



# The X-Executive

Vol. XVIII | 2021-22

THE X-EXECUTIVE VOL. XVIII



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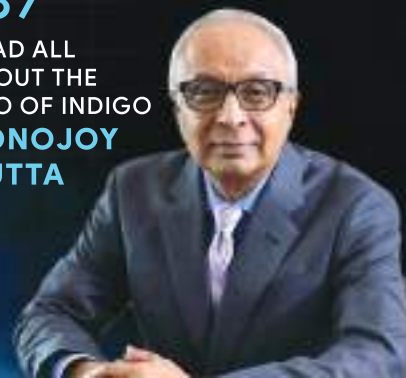
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INVEST.**  
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## PERFECTIONS A RHYTHM OF REFLECTIONS



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ABOUT THE  
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**ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), KOLKATA  
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES**

*The*  
**X-Executive**

Vol. XVIII | 2021-22

**A RHYTHM OF REFLECTIONS**

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For any feedback and suggestions, kindly write to us at: [xmseditorial2021@gmail.com](mailto:xmseditorial2021@gmail.com)

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# A message from FATHER PRINCIPAL



*"You can never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete."*

*- Buckminster Fuller*

The recent pandemic has been considered as another revolution in this world. It has impacted the masses in economic, social and psychological ways which are not curable unless we thrive to make this situation better for ourselves. At St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata we strive to alter the present world model and bring in an optimistic perception of the situation today.

However, outside the walls, our country is in turmoil. There is unrest. People are filled with anxiety and despair. This makes me reflect on the need of the hour and what role we could play to bring back the sense of security and peace that every citizen enjoyed. Being a prestigious institution, we take it upon ourselves to encourage the unending pursuit of knowledge and growth. The young who play a vital role in the society need to be re-energized, empowered and have an optimistic mind set towards the society. This 18th edition of the annual magazine, The X-Executive, is published with an enormous sense of fulfilment and joy by the Department of Management Studies of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata. The X-Executive is a successful endeavour of the Editorial Department of Xavier's Management Society, which allows a student to sketch their musings and invigorates students from across the globe to embark on an insatiable quest for knowledge and pedagogic brilliance. This edition deliberates on the concept of 'musings' which portrays the aspect of reflective thinking. Reflective thinking is a skill to find connections and involves deep reflection on past experiences. Reading about it would enhance the child's thinking capacity in every way and provide a prominent vision of the business and economic world, recovering from the damage. Their hunger for creation and innovation leads them to explore and experiment and gain experience to try new things and succeed through business ventures. In today's highly competitive and uniquely difficult business world, these musings are critical to reflect the ability to sustain and grow with different external and internal business environments. The insights that are gathered through this magazine represent individual musings via articles based on the thought process of today's young business icons in comparison with the thought process of the experienced past leaders.

I, enormously pass my warm wishes and congratulate the Editorial Board along with members of Xavier's Management Society for their annual publication and hope the magazine will be a knowledgeable insight for every reader. It defines the way people think and the thought of a 'musing' which enlightens everyone with reflective thoughts in order to get the world to a better position than yesterday. May we come out strong together and be good citizens of our motherland.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Savio' with a horizontal line underneath.

Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J.  
Principal,  
St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata

*A message from*  
FATHER VICE-PRINCIPAL

*"Education is the manifestation of perfection already existing in man."*

- Swami Vivekananda.



Every year is an opportunity to flourish and accomplish a new landmark for the Department of Management Studies at St. Xavier's College, Kolkata.

The persistent efforts and the unwavering passion of the students and the faculty members have consistently enlightened the minds of the youth and strived towards excellence and dominance. Xavier's Management Society has been successful in upholding the legacy of the institution during these erratic times.

It is through curiosity and looking at opportunities in new ways that we have always mapped our path. Through this curious nature, every member of the Xavier's fraternity steered along to develop on a personal as well as a societal level. We believe in upholding the inferno of learning and stimulating our students to excel and prosper. It is quite exhilarating to witness various individuals from different corners unite to justify the pole of compassion.

Our 162-year-old principle "NIHIL ULTRA" which means "Nothing Beyond" continues to bequest during all the hardships the world is going through. Xavier's Management Society ventures to acknowledge the oeuvre of the pathfinders who attempt to create a footprint in society.

The X-Ecutive Vol. XVIII: A Rhythm of Reflection, is an endeavour by the Editorial Department of the Xavier's Management Society in an effective way for any society to remain young and imperishable. The theme reflects upon our present situation where our youth have found solace amidst these difficult and unpredictable times by using their creativity and innovation. The Editorial Department has taken the inventiveness to use reflective thinking to solve problems. I present with pride, honour and glory the 18th edition of The X-Ecutive, in its own extraordinary way.

I would like to express my gratitude to the editorial department and the acclaimed faculty members for their persevering hard work and relentless efforts for making The X-Ecutive Vol. XVIII an astounding one. I would also extend my warmest congratulations to all the members of the Xavier's Management Society for engraving a new benchmark with this edition of the magazine. Let us all aspire for a new beginning with an igniting spirit.

---

Rev. Fr. Peter Arockiam, S.J.  
Vice-Principal,  
Department of Management Studies,  
Commerce (Evening), UG & PG  
St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata



## *A message from the* **MANAGING EDITOR** **DR. SUKANYA SARKHEL**

“Take each day one step at a time, inch by inch if you have to, and when you fall down remember to look and see all the progress you have made.”

A dreamer is someone who visions their ambition to plant the seeds of the future. The world of today has been bleeding for almost two years now. The pandemic has presented an unprecedented challenge. It has been difficult seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, as our lives have been marred in uncertainty. I feel that during these testing times, one simply needs to sit down and feel the bliss of solitude. With this impregnable spirit, the students of the Department of Management Studies have put their thoughts to paper to create the eighteenth volume of The X-Ecutive. This year’s magazine aims to bridge the gap between appearance and reality, as the world entered a period of positive reflection and tried its best to create something optimistic during these tough times. To change the way one feels, one has to change the way they live. It is with great pride I say that I have witnessed the students of this department adapt, improvise, and overcome every challenge that has come their way. The goal of Jesuit education is to form men and women for others, and the students of this department have left no stone unturned in upholding the values and long-standing legacy of our esteemed institution.

Despite all the hardships, the members of Xavier’s Management Society have shown great dynamicity in going the extra mile to ensure they meet their goal of spreading knowledge, following the trail of erudition. I would like to congratulate all the members of the society, for it is them who have worked holistically to sow the seeds of knowledge in each and every page of this magazine. The students interviewed eminent people from all walks of life, taking insights and lessons from their experiences and trying to inculcate within themselves the values that have helped these esteemed personalities tread so triumphantly in the path of success. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire Editorial Committee of the Xavier’s Management Society, with special mentions to our Joint Editors Atashi Dasgupta and Vidushi Nahata. They have worked tirelessly in etching a transcending mark with an ocean of knowledge that the magazine embodies, which ignites the fire of embracing change to succeed in one’s endeavours. The path towards this edition of The X-Ecutive started with the blessings and guidance of Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J. Principal of St. Xavier’s College (Autonomous), Kolkata, with heartiest wishes from Rev. Fr. Peter Arockiam, S.J., Vice-Principal. I would like to extend my exuberant wishes to Prof. Sougata Banerjee, Dean of the Department of Management Studies, and Dr Supriyo Patra, Deputy Managing Editor. I would also like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all the professors of the department for their constant benevolence and guidance. We at Xavier’s Management Society hope that the seeds of knowledge that we have sown bear fruit in the minds of our readers and help them  *muse* on the happenings around them, for happiness can be found in the darkest of times if only one remembers to turn on the light. We certainly look forward to your invaluable feedback that will assist us in ensuring that our magazine evolves with time and constantly brings out the best in all that is associated with it. We hope you have an enriching experience reading it. God Bless!

---

Dr. Sukanya Sarkhel  
Deputy President,  
Xavier’s Management Society  
Managing Editor,  
The X-Ecutive

*A message from the*  
**MANAGING EDITOR**  
**DR. SUPRIYO PATRA**



The world of business is seeing cutthroat competition in the 21st Century and survival of the fittest is the mantra of the game. Companies are leaving no stone unturned to connect with their target audience.

‘Musings’ refer to a period of reflection or thought and the youths of today are filled with a plethora of ideas and musings. It’s your thoughts or comments on something you have been thinking about carefully and for a long time.

It will be the innovative and big idea of the young entrepreneurs that will help them to swim against the tide and go for the uncontested marketplace and implement the Blue Ocean strategy.

Reflective thinkers refrain from making impulsive judgments. Instead, they make decisions based on a reflective thought process. This type of musing in the business world is crucial.

The 18th Edition of ‘The X-Ecutive’ focuses on the concept of ‘Musings’ A Rhythm of Reflections.

The journey from conceptualization to the launch of the present edition ‘The X-Ecutive’ was indeed a challenging one but became remarkable with the blessings of Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J., Principal of our college and turn out to be incredible with good wishes from Rev. Fr. Peter Arockiam, S.J., Vice-Principal of our BMS Department. Timely and active guidance received from Prof. Sougata Banerjee, Dean of the BMS Department made the journey memorable.

Dr. Sukanya Sarkhel, acted as a charismatic leader with her vast experience to help us sail smoothly from conceptualizing the magazine to its successful launch.

The concept of ‘Musings’ A Rhythm of Reflections is appearing before you because of excellent coordination by Atashi Dasgupta and Vidushi Nahata and dedicated effort of the entire editorial team and good wishes from one and all.

Stay safe & happy reading!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Supriyo Patra', written in a cursive style.

---

Dr. Supriyo Patra  
Deputy Vice-President,  
Xavier's Management Society  
Managing Editor,  
The X-Ecutive

# A message from the

## STUDENT EDITOR



This year has been one of great trials and tribulations as we endeavoured to get back to life as we knew it. This stark change in our paradigm has prompted each one of us to perform the arduous task of 'reflecting' within ourselves and discerning invaluable insight from superfluous information. 'Rhythm of Reflections' allows us to aspire for the zenith by making us find ingenuity in the interesting. As we move into the future, technologies such as NFTs, web3 and blockchains will seek to amalgamate business, pleasure and information; in such a precarious world where the threat of centralisation looms over us, it becomes imperative to look at the past and imbibe important insights which will form the foundation of your society moving forward.

My journey started on my first day at the Xavier's Management Society. As a wide-eyed fresher, I immediately became entranced in the wonderful tango between learning and fun that unendingly fills the minds and hearts of all members of this society. As my seniors moulded me into a much more mature, dedicated and inquisitive person. My progress through the ranks narrates a cliché story of the naive protagonist experiencing the world, learning novel ways of thinking, repeatedly failing but arising with ever-more resilience and grit. But as we all know, the reason why such stories are a cliché is that they are often the truest representation of reality for many. As someone who was humbled by being conferred this role, I now have more respect than ever for everyone who has worked tirelessly to actualize our endeavour of publishing a magazine that truly adds value to the readers' lives. The months-long process has finally come to a close, my heart is overwhelmed with gratitude and joy as I pen this message. If I ever get a learning opportunity that teaches me half as much as I have learnt during these months, I will consider myself to be very fortunate.

With our unwavering commitment and perseverance, we endeavour to interest our readers with interviews of renowned personalities such as Jubin Nautiyal-An Indian singer, and songwriter with many singles and albums, Umesh Yadav- An Indian cricketer who currently plays for the national cricket team and Harish Kohli-Managing Director of Acer India Private Limited, to name a few. The interviews, writings, and all of the visual content were specifically designed to persuade the readers to enhance their intellectual arsenal.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Rev. Fr. Dominic Savio, S.J. and Rev. Fr. Peter Arockiam, S.J. for their unwavering support in all of our endeavours. Without the leadership of Prof. Sougata Banerjee, Dean of the BMS Department, and our managing editors, Dr. Sukanya Sarkhel and Dr. Supriyo Patra, The X-Executive 2021-22 would not have been conceivable. I want to express my gratitude to my Editorial Committee, without whom this magazine would not have been possible. Finally, I would also like to thank Ayush Mishra, Krish Doshi, Nikita Baheti and Samridhi Borar who also contributed to this journey but did not make it to the other side. Our path to achievement has been illuminated by their hard work and dedication. The cornerstone of this version of The X-Executive is our strive to engage humans on a path of reflection and I hope it succeeds in satiating the expectations of the readers.

*Atashi Dasgupta*

Atashi Dasgupta  
Student Editor

The X-Executive Volume XVIII

# A message from the

# STUDENT EDITOR



To say that I am excited to be writing to you for the first time would be an understatement of monumental proportions.

But editor's notes are always treacherous to write. How do you encompass all the hopes and plans you have for your new publication? And how do you express your sincere desire to uphold the traditions and nuances that make the publication unique? I think I know how to do it, and it only requires three words: A Rhythm of Reflections.

The X-Ecutive Vol. XVIII, A Rhythm of Reflections strives to transcend to esoteric levels by promising its readers the chance to engage themselves within a plethora of topics in each section. To improve cognizance, a variety of topics have been presented in brief student-centric pieces portrayed in a diverse demography; with pieces ranging from 'The Big Quit Crisis' and 'Metaverse and Marketing' in the "Student Article" section to 'Ola's Foray in the EV Sector' and 'Money Management as a College Student' in the "Featured Article" section. Every year, the "Interviews" part of the journal engulfs the reader in the intriguing world of numerous elderly geniuses from throughout the world.

As an Editor for The X-Ecutive, when it came to deciding on a topic, content, or the people we wanted to interview, I've had to make tough decisions. This path has been filled with conflict that has turned into an opportunity to learn and grow, from battling over finalised content and re-drafting it multiple times to spending hours proof-reading contributions from diverse authors, to share their opinions on a wide range of themes, including but not limited to business and entrepreneurship, as well as technology, music, sports, and entertainment.

Through our constant efforts and perseverance, we have been able to embellish the magazine. We are proud to present to you engaging interviews of eminent personalities from diverse fields. This includes the likes of Mr. Rono Dutta- CEO of InterGlobe Aviation Ltd. which operates Indigo, Mr. Umesh Yadav - Member of the Indian Cricket Team, Mr. Partho Chakrabarti- Managing Director, Faber-Castell India, Jubin Nautiyal- Indian Playback Singer and Performer, to name a few. The interviews have been framed meticulously, with immaculately crafted questions that aim to engross our readers.

The ultimate perception will be determined by our readers who will define the success of this magazine. One thing that hasn't changed is our dedication to this publication and our desire to improve with each new issue. I would like to thank Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J., vPrincipal of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) and Rev. Fr. Peter Arockiam, S.J., Vice Principal, Dept. of Bcom Evening and BMS for helping the magazine reach greater heights. We are highly obliged to be continuously guided and assisted by our managing editors, Dr. Sukanya Sarkhel and Dr. Supriyo Patra.

As I sign out, I'd want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all members of the Editorial Committee for their insightful contributions; it is their tireless and diligent efforts which has made the magazine what it is today. In the end, it is the hundreds of hours of labour put in by dozens of individuals who provide the greatest possible reading experience for the readers that make a magazine useful. Their excitement is contagious, and they hold the magazine in such high respect that it strives to achieve new goals every year. Lastly, I hope that our magazine continues to live up to the expectations of all the readers.

Vidushi Nahata  
Student Editor  
The X-Ecutive Volume XVIII

# FOREWORD

While 2020 was the year of change, 2021 was the year of revival; we saw our lives get back to normal, albeit for short periods of time. We rebuilt our lives from the ground up, trying to Marie Kondo our way out of a cluttered and unfulfilling life. People from different walks of life set aside their differences and amalgamated their efforts towards the singular goal of saving people from the wretched disease. People braved their way back to work, children happily went back to the same school they dreaded a year back and people started patronising public places such as restaurants and movie theatres, which had been struggling to make ends meet for the past year. With this positiveness in mind, the Editorial Committee of the Xavier's Management Society brings forth the annual departmental magazine of the Department of Management Studies, The X-Executive Volume XVIII : A Rhythm of Reflections.

This edition of The X-Executive endeavours into the realm of critical thinking and discovers how our 'musings' can help us grow as humans. As we see the very foundation of life, along with the definitions of happiness, love, etc. change at warp speed, we must muse about what we aim to extract from the amazing gift called life that is as easily given as taken away. We aim to understand how industry experts manoeuvre their personal and professional goals around the shifting pillars of what makes us human. We must all reflect and critically assess our past life and make necessary and imperative changes that will help us lead a more fulfilling life. We strive to observe our environment and engrain in everyone the notion that change is the only constant and that we must mould ourselves in accordance with the evolving times which will see the unfit getting left behind.

The articles written by the Editorial Committee focus on providing the necessary tools required to be an adept 'muser'. The inputs from our students and faculty further provide their analyses of the present times which aim to add to everyone's intellectual arsenal. The interviews of industry leaders and successful professionals aim to inspire the readers to face with grit any challenges that dare to come their way; while simultaneously encouraging them to be pragmatic. Furthermore, the concise and informative features provide valuable insight into the workings of the corporate world; which, in tandem with the student-centric pieces and research papers, equips students with valuable information to kick-start their professional journey.

The magazine aspires to implore people to think critically and analyse all information they receive and eliminate the unnecessary, modify the erroneous and eventually apply the useful into their lives. Readers, when they muse about what they read in this magazine, will realise that musing is just a means to an end and not an end in itself. Being equipped with the necessary tools to face any challenges head-on, readers will surely look for the bright light at the end of every tunnel before deciding to embark on the journey.

We are honoured to have the opportunity to publish this issue. We are in anticipation that our readers find it worthwhile and wish for successful inspiration!

# THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE



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# MEET THE DEPARTMENT



## Rev. Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J., Principal

Father Principal is the driving force behind our college's objective of significance. He is the college's changing constraint, continuously working to accomplish our college's mission of 'Nihil Ultra'. He is credited for bringing the Department of Management to its apex. For both instructors and students, Father is a source of support and inspiration.



## Rev. Fr. Peter Arockiam, S.J., Vice-Principal

Father's compassionate and adroit nature could idealize and coordinate for the basic judgments he makes for our department. His inviting mien makes him congenial to everybody, counting teachers, staff, and students. He has been the driving figure behind the BMS Department's accomplishments. His magnanimity and equanimous state of mind permits him to form strong choices for our division while still making him congenial to all—faculty, staff, and students.



## Prof. Sougata Banerjee, Dean

The maintenance of unwavering discipline in all BMS classrooms can be attributed to sir. No matter what and how many problems he may encounter, he always keeps his calm and handles all queries with the utmost ease. Additionally, he is an excellent teacher who makes challenging subjects easier to understand by explaining topics in detail.



## Dr. Sukanya Sarkhel, Assistant Professor

Ma'am is a skilled teacher who can educate you in any subject. Her instructing methodology and approach towards educating her students is what sets her apart. Ma'am is very approachable and she is the one we can always go to in case of any issues. Her lectures are exceptionally special and uncommon. She makes sure to solve any doubt faced by the students and sees that they are well cared for. Her individual care and consideration for us is what makes her stand out.



## Dr. Supriyo Patra, Assistant Professor

Sir's classes are an incredible way to relieve pressure. Students can sense the eagerness of learning something unusual as long as he starts a lecture. You will not be bored for a moment, instead everyone is continuously willing to display themselves before the class. Sir guarantees that each student has the opportunity to lock in in dynamic contact based on his or her best qualities, and alludes to all his students as "brands".

# MEET THE DEPARTMENT



**Prof. Dibyendu Sen, Assistant Professor**

Sir always tells his students to "think out of the box" and this is reflective in his style of teaching which is unique and refreshing. Sir's lectures go beyond the syllabus as he tries to simplify every concept for his students using real life examples and personal anecdotes. His continuous motivation and life lessons are very encouraging and valuable that help each student in his/her overall development.



**Prof. Basuli Dasgupta, Assistant Professor**

Irrespective of the number of times students have doubts regarding the subject, Ma'am is exceedingly patient when it comes to clarifying doubts. She will leave no stone unturned to make sure that her pupils can take away nothing but the best from her lectures. Her affability and calm demeanor along with her tireless efforts to deliver the best to her students makes her very special.



**Dr. Himadri Karmakar, Assistant Professor**

Sir's ebullient identity makes indeed the foremost monotonous mathematics and statistics ideas fascinating. Sir is a multi-talented person. He solves all sums with his students, even in an online situation, to help them comprehend. During his lectures, the classroom is filled with generous jokes and chuckling. Sir has the ability to turn a serious concept like math into something that can be enjoyed.



**Prof. Rajashik Sen, Assistant Professor**

Accounting is a subject that scares students but Rajashik sir has successfully changed this misconception about the subject among the students with his special method of teaching. He makes sure to have interactive sessions with his students so that concepts are much easier and interesting to understand. His calm manner of teaching will remove all your accounting fears.



**Prof. Rajni Gupta, Assistant Professor**

One of the most friendly teachers in the department, ma'am is very dedicated towards all her students. Her understanding of the subject is so thorough that it makes it very simple for students to grasp the otherwise very complicated subject. Ma'am is never hesitant and goes an extra mile to ensure that her students do not only excel in examinations but also in life.

# MEET THE DEPARTMENT



## **Prof. Jnanranjan Chakrabarti, Assistant Professor**

Sir has an excellent teaching method that will make sure that no student leaves his class with a hazy understanding of any concept. His approach towards teaching is so clear as he begins each topic from the basic fundamentals. Students are always in awe of his enthusiasm and he inspires everybody to perform to their best potential.



## **Prof. Kaushik Goswami, Assistant Professor**

Sir teaches Information Technology providing his students with a plethora of knowledge regarding both the theoretical and practical aspects of the subject. His classes are engaging, and students eagerly anticipate his presentations. One thing each student makes sure of before sitting for his class is to be ready with a notebook and a pen as there will be too much valuable information that nobody wishes to miss out on.



## **Dr. Mahua Basu, Assistant Professor**

Ma'am employs a special method of teaching that makes learning 'evergreen' for all her students. One of the finest EVS teachers you would ever come across, ma'am has a cosmos of knowledge about the world we live in. Her eloquent command over the subject makes sure that students are well-informed thereby making learning very exciting and interesting.



## **Prof. Meenakshi Subramaniam, Assistant Professor**

One of the sweetest professors of our department, Meenakshi ma'am is hands down everybody's favourite. Her PPTs are a saviour for each student before the examinations. She conducts her classes in a very interactive manner making sure no student is left out from the discussion. Her constant guidance and care makes her classes a delight for all students.



## **Prof. Oyndrila Ganguly, Assistant Professor**

Ma'am is the professor of law in the B.M.S department. Her classes are a treat for the students as she makes each topic seem so simple and comprehensible with her intelligible examples accompanied by diagrammatic explanations. With her guidance, a subject as profound as law seems to be easy for students to grasp and learn.

# MEET THE DEPARTMENT



## **Prof. Rashtrajit Sengupta, Assistant Professor**

Sir's class meets only twice a week, yet he assures that it is sufficient to address our corporate communication needs. Sir believes that every subject should be clearly explained. You will appreciate the subject if you can keep up with his pace. Each student is inspired by his zeal for his subject and exceptional mastery of it.



## **Prof. Rinita Das, Assistant Professor**

Ma'am instructs corporate law and guarantees that all of her pupils are well-versed with the subject. She teaches at a calm and consistent pace so that each student pays attention in the course and understands all concepts and topics. Her persistence and continuous efforts to solve each and every doubt makes her an exceptional teacher.



## **Dr. Shaunak Roy, Assistant Professor**

Every student anticipates sir's amusing presentations and lectures, which are packed with useful information and stories from real life. As a result, rather than feeling tired, you will look forward to his courses. It becomes not just educational, but also entertaining and interactive. He goes above and beyond traditional teaching methods to clarify things and ensure that his students comprehend them.



## **Prof. Shouvik Sirkar, Assistant Professor**

Sir makes even the longest lectures feel quick with his enlightening talks and narratives. Be on the lookout for his funny and snarky comments, which are sure to make everyone laugh. Sir's classes are the most informative; whether it is about study or current events in the globe, his students always learn something new in every class.



## **Prof. Swaraj Kumar Nandan, Assistant Professor**

Sir is a professor of E-Commerce at the B.M.S department. His computer information amplifies past the classroom lessons. He is the individual to go to if you have any questions regarding a college event or anything computer related. He ensures that his students 'excel' not only in tests but also in life.

# MEET THE DEPARTMENT

## OFFICE STAFF



### Mr. Subrata Kr. Chatterjee

For any query regarding the BMS department, the one person who has the solution to all possible problems is Subrata sir. He looks after all the financial reports of the BMS department. Starting from our admission fees to the condonation fees we pay, he has the records for everything. If you ever have any issues with bills, then he is the right person to guide you.



### Mr. Manoj Chandra

A person without whom students can never solve their queries relating to attendance. Manoj sir is a very friendly and helpful member of the BMS staff. He is always ready to assist everybody without any hesitation. The day to day challenges that people find too overwhelming are nothing but a cakewalk for him as he finds solutions to all problems with ease.



### Mr. Alok Ekka

Are you facing any queries relating to administrative formalities or general information? Alok sir is your one stop solution. An extremely valuable member of the BMS staff, sir's helpful, cordial and congenial composure towards students and visitors makes him very special and irreplaceable.

# Meet the BOARD



*Editorial Head*

## *Atashi Dasgupta*

'I am not great at advice. But can I interest you in a sarcastic comment?'- conversations with Atashi are never boring. Her watch list includes more shows than you might have ever heard of. If you are getting bored and looking for some inspiration, her aesthetic "pinterest-worthy" spam account will surely entertain you. Our very own grammar nazi. Atashi is an admirable leader who has guided her juniors with realistic advice, wit and humour. She is often seen using spotify more than discord and choosing cafes that are Farzi.

P.S. Bribing with Oreos is a bad idea.

## *Vidushi Nahata*

Vidushi is so obsessed with content writing that she comes up with touching paragraphs to help her friends deal with their life crises. One of the most resourceful seniors, she will always assist you with semester notes, and can solve any problem in an instant. Regardless of how confident you are in your work, she will certainly 'help' you find all the mistakes you missed until it is perfect. There is never a dull moment with her as she keeps everyone around her in good spirits. "Deadline miss hua na, kisi ko trip pe nahi leke jayega hum" is her go-to way of threatening her juniors.



*Editorial Head,  
Planning and Operations Head*



*Joint Secretary*

## *Navya Bahety*

"If you think I talk too much, let me know, we will talk about it"- describes Navya in a sentence. "Zindagi kharab ho gaya hai yaar kya kare" has become our patent too now, all thanks to her! Fun Faer - Navya makes THE BEST reels in the society, no offense, to you know who. Pasta is the only thing she loves more than gossiping. Her charisma brings in the biggest smiles and the best vibes in the society. The Y in Navya stands for "Why are you not having fun", for at the end of a tiring day, she is the one lightening everyone's mood!

## Simran Juneja

Being a silent killer, her eyes tell more than words could ever say. Plan on binge watching sitcoms? Son of a gun she is in! If a character from FRIENDS would describe her, it would definitely be Monica. She is the 'calm in the storm' for you will never see her panicking, no matter how bad the situation is, she has always got a solution. She is the perfect combination of sugar and spice, and everything nice! The only fear which eats up our fearless leader is the mighty FOMO.

P.S- Before you plan an outing, make sure she is in town! #siminkol



Joint Secretary



Finance Head

## Kanishk Agarwal

"Dekh lo, paisa nahi aayega toh BT hoga, baaki it is up to you". We not only have a love and hate relationship with finance, but also with Kanishk's surprises! Despite being the most wanted Munda (in XMS as well) he is not only chivalrous but also savage. He has a good 'vision' which brings nothing but wellness to the society. Early to bed, early to rise, makes him 'healthy', 'wealthy' and 'poetically wise' (PS: not to include his lame jokes). Our not so friendly wannabe Rakesh Jhunjhunwala can talk hours on sports, gaming and Ramos. To most Kanishk might seem intimidating, but gradually he becomes your go to person when in dilemma.

## Manya Ahalani

Manya is the "Eid ka Chand" of XMS and it is not only because of her beauty, but also because of the hope she provides in times of darkness! She sure knows how to turn boring things into fun ones- be it clothes or meetings! Known for her immense social media presence, Manya is a very sweet and approachable girl with a killer fashion sense. Do not be fooled by her fashionable expertise as she has a strong business acumen and wants to run her very own fashion label one day.

P.S. :Manya, please get your laptop fixed.



Finance Head



Finance Head

## Mahak Khemka

Popularly known as 'Ms. Trello', she will probably be the only person in the world to organize her wedding in a miro board. If you are working with Mahak you can take a chill pill and relax because Mahak will panic on behalf of the whole team. She is one of the most approachable and helpful heads that we have, and is always ready to solve our problems. The 'Mother of the Group', she will help you, scold you and continue to pester you until you get your 'alignment' right but at the end will always treat you with cupcakes.

## Yashraj Singh

One of the goofiest people in the society, Yashraj uses his peers' Instagram account and discord more than his own. The self-proclaimed Skribbl King of the society, loves to play Football and Play Station with his 'lads'. No matter how busy he is, he always makes time for his 5-minute break at 'Sharma Tea'. He will ensure that all of his work is finished remotely prior to an offline meeting, allowing him to devote his work time to cricket and football. His main passion is "role-play" and that is very evident by the ready presence of a wig at his desk.



## Pratyush Chitlangia

When you 'EXCEL' in life they 'SPREAD SHEET' about you, Pratyush, the most calm and composed person you will ever meet, has his life seemingly sorted which is why 'VLOOKUP' to him. He is a creative genius, who has always stood out in the crowd in his own fascinating way. He might be the only Board Member who spends his whole time trying to get people to be scared of him, but sadly all his efforts go to vain. "I'll be there for you" is one song that Pratyush could play for his XMS buddies in his famous boombox. And oh, a big shout-out to Pratyush's barber for giving him a 'short-cut'.

## Megha Tantiya

"Buddy, what is the update?" is the one question Megha will always ask you but eventually ends up giving updates about her own life. Our Marketing head is so precise when it comes to work that she surely knows "something is off" but "cannot pinpoint exactly". She is always eager to roast people, but more often gets herself roasted. She is an avid movie buff and is eagerly waiting for her Bollywood fantasies to become a reality. The life of every party, she always "breaks a leg".



## Tanvee Singhania

Tanvee is suffering from "ptsd" after designing innumerable posts for XMS. She is most often seen finding the right font for posts, rather than finding the right one for herself. Legends say that the first words of Tanvee's kid will be "Oh crop". You can sit till 3 in the morning with her and designing will not seem like a task. Her creative brain finds an ingenious angle in everything, even Spotify ads. There is no trend on Instagram that she is not aware of. Always open to our meme-centric ideas, she is someone who makes marketing so much fun!

## Nandini Saraf

"Heyyy guysssss!" There is sweetness, enthusiasm and positivity overloaded in whatever Nandini "plans" for! In cafes, you will always find her having a papaya salad, and she always knocks on the door of her fridge, just in case there is a salad dressing xD. Though she avoids taking sugar, she is one of the sweetest person you will come across. She has the ability to stay calm in the trickiest of situations. She would not budge you until and unless there is some "super super important work" and come what may, she is always there for her "Bachas".



*Planning and Operations Head*



*Planning and Operations Head*

## Anshul Mahajan

Our tall, hyperactive amoeba, aka Anshul, is the one who can be relied upon when things go haywire. If you cannot find Anshul PLANNING an event for XMS, you will definitely find him planning a date or doing both simultaneously. If you know him well enough, you will agree with the fact that he can give "Dennis The Menace" tough competition. Apart from gymming, Anshul likes to walk his dog (who probably gets more compliments and attention than him XD).

Anshul is always the most cheerful person in the room and will never fail to entertain you no matter how serious the situation is!

## Shruti Goel

"Har baar mera lol kese ho jata hai", witty and full of all the latest memes, from punchlines to jokes followed by appropriate GIFs. Shruti's Instagram stories can describe our mood. You can trust her to accompany you to all the parties and we assure you will not be disappointed. She is either a couch potato or an over enthusiastic person who would not stop dancing and sprinting for 4 hours straight. Every gossip group is incomplete without her because either she has a gossip or is the gossip. Jokes apart, Shruti is one of the most understanding people you will ever come across and will never fail to bring a smile to your face.



*Public Relations Head*



*Public Relations Head*

## Keshav Gupta

Keshav Cutie sounds much better than Keshav Gupta and you cannot change our mind. He is one of the most calm and understanding people in the society, and any problem you throw at him will be tackled by "koi issue nahi hai". For as we say, never ask a woman her age and Keshav his height. Deeply caring and kind, he is a gem of a person who always puts his friends first. His 'hobiz' include 'strategically managing' all the PeRmissions, double-checking every single thing one can think of, getting scammed by Bangur sponsors and delivering gifts of joy to people.

# XMS REPORT

## 2021-22

The Xavier's Management Society is an amalgamation of ideas, opportunities, and learning. We aspire to create value for those who associate with our society and provide a platform to gain meaningful experience and organizational skills. In the new academic year 2021-22, the society was determined to pursue greatness. The members of XMS welcomed the new batch of students with an event exclusively for the first years: X-Genesis'21- "Augmented Reality". With over 200 teams participating and six grueling rounds, X-Genesis'21 was a huge success. A series of insightful speaker sessions were conducted with 1500+ registrations where we had the opportunity to host Mr. Venugopal Nair (CEO of Shoppers Stop) and Mr. Satish Verappa (CEO of Kokuyo Camlin). We also had the opportunity to have Mr. Rajdeep Manwani (Coordinator, Department of Commerce, Jain University) as our moderator. Overall, this event was extremely fulfilling for both the participants and the organizers.

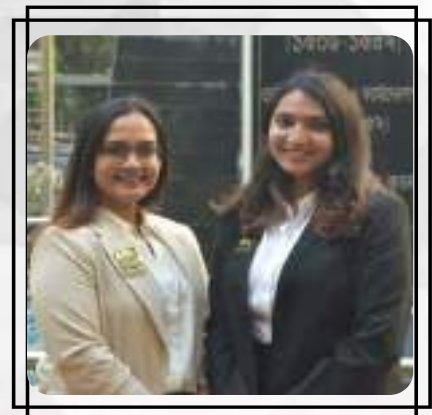
The Xavier's Management society is not only known for the magnitude of events it conducts but also for its nature of giving back to the society as a part of its corporate social responsibility. Every year XMS conducts a social drive. This year on the 24th of December, in the spirit of Christmas, the students at XMS arranged for an opportunity to visit Unmish, a school for the specially-abled. We not only organized several fun activities for the children but gave them gifts, packed with a lot of love and affection. To be a reason for bringing smiles to the faces of the less privileged is something that the members of XMS take pride in.

On the back of a glorious start, we embarked upon our journey toward our managerial oratory and debating event: X-Confero'22: Undiminished Passion. Driven by this motive of 'Nihil Ultra', and to take the traditions to a new level, the students of the Xavier's Management Society took X-Confero to an international level this year with participation from reputed institutions like the University of California and Indiana University among others. Over 100 aspirants contested a series of intriguing debates, and two teams qualified for the final. Continuing the fervour, X-Confero'22 witnessed a forum of quintessential speakers comprising Ms. Kiran Bedi (the first female IPS Officer of India), Mr. Tarun Arora (CEO of Zydus Wellness), Mr. Vipin Sondhi (Former MD and CEO of Ashok Leyland) and Mr. Ashok Ramachandran (CEO and President of Schindler India). They had unequivocally ignited the minds of emerging leaders with thought-provoking topics such as "Leading Your People: The Essentials", "Emerging trends in FMCG", and "Grooming Leaders - Fearless Governance".

With a team of 80 members and a myriad of ideas in mind, we began preparations for our flagship event- The Xavier's Management Convention'22- an International level management fest. The Xavier's Management Convention 2022 witnessed a battle of merit among students representing renowned colleges from across the world. We had the pleasure of hosting Mr. Rahul Agarwal (Former CEO and MD of Lenovo South Asia), Mr. Bipul Chandra (MD of Ducati India) and Mr. Harjeet Khanduja (Vice-President, HR of Reliance Jio). They motivated the students to earnestly pursue their aspirations without compromising the value of hard work and perseverance.

2021-22 has been a successful period as the society rose to unprecedented heights. The smooth execution of the events is a result of the collective efforts of all the members. At XMS, we place the foremost emphasis on diligently pursuing every endeavour and inculcating a team spirit to support each other at every step of the journey. We live by our motto to explore different aspects of this dynamic world, meet a group of driven personalities and form an everlasting connection with these individuals. We owe our success to the constant support of Father Principal- Rev. Dr. Fr. Dominic Savio, S.J., Father Vice-Principal- Rev Fr. Peter Arockiam, S.J., Dean of Department of BMS- Professor Sougata Banerjee, our Professor-in-Charge, Dr. Sukanya Sarkhel, and Assistant Professor-in-Charge, Dr. Supriyo Patra.

Compiled by,  
Navya Bahety and Simran Juneja,  
Joint Secretaries,  
Xavier's Management Society.



# FINANCE REPORT

## 2021-22

Finance plays a significant role in the success of any organization and is the backbone around which the performance of the society revolves. With immense pride and gratitude, I present to you, the Xavier's Management Society's Annual Financial Report for the year 2021-2022. Juggling between the difficulties imposed by the pandemic and getting accustomed to virtual operations, the members of the society managed to put forward a phenomenal performance and set a new benchmark for the upcoming year. The society is proud to have had the honour to collaborate with companies such as Charnock Hospitals, Shiva Commercial Corporation, and 91.9 Friends FM among many others. Through these collaborations, XMS managed to raise an approximate amount of Rs. 5,00,000. Guided by the vision of providing a real-world corporate experience to the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata, team XMS conducted various insightful sessions with educational institutions like Groww, EduAims, Erudite, Endeavor Careers, Actuators, and Vanik IAS. We have also associated with companies that have done a remarkable job in imparting knowledge regarding "The Various Tools of Google Workspace" and facilitating the members of XMS in their day-to-day tasks. The use of these tools allows us to complete an assigned job in minimal time and ensure quick delivery, along with coherent results. Our stable financial foothold allowed us to invest in the society's very own website and take XMS to soaring heights. Apart from our usual calendar events, we even organized a social drive wherein the members celebrated Christmas with the children of the NGO-Unmish, to fulfil the objective of giving back to the community. I would like to thank The Mint Enfold, Engage, The Perfect Present, and The Cooking Trail for partnering with us and providing us with goodies and presents for all our esteemed faculty members to portray our respect towards them and acknowledge their constant support and guidance. In order to recognize the efforts and victory of the participants, we gave promising internships and cash prizes, along with alluring gift hampers to the winners of each event. Knuts, Firstricoz Marketing Pvt. Ltd., and Elearn Markets have offered enticing internships that have been beneficial in equipping the students with comprehensive corporate knowledge.

Team XMS also made provisions to avail exciting discounts that apply to everyone that registered for our events. The Raymond Shop, Own Days, Electra Vision, and The Dayroom Cafe are a few companies that have associated with us for the same. The primary motive of the Finance Department is not only to guarantee that all the deliverables are met and the companies are content with the collaboration but also to ensure that the finance is utilized following an efficient procedure.

Our endeavours would not have been possible without the guidance and support of Reverend Dr. Dominic Savio, S.J., Principal, Reverend Dr. Peter Arockiam, S.J. Vice-Principal, Professor Sougata Banerjee, Dean of the Department of Management Studies, and our Professor-In-Charge Dr. S. Sarkhel and Assistant Professor-In-Charge Dr. S. Patra. I am grateful to Subroto Sir, Monobroto Sir, Papon Sir, and the entire treasury department of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata for helping us carry out the entire administrative process smoothly and the event flawlessly.

I extend a token of appreciation to all the members of the Finance Department- Anushka Kedia, Dristi Poddar, Enakshi Varma and Tanishka Agarwal for their sheer determination, commitment, and dedication towards the workings of the department from the very beginning. I would also like to thank Mahek Khemka and Manya Ahalani, my co-finance heads, for being a constant source of support. Thank you for being the people I could count upon when times were tough and for getting work done even at the eleventh hour.

This would not have been possible without the members of the society and their consistent efforts in bringing new companies on board. Although the events were conducted virtually, our team managed to adopt an unconventional approach in order to accomplish all goals and take the society to its zenith.

I wish all the best to the next batch of the Xavier's Management Society and sincerely hope that the legacy is carried forward in the years to come.

Compiled by,  
Kanishk Agarwal  
Finance Head, Xavier's Management Society.



# METaverse : SIMPLIFIED

## HOW DID THE WORD "METAVERSE" COME ABOUT AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Let us decipher and understand what Metaverse is by going back in time and seeing how the words "meta" and "metaverse" evolved.

The word "Metaverse" was coined in a book by Neal Stephenson back in 1992 named "Snow Crash". Neal envisioned metaverse as the successor of the internet, which itself was quite nascent at that time.

In Greek meta means "after", "between" or "beyond". Aristotle wrote "Metaphysics" that dealt with the nature of reality beyond the physical world. "Metamorphosis" refers to the change between two forms.

In 1920, David Hilbert wrote a book on mathematics that dealt with the study of mathematics using the tools of mathematics. Thereafter, "meta" became a self-referential prefix that many scholars started using in their studies.

However, "Meta" wasn't used much in the technological world until the advent of Lisp Programming (second oldest programming language) in 1958. Lisp had the ability to modify the code of the program during its execution. For this feature, a "Meta key" was also added in the keyboard for Lisp programmers once it became popular.

Later, John C. Lilly applied the logic of Lisp metaprogramming in humans and wrote a book called "Programming and Metaprogramming in the Human Biocomputer" which dealt with his experiments on how one can modify their own programs. In 1979, Douglas Hofstadter published a 777 paged book on human consciousness, artificial intelligence and various self-referential art forms. Such books contributed in inducing the word "meta" in the geek culture.

Hence, due to these usages the meaning of "meta" that stuck with people was that whenever someone talks about something being meta, it conveys that they are self-referentially talking about the same thing. For example, Metadata is data about data, a metagame is a game about a game and so on.

Now, coming back to metaverse, it essentially holds the two ideas of having another reality or space beyond the existing one for people to craft experiences and the self-referential aspect of these spaces referring to themselves. It is a place where technology allows humans to have another identity (an online one) and have new kinds of experiences. Neal was right in his science-fiction "Snow Crash" that metaverse is the successor of the internet but he could not establish the self-referential treatment of this term and the experience of having a universe beyond our own. In a nutshell, the metaverse is going to be a compilation of many metaverses created using virtual reality, artificial intelligence, metaprogramming and co-created by the participation and creativity of humans which will allow an unprecedented expansion of human expressions and experiences.

## METAVERSE : A GEN Z's INFORMED OPINION

Recently, Facebook changed its name to Meta and they are building onto something big called the 'Metaverse'.

Throughout our history we have been moving towards more and more engaging mediums, eg: from text to photo to video. The Metaverse is what comes next! It is not the internet that you will not just be looking at but one that you are actually inside of.

It will be a living shared everlasting universe. This is the Meta's vision of the Metaverse.

Just as we have a profile picture now, we would be having avatars in the Metaverse. Each individual will have their own space in Metaverse and teleportation will be possible! 26



It will be equivalent to clicking a link and getting redirected to that page. Not only will travel speed up but also our knowledge! Imagine travelling to any time period in history and learning about it. How cool does this sound?! Yes! This will be possible through the Metaverse. Better learning experience will lead to better productivity. We have grown up by writing with pen and paper or typing on the keyboard but the Metaverse will enable using voices, gestures and even making things happen by just thinking about it! Benefits not only include these but also it will benefit the environment. Virtual Cars will exist in the Metaverse. Where normal physical cars put out CO2 emissions, this is negligible from a virtual car. Now the Metaverse will also be a new economy. It will have a marketplace, and not just them selling stuff to us but anyone can sell things over there.

All that glitters is not gold! Metaverse can be scary too! Data Breach will be a lot more scary since our entire world will be virtual. With Virtual Reality being a part of our everyday life we could lose touch as to what's real.

## METaverse AND CRYPTOCURRENCY

The metaverse is quickly expanding in terms of cultural awareness as well as commercial value, since Facebook changed its name to Meta in 2021. Metaverse is essentially a hybrid of technological features such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and video in which users "live" in a digital realm. It is by and large, the creation of a hyper-real alternative world for us to coexist in.

So, with all the buzz of VR, AR, digitalisation, technology, where does cryptocurrency come from? Well it's simple. Metaverse is all about developing an alternative digital world, and for any kind of a world to function, a medium of exchange, i.e. currency, is required. Think about it this way, in the physical world, we use fiat currency which allows us to buy and sell anything we want. But in a digital or virtual world, how will the transactions be facilitated? That's where Cryptocurrency comes in - digital currency, for a digital world.

According to Sina Kian, VP of Strategy at Aleo, a blockchain platform for fully private applications, "crypto is a fundamental part of the metaverse because it allows ownership of digital assets, and ownership will create incentives to invest."

The decentralised and secure environment that the blockchain technology provides is what makes cryptocurrency most suitable for the exponentially emerging hybrid world. Moreover, cryptocurrencies like bitcoin use incredibly powerful cryptographic technology for encryption and fund security, which makes it certain that every transaction you make is irreversible, traceable, and secure.

## FUTURE OF METaverse

No one can deny that the concept of Metaverse has proven to be a global phenomena and is reaching unprecedented heights. With major companies like Facebook, Meta Platforms Inc, Roblox Corp, Microsoft entering this space, it is only a matter of time that vast volumes of consumers will join in for indulgent and interactive experiences. Already we are observing primitive versions of Metaverse with digital goods like Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) consisting of digital art and memorabilia that is attracting crypto fans from all around the globe.

"In the future, progress in technologies like 5G will enable better quality, faster, and possibly more accessible productions. AI and data will unite to allow things like dynamic creativity in AR and video game programming, as well as more hybrid experiences at stadiums, festivals, etc. We are already beginning to see this in markets with more advanced technology," says Dominic Ryder, CEO of vEmpire.



# FISH TANK

Youth Entrepreneurship has a strong impact on a country's economic progress and it is high time students get to study entrepreneurial cases and practical examples and challenges of modern entrepreneurs instead of a list of quixotic principles and theories. A Fish Tank is a word play on Shark Tank coined to convey multiple stories of bootstrap companies to encourage the entrepreneurial minds of our youthful country. When a person attempts to start a company from their own finances or the company's operating revenues, this is known as bootstrapping. In this article, we have given examples of companies or startups that started with very little capital (fish tank) and today have established a well recognised brand by virtue of their vision and business acumen.

"I have never craved money because I never lacked it." - Kainaz Messman, founder of Theobroma. Theobroma is a chain of patisseries serving delicious brownies, cupcakes and other freshly baked products founded by Kainaz and Tina Messman who come from a food obsessed Parsi family. From a humble beginning in 2004, when the first store opened its doors at the iconic Cusrow Baug at Colaba Causeway (Mumbai) with just four tables. Theobroma has today grown to become a multi-million dollar Pan-India chain of patisseries across Mumbai, Pune, Delhi, Hyderabad and Bangalore, with 50 outlets across the country. A graduate of IHM Mumbai, India's leading Hotel Management Institute, and the Oberoi Centre of Learning & Development (OCLD) Delhi, Kainaz worked as pastry chef at the Oberoi Udaivilas before she was diagnosed with a back problem and the doctors said that she could not be chef. That is how Theobroma took shape. The Messmans may have business in their blood, but the growth of Theobroma was not easy. Kainaz loaned a small amount of money from her father and opened the first Theobroma store. In the initial stages, she could not afford to hire experts and had a hard time training and working with novices. Their lack of experience in retail proved to be a huge problem for them. "Theobroma was born out of my love for food. We would have never thought about whether it would be a money-spinner. Its popularity is something we just could not control," says Kainaz in an interview. According to her, the key to becoming a millionaire is just to work, work and work.

*theobroma*

• food of the gods •

  
SABYASACHI

"I draw inspiration from everything around me, be it people, books, films, forest, and even silence." Sabyasachi is a brand that was born out of its founder, Sabyasachi Mukherjee's love for recording every minor detail of his surroundings, especially those of his hometown, Kolkata. Coming from a middle-class Bengali family, a graduate of the National Institute of Fashion Technology India, he started his eponymous label, which began with a workforce of three people. In 2001, winning the 'Femina British Council's most outstanding young Designer of India' Award, took him to London for an internship with Georgina von Etzdorf,

who played an instrumental role in helping him return home with ideas that were destined to change the future of Indian traditional fashion. After selling at major retail stores, he took a chance at several fashion week events, one of which paved his way to a workshop in Paris. Soon he started being acknowledged as a designer who was known for adopting a bohemian take on Indian textiles. His significant achievements and persistent hard work earned him the image of a designer who is here to dominate. Even after facing stern competitors, the essence of his collections were based on modern architecture and intricate detailing which resulted in his sarees being quite expensive. Today, his brand generates a fiscal value of INR 200 crores on an average, setting itself apart as a pioneering luxury brand and a dream for many. It was only until January 2021, when Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd had announced the acquisition of 51 per cent of its stake for INR 398 crores. Sabyasachi believed that it would strengthen its position in the growing apparel market and luxury segment. With the vision to enhance the personalized imperfection of the human hand, he is now on a quest to tap the lucrative fine jewellery market and take his business global.

Infosys must be the most basic and famous example of starting small and making it big. Infosys Limited is an Indian multinational information technology company that provides business consulting, information technology and outsourcing services. Narayana Murthy started a company called Softronic, which failed after 1.5 years of its inception and then joined Patni Computer Systems in Pune. Then in 1981, Murthy along with six software professionals, Nandan Nilekani, N.S. Raghavan, S. Gopalakrishnan, S.D. Shibulal, K. Dinesh and Ashok Arora, all former employees of Patni Computer Systems, started Infosys in Pune.

The company was started with meager initial capital of Rs 10,000 and was named Infosys Consultants. Murthy borrowed the sum from his wife Sudha Murthy. The front room of Murthy's home was the company's first office, although the registered office was Raghavan's home. The company did not have any computers till 1983 because they could not afford it. In 1983, Infosys moved to Bangalore when it got its first client, Data Basics Corporation from the United States. The company changed its name to Infosys Technologies Private Limited in April 1992 and to Infosys Technologies Limited when it became a public limited company in June 1992. Infosys shares were listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange in 1999. It became the first Indian company to be listed on Nasdaq. Its annual revenue reached US\$100 million in 1999, US\$1 billion in 2004 and US\$10 billion in 2017. Today Infosys is the second-largest Indian IT company after Tata Consultancy Services by 2021 revenue figures, with a revenue of over US\$14 billion. On 24 August 2021, Infosys became the fourth Indian company to cross \$100 billion in market capitalization. It uses a low-risk, global delivery model to accelerate schedules with a high degree of time and cost predictability. The company has over 53,000 employees worldwide. It would not be wrong to say that this global IT force is not slowing down anytime soon.

The Infosys logo consists of the word "Infosys" in a white, sans-serif font, with a registered trademark symbol (®) to the upper right of the 's'. The logo is set against a solid blue rectangular background.The GoPro logo features the word "GoPro" in a white, bold, sans-serif font. Below it, the tagline "Be a HERO." is written in a smaller white font. To the right of the tagline are four colored squares: a blue square, a light blue square, a dark blue square, and a white square.

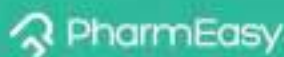
Whenever we see an action body cam today, our mind only thinks of one word - GoPro. Be it creating the most extravagant of shoots or simply recording a bicycle ride in the midst of the urban jungle, our handy little GoPro can do it all. Having the ability to capture the angles of professional equipment with the convenience of portability, GoPro has become a household name for the people seeking thrill and adventure. GoPro is the brainchild of American businessman Nick Woodman who founded the company in 2002.

He had been on a surfing trip in Australia, and wanted to record quality action photos of his surfing. However, cameras back then weren't exactly action friendly - one could not hold the camera while surfing, duh! Thus, Woodman conceived the idea of GoPro - which would provide small, body worn cameras that would record the user's experience in high definition. Needing the necessary capital to set up manufacturing units, Woodman started selling bead and shell belts out of his Volkswagen Van. He also moved back with his parents at the age of twenty six to save as much money as possible. He did several part time jobs from sending bulk emails to driving trucks across the USA. Alongside all of this, he worked tirelessly developing his camera and perfecting its design. Finally, he bootstrapped \$10,000 through his efforts, and GoPro sold its first camera system in 2004. Today, GoPro has a market evaluation of about 1.7 billion dollars, and has become one of the most sought after gadgets of the generation.

Great Learning is a Gurgaon based Ed-tech company. Founded by Mohan Lakshmaraju and Hari Krishnan Nair in 2013, Great Learning offers a technology platform that helps working professionals and students to develop their skills in handling emerging technologies like Data Science, Artificial Intelligence, Cloud Computing and Cybersecurity. Back in 2013 the company started their operations with only thirty students. A Stanford graduate and former India MD of Tiger Global Management, Mohan was associated with



Chennai based Great Lakes Institute of Management, where he met Hari Krishnan Nair. Together they co-founded Great Learning. The first six months were spent developing the edtech startup's technology platform and its first product- a post-graduate blended learning program in business analytics. Their first student was a female employee from Accenture, who wanted to pursue a course in business analytics for a fee of Rs 3 lakhs. The eleven month course was designed as a substitute for MBA, to cater to people who can't leave their job for higher studies. In 2016, Arjun Nair, an MBA holder from MIT, joined as the third co-founder. Great Learning crafts their programs with the help of institutions like Stanford, McCombos Business School, etc. Almost 40 percent of Great Learning's business Today comes from international learners. They roped in Virat Kohli as their brand ambassador in September 2020 in its first major marketing activity. The online higher education market is expected to grow ten times by 2025 and reach \$5 billion. Hence, Great Learning is one potential billion dollar bootstrapped startups that are going to dominate the education segment in the coming decade.




PharmEasy is a healthcare technology firm that was launched in 2015 and is situated in Mumbai, India. The company's services concentrate upon providing consumers with medicine delivery, diagnostic sample collecting, and remote healthcare consultations. This is a critical service in India right now, as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a huge impact. The company's two top executives are Dhaval Shah and Saumil Parekh. PharmEasy's founders have set their sights on becoming India's greatest healthcare delivery

company. The founder of PharmEasy, Dharmil Sheth, and his doctor friend, Dr. Dhaval Shah, came up with the idea of creating an online pharmacy. They both saw the potential of technology in the healthcare industry, and it was this notion that sparked the creation of PharmEasy in 2014. The mission of the organisation was to fulfill its purpose of delivering everything linked to healthcare to customers' doorsteps. Currently, their services extend to almost 98% of Indian pincodes. In terms of obtaining outside investment, the company has had tremendous success. A total of \$651.5 million has been raised so far from a group of 25 investors. PharmEasy is a privately held corporation that hires new employees every other day. In India's healthcare industry, digitization has become a necessary component. Every step in the sector has been digitised, from organising a doctor's visit to delivering results and drugs. E-pharmacies like PharmEasy deserve a lot of the credit for this endeavour. Because of these e-pharmacies, India's "health commerce industry" is expanding at unprecedented rates.

# Impactful Followings


Instagram took some time to establish itself as one of the most effective channels for generating a positive return on investment, but now that it has, marketers everywhere are eager to learn from the finest Instagram business accounts. Instagram, like many other social media platforms, was once derided as an online playground for kids with little business or advertising potential. That impression was short-lived. Today, Instagram is an online marketing powerhouse. Here are some pages that you should definitely follow for knowledge in Marketing, Finance or Entrepreneurial fields-



@officialsocialsamosa 

Follow


*Social Samosa* is a media/news company related to advertising and marketing. It posts about online publications and reporting campaigns and ongoing trends. It posts videos narrating how a common man's dilemma of financial choices and lifestyle can be addressed with a one stop destination. It posts contents with reference to memes which makes it very appealing to its Gen-Z audience. This way it is both interesting and informative.

@entrepreneur 

Follow


As the name implies, their Instagram page '*Entrepreneurs*' promotes entrepreneurs from all over the world. It shares inspiring stories of people who have overcome adversity to become successful entrepreneurs. The page discusses the qualities that a good entrepreneur should possess. Experienced entrepreneurs share tips on how to manage and run a business. If you are an aspiring entrepreneur and want to feel inspired and learn as much as possible this is the page to follow. It is a source of powerful information for anyone who wants to create a startup.



@bloombergquint 

Follow

The financial revolution in India has peaked in recent years. All of us are taught how to make money, with little impetus on what to do with the money once we get it. *Bloomberg Quint* is a media/news company related to finance. It is India's premier multi-platform business and financial news company. Following this page is the best way to stay up-to-date when it comes to financial news in the country. With this page, you keep up with the latest financial news in an engaging and eye-catching way, which makes it stand out from the crowd.

@harvard\_business\_review 

Follow

*Harvard Business Review* is the destination for those interested in smart management thinking. It provides rigorous insights on strategy, innovation and leadership, for global leaders from the world's best business and management experts. The audience finds its content easy to follow and participate in. Information is presented in an easy-to-understand manner, whether it is in their feed posts, stories, or story ads. Harvard Business Review is an unrivaled source of cutting-edge articles from industry experts giving readers access to leadership and management tools and techniques that are critical for success and survival in today's global business environment.



# Impactful Followings



@movesofmarketing

Follow

**Moves of Marketing** analyses marketing and advertising content on social media and gives insightful reviews on them. It presents its contents in a fun way which can be easily understandable. This page keeps track of all the latest internet trends and how companies are using those trends for their benefit. It raises public awareness about key issues related to marketing and elevates the status of tiny street sellers. It also provides information on cryptocurrency and the stock market, as well as updates on new product launches.

@startup.pedia

Follow

India is a vast country with 28 different states. It is due to this reason many startups with immense potential do not get the proper exposure and the attention they deserve. This is where the Instagram page **Startup Pedia** comes in. It provides insight and perspective on the Indian startup ecosystem. Startup Pedia can be a great source of inspiration for the would-be entrepreneurs as it shares the most inspiring stories of innovators and startups of our country. They create awareness about these entrepreneurs and startups that would have otherwise been absolutely invisible to an average Indian. If you want your daily dose of motivation, you now know where to head to on social media!



@themoneyroll

Follow

As a student, one spends hours scrolling on Instagram. What if we tell you that exploring a certain page will increase your productivity and provide you with an education like no other. **The Money Roll** is a page where you will learn something new every day. This page has it all, from giving you life hacks to offering connections to excellent websites that will help you improve your grades. With all the excitement and trends going on, the page keeps its information interesting and fresh, making you want to give it a try. So, start taking right use of Instagram now!



@barelyopinionated

Follow

**Barely Opinionated** gives all Business, Social and Political news updates and topics related to India, without giving their opinions on it. As a result, the readers are able to form their own conclusions based on the information. They also claim to be a fair community where fair discussions and open-minded conversations about various topics are encouraged. From Inflation to Cryptocurrency, and from guiding readers on how to find out when one's investment will double to talking about the business situation in India, they have covered it all. Follow this page to stay up to speed on everything that is necessary to know.



@stockmarket\_times

Follow

**Stock Market Times** is a page for all the stock market enthusiasts. Being interactive, the page also provides essential information in time for followers to stay informed. To know all the current ongoing in the stock market and the finance sector, this is the page to follow. With the content being spread across all realms of Instagram, this page is an eye catcher. Being bored while learning is not an option when you come across this page because you will be hooked!



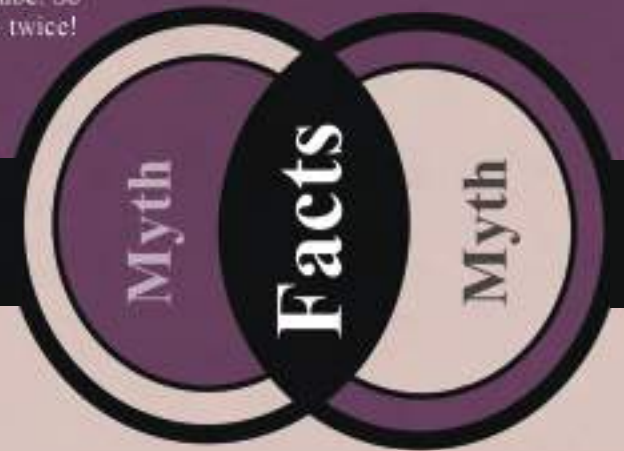
The majority of people make career assumptions. These preconceptions are frequently based on perceptions individuals receive from relatives and friends, social media, and workers and jobs they observe in their daily lives. When looking for a job, first impressions are a wonderful place to start because they help people see possibilities. At the same time, first impressions can be deceiving. They just show a small part of reality, or even worse, none at all. That is when first impressions of a career become into career myths. Given below, we have debunked four highly deceptive career related myths and they are as follows.

## Myth 1 : An MBA is needed to start a successful business

“An MBA will sort your life” is perhaps the most overstated notion in the business world. On the contrary, can we say that all MBAs are capable of running successful businesses? Or are all successful entrepreneurs from top B-schools? No, history shows that a management or business administration degree is not necessary to run/start a successful venture. The likes of Tatas and Ambanis are either B-school dropouts or have never opted for an MBA. Not to be misunderstood, a professional post-graduation degree gets your basics right and teaches you how to execute plans and strategies correctly. However, who wants to learn these skills and start a business overnight? With globalization and accessibility to resources online, there is no longer a need to enroll in a degree of such high fees. Instead, hit the ground running and use that money in starting your own venture. Starting a business demands quality skills, not a quality degree. You can acquire these skills sitting at home with little to no money through online mediums like Udemy, Coursera or even Youtube. So before you pay a lot of money just to learn how to make it, think twice!



# MYTHS



## Myth 2 : A leader should treat all members the same

“The key to successful leadership is influence, not authority.”  
- Kenneth. H Blanchard

Rookie leaders make the error of assuming that they should treat all the members of their group equally, despite their different workstyle, strengths, shortcomings, instincts and skills. Such an approach is proved to have a negative effect on productivity and promotes a toxic work environment. There is a difference between a dictator and a leader and the aim of the latter should be to create a wholesome atmosphere where people can learn from each other's work and feel free to approach their boss at any juncture. A good leader should treat all members “fairly”, not equally. One should treat every professional with respect and courtesy, whilst tailoring your leadership style to their individual requirements and demands. Some people might require their head to give them full autonomy while working to provide them with superlative outputs while others' might need a more hands-on approach. This requires a confident and secure leader who is flexible and open enough to use different approaches with people which are best suited for them and the circumstance.



### Myth 3: Bigger the degree better the Candidate

In today's workplace, demonstrating your abilities is more vital than having a bigshot degree. There has been a huge movement at numerous organizations where a college diploma is no longer required to be a part of the interview. The number of degrees a person holds, the grades he achieves in school/college, or the formal management programs that he attends have no impact whatsoever on how effectively he will perform when he has a task at hand. Academic performance is not a valid criterion for assessing managerial ability. Students believe that completing a four-year course, in turn getting the burden of tens of thousand student loans is the only way to get a job in elite companies.

NO MORE. In an interview, Tim Cook stated that in 2018 employment included people who did not have a four-year degree but possessed the skills that were required for the job.

Siemens CEO Barbara Humpton said in an interview and I quote "All too often, job requisitions will say they require a four-year degree, when in fact there's nothing about the job that truly requires a four-year degree - it merely helped our hiring managers sort of weed through the crowd and get a smaller qualified candidate group"



Prominent companies like Google, Apple hire employees who have the skills required to get the job done and LinkedIn played a major role, revealing that some of the heavyweight companies do not require employees to have a college degree and some positions open for them are marketing representatives, mechanical designers and electronic technicians.

## DEBUNKED

### Myth 4 : Learning happens only in classrooms



Not only in the classroom, but also in our everyday lives, we learn. This is because learning entails more than just gaining academic knowledge. Learning, on the other hand, refers to the acquisition of any form of knowledge that might provide us with instructions on how to act. The information we learn in school is undeniably helpful and established, and it has the potential to widen our minds. However, school years are very short in comparison to a person's life duration, thus there are a lot more things to do.

They not only broaden their knowledge and abilities, but they also interact with their peers and teachers. As a result, they will be able to further develop their personalities.

Is this to say that we can only receive good and relevant information for our future lives in the classroom? Obviously not. If we trace the origins of classroom information, we will see that it comes from a variety of sources.

Take, for example, the law of gravity, which we now learn in school. Newton was the first to find it. When he was struck by a falling apple, he realized the concept of gravity. This example demonstrates that the knowledge we are gaining in the classroom is a collection of personal experiences that have been summarized and structured.

# UMESH YADAV

Interviewed by: The Editorial Committee | Mode: Online

An Indian Cricketer who currently plays for the Vidarbha cricket team and the Indian national team. A right-arm fast bowler, Yadav has played for Vidarbha at the domestic level since 2008 and is the first player from the team to have played Test cricket. He was the highest wicket-taker for India and third highest overall in the 2015 ICC Cricket World Cup.

1. If you could be a part of one historic match, which one would it be and why? Who were the players who inspired you to be a cricketer and a pace bowler?

It might be 2011 because if you go back to 1983, it is not possible. After all, at that time I was not born, so going back in time is not fair. So, I started watching matches and playing cricket, and I think 2011 because I saw my heroes like Sachin Tendulkar Ji, Virender Sehwag, Ashish Nehra, Zaheer Khan, Munaf Patel, Yuvraj Singh, Mahendra Singh Dhoni- everyone was there. That was the team that had a historical win at the World Cup, so definitely I would have liked to be a part of that team, and it would have been the best for me if I was.

When I started fast bowling, I watched Javagal Srinath Ji, Venkatesh Prasad, Zaheer Khan, Nehra Paaji, and Ajit Agarkar Ji they were my heroes because before that I had no idea about bowling. When I started fast bowling, I had an interest in it. It is not like I saw someone and wanted to become a fast bowler. Yes, many people admire fast bowlers, and I also admired a few- Zaheer Khan, Javagal Srinath, Ashish Nehra, Ajit Agarkar Ji and many more whom when you see, you feel good, have fun and get inspired. But when I started my journey, I never saw anyone and decided to become a fast bowler. It was a natural thing for me which I have been doing since my childhood.

2. In the 2015 World Cup, you were the highest wicket-taker for India and the third-highest wicket-taker in the tournament. Representing your country is a matter of immense pride and your performance was one of the reasons for India reaching the Semi-Final. What were your key takeaways from that tournament?

If I was to talk about the 2015 World Cup, then definitely, it was a pretty big tournament for me. All these are things you keep watching while you grow up. It is every player's dream to represent their own country and to play in a World Cup, which is such an important tournament for everyone. And when it comes to taking wickets, I was the third-highest wicket-taker in the 2015 World Cup and the highest wicket-taker in my team. So definitely, your contribution to your team is extremely important, and I gave in the best I could. It was not just because of me that the team reached its semi-finals, but because of all its members. A team is made up of all 16 members, 11 on the field, and 4

supporting outside, each of whose support and contribution is extremely important, and that is the reason we reached this far. This is why I feel that my performance and hardwork in the 2015 World Cup was for my team, and it was only because of everyone's performance that we reached this far.

3. Share the funniest on-field memory you could recall.

There have been many funny incidents and memories at the field. Once, there was a tournament against Australia, and I was standing at the mid-on, and I happened to be looking somewhere else when Pujara threw the ball which came right at me and hit me on my side face. Fortunately, I was wearing glasses, so the ball hit me on my glasses, which was funny. The celebrations after I used to take wickets in the form of run-outs were also hilarious. Once, before the world cup, we were playing a practice match at Adelaide. Shikhar tried to take a catch by diving. The catch went from his hand and ended up in mine as he did that. So, there are many such funny incidents, but these are definitely some of the memorable ones.

4. According to you, how has T20 impacted cricket over the years?

Definitely, T20 cricket has impacted a lot of people. The number of countries playing T20 matches has increased tremendously, and a lot of things have changed because of that. T20 cricket is a shorter form of cricket, as compared to test series; it is time-saving, which is why people enjoy watching T20 matches more. More than anything, I feel it has impacted the youngsters the most. T20 matches are growing at a fast pace, even changing the aura of Test Matches. Nowadays, we see players play test matches the way they would play a T20 Match. New emerging players also prefer T20 over test matches, as its results are shown in just a matter of 3 hours, whereas Test matches take 5 days.

5. Something many people might not know is that you have the record for the highest strike rate in a test inning from when you hit 31 runs off 10 balls against South Africa in 2019, how much importance do you give to batting? Is honing your batting skills an important aim as a bowler in modern-day cricket?

Those people who follow Test Cricket closely know that I have the record for the highest strike rate in a test inning. It happens so that sometimes the player can hit big shots and sometimes he gets out. When it comes to batting skills, they are unquestionably crucial since, in right situations where the team has lost early wickets, you must stand on the pitch and form a decent partnership for the team.



6. In the last few years, the Indian fast bowling set-up has been one of the finest in the world, especially in Test cricket. How do you as a player keep yourself motivated and ready amidst the healthy competition there exists within the dressing room?

When I started playing, there were definitely situations where a few bowlers were bowling well but others were not able to bowl that well. It felt like you did not have bowlers to bowl fast when we went on foreign tours. But from that time, my partners like Shami, Ishant, Bumrah, Siraj and Shardul have increased their impact on the game. When we got such good bowlers and we experienced their performance in the matches we played, we were sure that our bowling attack is good and we are consistent. It is said in cricket, "when 11 play, it will not be everyone's day", so if someone does well, someone will do poorly as well but in that situation, how you support your teammates is important. When you bowl in pairs, just like in batting, if one batsman is playing well, timing the ball well and plays long, the other must support him, only then can there be a partnership. In the last 4-5 years, we have bowled in partnerships and whoever has gotten chances to take wickets has taken wickets. This is very important, one of the things we have learned in the last 4-5 years is how to bowl in a partnership in any situation. This has made our bowling attack great. The youngsters know that there is healthy competition since the attack is good. They know that they need to do better and better till they get a chance. When you play with good bowlers and a good team, your brain knows that you need to keep getting better to get more chances. This is a healthy sign because it makes you push yourself and work hard. When you know that the situation is easy and there is no one to take your spot, it is actually negative for you since you end up putting in less effort, the fact that there are always people lining up to take your spot makes you push harder and get better and better.

7. Being a fast bowler, especially a raw pacer, players like you are very prone to injuries. How do you bounce back from such situations and is there a way for a sportsman to avoid them?

Yes, it is true that fast bowlers are very prone to injuries and sometimes it becomes very hard for the player to deal with the injury as it gets worse and worse. The problem worsens when the player has just recovered from a prior injury and has worked hard to earn a spot in the squad, only to suffer from the same injury again, requiring him to seek treatment and, despite his best efforts, missing the game owing to the injury. According to me, the player has to be mentally strong to deal with such injuries, and know which part of his body is prone to such injuries as well as the body's recovery process and the exercises which will help him. Being a professional player, it is important for one to think like a professional because injuries are a part of the game. Instead of thinking in the back of my mind that I may suffer from an injury, the player must train hard and give his 100% per cent and enjoy the game.

8. You have mentioned the importance of your coach Subroto Banerjee several times during your career. What is the best life lesson you have learnt from him?

I have been playing the game for many years and there are many ups and downs I have faced in my career. During hard times, you need someone who makes you confident and ignores your bad performance and talks about the positives that you have achieved. Though the person is noticing everything he takes no notice of it and talks about your hard work, motivates you and keeps you pushing to achieve your goals. Since, sometimes it so happens in sports that in spite of your hard work you are unable to achieve the target, as a result of which your morale goes down. It is during these times you need a coach who can guide you as well as help you to improve your mistakes and support you constantly, allowing you to always have a positive mindset. Whenever I was in such a situation, I used to talk to Subroto Sir and he always boosted me as a mentor and helped me to come out of such a situation by telling me to work hard.

9. What has been your personal experience playing during the pandemic keeping in mind the stern regulations of a bio-bubble? How difficult was it for you to get back to the game routine post-covid? Was staying at home difficult for you or a much-required break?

The pandemic situation has been quite frustrating for all of us, as the routine of our life got completely disturbed. As we were restricted to our homes and were not able to go out with our family or enjoy our social life our mindset got disrupted. Whenever we used to play a match and come back we were completely restricted in our rooms and therefore there was no source of refreshment. Living around the boundaries of the room and being confined to the bio-bubble was of course boring, but the pandemic has created a kind of situation where following all the necessary precautions has become important therefore we have to deal with it.

10. Representing one's country on an international level is a matter of great honour as well as immense pressure. It feels like you are responsible for the happiness of a million people. How does this sense of responsibility affect your game and how do you deal with this pressure?

We are honoured to be representing our country and we know that this is a big achievement for any cricketer or sportsman to play for their country, there is nothing bigger than this. We have a responsibility to go there and do better and try to win games as much as possible. We know that everyone is behind us. Obviously, all our supporters and fans are happy when we win games and when we lose, just like us, they are also sad and upset, and this is what connects us, players, to their fans. There is definitely the pressure that when you enter the ground you have to win the game because millions of people have their emotions and happiness attached to this (cricket). We try our level best to win as many matches as possible and give that happiness to your country and our fans.

11. Mental health has been a much talked about issue recently. What is it that you do to ensure you are in a good headspace to put out such match-winning performances?

This (bio bubble) has been going on for quite some time now. Everyone has heard that many players have taken rest and time off from cricket citing mental health. Mental health is definitely very important. When there are things going on in your life and in your mind and you are not capable of finding out what the causes are, you become internally disturbed, which makes it difficult to focus on cricket or any other sport. To maintain this (mental health) you need to have self-belief and the support of your family and friends so that you can enter bio bubbles and maintain yourself at such a level that you can perform for your team and your country by playing well in the matches. There are always rules and ideas for getting out of tough situations. You need to decide what works for you, for example, travelling with your family. You need to realise what might work for you when you feel bored or depressed so that you can escape such things and relax.

12. What is your message for the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?

Believe in the process, because the process is one thing you can do better at. I think that it is very important to believe in the process. You cannot control winning or losing since it is not in your hand but the process is. So, believe in the process and focus.





# JUBIN NAUTIYAL

An Indian Playback Singer and Performer

Interviewed by: The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview: Online

**1. We have watched you perform in a number of concerts, and you have now become the heartthrob of the entire country. How was the experience of your first on-stage performance, and how has your journey since then been?**

I remember the chills and overwhelming feeling when I went on stage for the first time. It was just so much to take in, seeing so many people gathered and cheering, hooting for you, the feeling is so strong that I can't express in words. I can say that every live performances till this date gives me the same feeling and it's one of the best feeling in the world.

**2. A.R. Rahman has been an instrumental figure in your life. Apart from Rahman Sir, who have been musical inspirations from you?**

I was fortunate to meet him at an early stage in my journey and I followed advice Rahman Sahab told me about how Mumbai city has its own influences on a person's personality and said I have original voice quality, but I was too young to be dabbling in the city of dreams. He advised me to wait for another couple of years to get that maturity in my voice. When I was 21, I did a charity concert in my hometown and while singing I realised some changes in my tone, pitch, expression, diction and it felt right. That time, I recalled what Rahman Sahab had told me and I told my parents that it was my time to go back to Mumbai to pursue my dream.



**3. Starting from different genres to different languages, you are covering everything in your career. Amidst all the success, is there any memory or experience in particular that motivated you to keep going? What would be a piece of advice would you like to share with the youth of today?**

I think my journey till now has been interesting. I have faced up and downs, and I learnt a lot about myself in the process. I think how humble you are in your ups and how graceful you are during your downs is what dictates what kind of human you are. I think music career has taught me a lot, and it has taught me to be like a spring. The more you push me down the higher I'll jump. That's the kind of passion you need to make anything possible in life.

**4. Now that you are one of the most successful singers in this country, how do you think your parents played a part in it?**

My parents are everything to me, without their constant support and love it wouldn't be possible to achieve this. My interest for music happened at an early age and as I am not from music family, they supported my decision to pursue music and like strong pillars always stood by me in thick and thin. They are the ones who have been with me in every part of my journey, encouraging me if I ever self-doubted, pushing me to do better. I am what I am today is because of them.

**6. What is your perception about the reality television singing shows being held at the present day on a national level? Do you feel these shows act as a platform for an aspiring singer's success in India?**

It has given opportunities and a platform to many aspiring singers and musicians to showcase their talent to the world. Their art has got recognition through it, expanded their knowledge and open doors for few in film music. Success doesn't depend on opportunity, it's solely depends on the person's hardwork and how they make the most of each opportunities. If one can keep evolving and moulding with changes, learning new skills, new techniques and get better at your art, put your heart and soul into your craft, then it will all work out.

**5. You have always said that you want to explore as many genres and languages as you can. How do you feel musicians can evolve their craft with full devotion?**

I believe, there is only thing that works is your craft, your art, how better you evolve and mould yourself according to music. Now a days with advancement in technology, it has helped us but with constant change in techniques it's very important to learn and understand the roots of music. Music itself is so sacred and innocent that no artificial formula applies to it. The only thing that works is music that you create from your heart and put your soul into it and deliver each aspect of your song with honesty. Trust me, it'll touch others heart and soul and that will bring you success. So just keep working to get better without any fear or doubts in your art.

7. Right from when you started in the industry 10 years ago, till now, what do you think has evolved in music? How do you mould yourself with evolving music?

It's been 10 years since I formally entered the music industry for sure, but it is about the 20 years before that. I think music was not something that I found in between my journey, but it has always been there with me. I have tried different forms of art like mix martial art (got my black belt), air rifle shooting (played Indian Nationals). I was always a sucker for hikes and trekking and all the adventure sports. Also, I did my MBA and come from a business background. Honestly, I could have been any of the above things or a business man or a politician as my father is a senior politician in Uttarakhand (my native). But music was something that kept me going and that one hour with my guitar before going to sleep was everything. I always wanted to do something that makes me happy. And after all exploration, I think music was something that truly made me happy and decided to do it for rest of my life. Even if I was not as big as I am today, I would be doing music. I still would be sitting in my room or in a small cafe somewhere or somewhere not, to play some guitar and just mix music.

8. You have voiced a song that has been listed in Billboard Global US charts. How do you feel about this achievement: expanding your horizon of performance as an artist?

I'm delighted to see the love and appreciation the song has received from fans across globe. I try to put my best skills into every song. I listen to lot of new music, learn from it, keep evolving myself to get better at my craft. I believe that's the only way one can get ahead in their life, with constant learning.

9. You are both a singer and an outstanding performer. Can you tell us how different it is to sing in a recording studio and live on stage? How do you prepare yourself for both these situations?

There is a lot of difference performing live and singing a playback. But one thing common in both is that as an artist you have to give in your 100 percent.

10. Choosing any unconventional career path in life is a difficult step that not everyone can take. How did you overcome failures, self-doubt and setbacks and what always helped you get back on track?

My family and friends have been constant support in my journey. We all have phases in life but having people around that understand you is very important. I'm blessed to have my loved ones close to me who are my biggest cheerleaders and critics.

11. What is your message to the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Kolkata?

To all the students of St. Xavier's college I would like to say, Make art to express not to impress. When you're expressing it right, you will impress people but your purpose of doing it should be done to express what's inside you. It is more of an internal state than external. Grow and learn from your mistakes, take inspiration from surroundings, get better in whatever you do. Life will push you down 99 times, but you have to get up at hundredth time. Stop struggling and start having fun with your craft or work.

## RAPID FIRE QUESTIONS

1. We often listen to your music to feel better, Which musicians are likely to appear on your playlist?

I love listening to Kishore da, Rafi sahab and Nusrat sahab. They are magical and I enjoy listening to them. Apart from that, I listen to Amy Winehouse, John Mayer, Jason Mraz, Damien Rice and many more.

2. Which is the song that is closest to your heart?

My songs? Well I can't select one, my all songs are close to my heart. But there are some songs that teach you in the process while recording/creating them and for me I would say two songs that taught me alot about my voice and myself. One is 'Tujhe Kina Chahne Lage Hum' from Kabir Singh and 'Zindagi Kuch Toh Bata' from Bajrangi Bhaijaan.



# HARISH KOHLI

President and Managing Director, Acer.

International Age, The Editorial Board | Madani | Interview | Online



**The youth today has an awakened sense of responsibility and independent nature to achieve great things in life. According to you, can an inexperienced but academically and sensibly mature person with a few years of work experience be a good manager/entrepreneur in his 20s?**

Absolutely. For the millennial generation or Gen Y, the whole world is in their capable hands and they stand out for their knowledge in technology. They are the largest, educated, and most diverse cohort in history, and acquire creative power that can reshape the world. Many do not realise their full potential as an individual, so grow they need acknowledgement and support to develop their skills and abilities that will prepare them to make the impact they want to create. Your age does not define your capabilities, your actions and thoughts make the difference. I also feel EQ is very important to be a manager or entrepreneur so I encourage everyone to develop that at an early stage.

**You are someone who values sustainable growth, what do you think is the future of 'right to repair' considering that Windows products are generally very easy to repair and upgrade already?**

The right to repair and right to upgrade movement followed by Acer is another step towards sustainability that helps our customers to upgrade their gadgets with necessary components of a product that increases longevity and minimizes electronic waste. We have launched our Neo series of laptops and IT products which is made of recycled plastic with easy upgradability. More than a trend this movement is a

**You attained a degree in Chemistry before pursuing business management. What prompted you to take the plunge and find your passion in management?**

I was always good at science subjects, but my passion always lay in sales and management. The art of selling is a fine art and it's an art which I fell in love with and I started to excel right from my college and internship days. Then the right opportunity came after college from HCL and then subsequently in companies like PCL, TATA Elxsi, etc. where I grew into leadership roles before I joined Acer as the GM of Sales 22 years back. Now as President and Managing Director of Acer I feel that it is your passion for your job which

**How do you think the government's Make-in-India program will help your business? What are your thoughts on this initiative?**

The Make in India initiative will give a strong momentum to India's manufacturing competitiveness and leverage the production-linked incentive (PLI) by the Government of India. The PLI for IT hardware brought by the Government of India is a game-changer that will have the advantage to increase domestic value addition and significantly position India as a key export hub. The impetus to PC manufacturing is particularly significant as it can help reduce imports which have become all the more important as their usage increased rapidly amid the Covid-19 restrictions. At Acer, we are already manufacturing Laptops, Desktop PCs, All-in-One PCs and Tablets in India. Acer has always believed in developing a local manufacturing ecosystem to deliver world-class products. Acer brings in the global know-how and processes to manufacture high-tech electronic products in the PC and tablet category. We believe that this key initiative will help to grow the electronic

**You have been at Acer for about 22 years now. From the year 2000 to the pandemic, how do you feel the Indian technology market has evolved, and how has Acer contributed to this fast-paced**

Digital Transformation has become imperative today. While companies have embraced information technology solutions for years, the pace of this acceptance has never been so quick and ardent. Every company that wishes to thrive needs to put digital first. The pandemic shortened the digital. Acer is one of the first few companies to realize the importance of transforming itself into a technology-first business. The basic premise of the company is to create meaningful innovations – beyond just creating new technologies and solutions which enable consumers and enterprises to do more, do better and do faster in a simple but powerful manner. Acer has moved beyond just being a computing-only brand. At Acer, we are proud to be leading the smart technology innovators built to improve the world of business. The fact is, it's no longer enough for a PC company to just make PCs. And Acer has evolved much beyond our capabilities which includes our path-breaking products with innovative technologies. Acer dedicates to optimizing the existing products, continuously innovating to bring in new product lines and build new categories, integrating cloud platforms and services by developing software and combining with hardware. The company is bringing 5G tech-enabled laptops to the market that offers much faster data download and upload speed. For AI-based technology, Acer is bringing customized solutions across industries. Through AI and IoT, we are determined to offer a smarter and more convenient lifestyle for people. Acer is also venturing into lifestyle and healthcare spaces and growing into a multi-pronged global tech conglomerate.

**You are someone who values sustainable growth, what do you think is the future of 'right to repair' considering that Windows products are generally very easy to repair and upgrade already?**

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**You mentioned in an interview that you prefer reading autobiographies whenever you get a chance to read; which ones would you recommend to us students and why? You have mentioned that if COVID would have vanished you would like to meet Elon Musk, what quality of his do you admire the most?**

One of the books I read recently, and I think would be inspiring for the youngsters out there would be Soul Surfer by Bethany Hamilton. At the age of 13, surfer, Bethany Hamilton lost her arm in a shark attack. She thought her life and her life as a surfer was over. Despite the hurdles, she found the determination to start surfing again in her style and proved that World Surfing Championships were still within her reach. Her life is inspiring especially to youngsters to overcome hurdles by finding their inner passion and determination.

I have always admired Elon Musk's process of work especially his ability to overcome disappointment. Just like any of us, he has been through several failures in his career. However, has never let any of these failures stop him from achieving what he is today. It is remarkable to see how he has fought these failures and has turned them into success. He is a pioneer in the industry who is passionate about innovation and technology. He leads by example which is something we all need to adopt in our lives.

**You have played an instrumental role in two great start-ups that have significantly impacted your career. How should the current generation, where start-up is the new tradition, manage their ideas amidst the ongoing pandemic situation and build a successful business?**

Startups are the key drivers of our economic growth and employment generator. In India, startups play a vital role in the field of technology and entrepreneurship, they are also a catalyst for revolutionary innovation. During the pandemic, startups have continued to play this critical role and have helped in a smooth transition towards digitization in the field of education, health, etc.

Starting a business is quite a struggle; however, the result of a successful business always makes it worthwhile. Besides, it is never too late or too early to start your own business. Courage, leadership skills, team player, risk-taking, and adaptability are some of the qualities that you need to possess to start your own business.

**Acer has been dominant in both the consumer and enterprise sectors amidst the increasing need for computing devices across various segments. How have you managed to be so strong in so many sectors?**

Acer has been in the industry for almost half a century and has not restricted us to manufacturing computer devices. Consistency and Innovation in consumer technology are two things that have enabled us to sustain and thrive in the industry. Understanding

your customers' needs and enabling them with the right technology at the right time is important. Especially with the pandemic, usage of tech and tech-enabled products has spiked over the last few years. Companies have also adapted themselves to temporary and permanent solutions to meet the changing demands and requirements of the consumers more quickly than they would have before the pandemic.

**There was a massive economic recession during the peak of the pandemic. A lot of companies suffered, but Acer managed to show consistent growth. How did you manage to turn this obstacle into an opportunity?**

This was a global crisis as no country was spared. The pandemic was at its peak and countries especially those that relied on travel, tourism, hospitality, and entertainment were affected badly. However, with people engaging in more work from home and learning from home, at Acer, we saw a significant spike in requirements for tech-enabled lifestyle products like laptops, purifiers, accessories, etc. During these difficult times, our strategy and promise is to support and empower our channel partners by offering industry-relevant solutions that they can effectively leverage in the Indian market. Also, at the same time, we aimed to train them and help them design and build sustainable and profitable business models. Hence, a lot of our focus is on being close to the reseller partners, understanding their needs, and empowering them with the right set of knowledge and tools. This will help them to stay up to speed with the latest products and offerings and serve their customers with the right products keeping in mind current consumer requirements.

**Given your background in technology, do you believe Metaverse will be the next big thing? What are your opinions on it? According to you, what can we expect from the Indian gaming and Esports industry in the near future?**

New technologies continue to question our traditional perception beyond boundaries with innovative applications across sectors. Initially, the internet changed how we communicated with people and now we have the internet in every corner of the world. As Satya Nadella says, "metaverse is essentially the next internet: the embodied presence". He also says "It is about being able to put people, places, and things in a physics engine and then having all the people, places, things in the physics engine relate to each other."

According to the reports online gamers in India are estimated to grow from 360 million in 2020 to 510 million in 2022 and India is the fourth largest online gaming market globally. The industry is growing faster than most digital sectors ranging from movies to music. It's no longer a male-dominated sector; women are equally contributing to the e-gaming field and have taken the influencer positions. Since 2019, we have seen a rise of female gamers and the number is increasing by the day.

**What is your message for the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?**

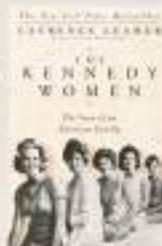
As Muhammad Ali said, "Even the greatest was once a beginner don't be afraid to take that first step". The world is full of opportunities, you just need to make the first step towards it, and the rest will follow.

I wish all the students and faculty lots of success in the future. May the college bring the best out of you to be successful in your lives.



## A journalist and a New York Times bestselling author, best known for his trilogy on the Kennedys : The Kennedy Women, The Kennedy Men, and Sons of Camelot.

*Interviewed by : The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview : Online*



**1. You have worked in a factory, coal mine and also as a Peace Corps volunteer in Nepal. Firstly, how did you eventually decide to be an author and secondly do these experiences of yours impact your writing?**

You can't write if you don't have experiences worth writing about. You don't have to be Hemingway killing lions on a safari in Africa. Working in a nursing home is as great an experience. I've had a treasure of experiences and I draw on them every day.

**2. In the 21st Century, there are a lot of authors and journalists who are confident enough to share their views on politics and pop culture. This was not the case 20 years ago, you were one of those who decided to get your teeth into this rarified world. What were some challenges that you faced and are they still prevalent according to you?**

You just have to decide one day your ideas are as worthwhile as anyone else who puts them on there. I was shy and insecure and it took me a long time to realize that. We're in a world now in the States of nothing but mindless opinion, palaver that has little meaning. One must try to cut through that.

**3. Your works are always filled with immaculate detail about the setting, people and the era in which they are based. How important is it to place these intricacies in a book and how do you achieve it?**

Details are the key and the only way to get them is to be incredibly observant. The large ideas will come almost magically if you get those details.

**4. As an author one receives both praise and criticism which sometimes feels overwhelming. Being the author of a best-seller, how have you dealt with situations of both appreciation and censure?**

Look on Amazon. Every product no matter how good it is has critics who condemn it as largely worthless. That includes books. I don't mind being criticized when I can learn from it. I hate idiotic assaults from sad people who have nothing else to do. My new book, Capote's Women, has gotten largely five-star reviews but there are a couple one-star reviews. One of them is from a person who only gives one-star reviews. What does that say?

**5. In one of your interviews, you said "you have to build a new group of audience with every new book of yours", should this be a conscious effort of every author or will it be an outcome of one's exploration of different subjects?**

I would have sold more books if I did what John Grisham does. He writes books that are similar enough that he builds from the same audience. I get bored doing the same thing, and my books are so different that in part I always need a new audience.

**6. We live in a much different time than when the Kennedys were at the peak of their power. Today the media is anxious to break any story detailing the sordid exploits of any politician, but over forty years ago they would help cover up the various scandals of the Kennedy family, including relationships with organized crime. What are your thoughts on the change in the media's attitude towards politicians?**

I believe in absolute freedom and it is being challenged as never before. Despite all the excess and negativity, it's worth it knowing so much more about our leaders. My generation grew up learning fairy tales about America. Now our young people have a shot at the truth.

**7. What do you know now that you wish you would have known at the beginning of your writing or publishing journey?**

I'm starting a new book now and it's like I know nothing. I sit in front of my computer desperately trying to figure out how to write.

**8. Do you believe in writer's block? If yes, how do you deal with it?**

Writing is solving one problem after another. Writer's bloc is trying to solve the wrong problem, focusing on the wrong issue the wrong way. To get beyond it simply ask another question, break the subject in two, do whatever you have to do to see the problem in a different way.

**9. Your writings reflect a very strong and captivating narrative style that keeps the readers engrossed. What were some of the books you read that helped you find your true interest and passion? What are some of the books you suggest nascent authors should read?**

I got into journalism in the late sixties at the high point of narrative magazine writing. People like Norman Mailer, Tom Wolfe and Gay Talese were writing these pieces so good that one waited desperately for the magazines featuring them to arrive. I can't say what a would be writer should read but he should read a lot learning whatever he can.

**10. What is your message to the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?**

The great days of the United States are probably behind us. The great days of India are likely ahead. You are so fortunate to be smart, educated young Indians at this juncture in history. The world is yours.

# WORK ORGANISING TOOLS

The interesting idea that order and chaos are not always diametrically opposed is at the heart of Chaos Theory. In fact, chaotic systems are a hybrid of the two: they appear to behave in an unpredictable and chaotic manner, but inside there is a perfectly deterministic set of equations ticking away like a clock. It is a set of mathematical tools that lets us create beautiful, well-ordered structures out of a sea of chaos. Work Organizing Tools make it possible for a group of two or more individuals to work together and achieve a common goal or target. It allows teams to complete tasks more quickly and efficiently, and it can also stimulate innovation and creativity. Although there are many non-technical solutions accessible, such as post-it notes, paper, whiteboards, and flip charts, there are a few technical applications too that are useful.

**TRELLO** is a collaboration tool that is ideal for tackling and forming all your tasks. This program allows you to visualize and track your ideas effortlessly. The platform is ideal for group projects, as it can be used to smoothly coordinate and arrange every bit of work. It helps to keep a track on information such as what is being worked on, who is working on what and what progress a particular project is making



**TRELLO**

**EVERNOTE** is a powerful and keeping tool which helps to write all the notes effectively and synchronise and organise tasks well. Evernote organizes the notes into Notebooks, which are essentially file folders. With multiple other features and app integrations, such as note tags and Evernote Web Clipper browser extension this surely is something one doesn't want to miss out on.



**EVERNOTE**

**GOOGLE TASKS** has got to be the #1 supporter when it comes to multiplying productivity. It allows us to frame and create simple, yet detailed To - Do lists . One can create multiple lists, assign dates to items, add additional notes to a task and assign multiple subtasks below a parent task. By integrating a task into their Gmail calendar, one can drag and drop emails onto their to-do list, modify and check off the ones they have finished using. Google Tasks is now sleeker and easier to integrate into the work routine thanks to the revised Gmail interface.



**GOOGLE TASKS**

For an organisation or a team, **ASANA** will be anyone's go-to work manager. It is a web and mobile application designed to help teams organize, track, and manage their work and it simplifies team-based work management. Asana helps teams orchestrate work, from small projects to strategic initiatives. Teams may use it to build projects, assign work to peers, set deadlines, and communicate directly about tasks. Reporting tools, file attachments, calendars, and other useful features make Asana one of the best work organising tools.



**ASANA**

**AIRTABLE** is one of the most important organisational tools for the office. It maintains a track of one's work, not only allowing one to communicate with their team and directors, but also receive feedback and guidance. By linking the application to the internet, a track of the company's major databases and SEO can be kept. The fields in an Airtable table are similar to the cells in a spreadsheet, but it includes features such as 'checkbox', 'phone number', and 'drop-down list', and can reference file attachments like images.



**AIRTABLE**

**INFINITY** is truly one of the most adaptable work organising solutions available. It is helpful in planning and managing everything from marketing programmes and HR tasks to finances and sales processes, thanks to its exceptional versatility. This platform is beneficial for almost every niche out there, as it comes with a variety of ready-made themes and templates that can be personalized according to one's needs. Infinity is quite intuitive and user-friendly, so figuring out how to effectively utilise it for organising work won't be a difficult job!



**INFINITY**

## SONY AND ZEE

On December 21, 2021, the merger of Zee Entertainment Enterprises (ZEE) and Sony Pictures Network India (SPN) was approved. Zee and Sony formed the largest media entertainment player in the country. Their revenues on a standalone basis combined close to \$2 billion, and the capital that Sony infused in the merged entity (\$1.575 billion) gave them the opportunity to invest in premium content, including sports. Sony has 51% ownership after the merger and can appoint the majority of directors. According to Elara, the merged entity may emerge as the second largest homegrown entity after Disney+ in India.



## GINGKO BIOWORKS AND SOARING EAGLE ACQUISITION CORP

On 14th September 2021, Ginkgo Bioworks, a biotech company which uses the most advanced technology to grow better products combined with a public acquisition vehicle, Soaring Eagle in a \$17 billion merger. The Company changed its name to Ginkgo Bioworks Holdings, Inc and went public with over \$1.6 billion in proceeds. The deal included a \$775 million private placement led by Baillie Gifford, Putnam Investments and Morgan Stanley Investment Management's Counterpoint Global arm.



## TECH DATA AND SYNEX

On September 1, 2021, Tech Data, a Clearwater-based technology distribution company, finalized its \$8.3 billion merger with global consulting firm Synnex Corp. They merged to form TD Synnex, industry's largest IT distributor and have a combined sales of \$59.8 billion. It provides the opportunity to expedite technology adoption, diversify income streams, develop cross-selling opportunities, and bring everything faster to the market.



## FIAT CHRYSLER AUTOMOBILES (FCA) AND FRENCH AUTO GIANT PSA

On January 16, 2021, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), an Italian-American multinational company primarily known for manufacturer of automobiles, and French Auto Giant PSA, a multinational automotive manufacturing company which produced automobiles and motorcycles under the Peugeot, Citroën, DS, Opel and Vauxhall brands completed its \$52 billion merger, combining into a new company-Stellantis. The aim was to create an auto group with combined annual sales of around 8.1 million vehicles and deep pockets to fund the shift to electric driving and take on bigger rivals like the Toyota and Volkswagen Group.



## BHARTI INFRATEL AND INDUS TOWER

On November 19, 2020, Bharti Infratel, a telecommunications infrastructure company which provides telecom infrastructure to Bharti Airtel and other telecommunications companies in India, merged with Indus Tower, India's largest mobile tower installation company to form a mega tower company- Indus Towers Limited. The debt-ridden Vodafone Idea received around \$500.8 million cash for its 11.15% holding in Indus Towers. Vodafone group will hold 28.12% stake in the merged entity, while the holding of Airtel Group will be around 36.73%.



## BIG BASKET BY TATA DIGITAL

On May 28, 2021, Tata Digital Limited, a subsidiary of Tata Sons Private Limited company, purchased a 64 percent stake in Supermarket Grocery Supplies Private Limited (BigBasket), India's largest e-commerce player in the Food & Grocery industry. BigBasket received a \$219 million investment from Tata Digital and has raised about \$1.1 billion to date through equity rounds as well as debt funding. Tata's purchase of BigBasket was part of a bigger digitally enabled commerce strategy. According to the proposal, Tata Digital would gain ownership of BigBasket's retail and B2B business divisions.



## EXIDE BY HDFC LIFE

On January 1, 2022, HDFC Life, a leading life insurance private sector company, acquired Exide Life Insurance, promoted by Exide Industries, for \$900 million in order to expand its proprietary channel. As a result of the acquisition, this deal allowed HDFC Life to strengthen its foothold in Southern India, particularly in smaller towns, while also providing access to a larger market.



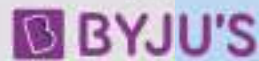
## AESL BY BYJUS

On April 6, 2021, Byju's, the country's largest online ed-tech startup, acquired tutorial chain Aakash Educational Services Ltd (AESL) in a cash and stock deal estimated at \$950 million- making it the biggest acquisition by Byju's to date.

This acquisition shall help Byju cross the \$1 billion mark in revenues for the next financial year. The edtech company claimed its current annual run rate is over \$800 million, with revenue and valuation steadily increasing as a result of organic and acquisition growth. AESL will continue to operate as a separate entity, and together with Byju's they will work towards building an omnichannel learning offering that will accelerate the test preparation experience.

## WHITEHAT JR. BY BYJUS

On August 5, 2020, Byju's acquired White Hat Jr, an online coding school for young children for a \$300 million all-cash deal. Going by the reports, White Hat Jr. was a cash flow positive startup with actual revenues of \$150 million. Byju's made the right call as this brings in a high quality of niche audience. By acquiring a fast-growing company with a great marketing engine and unit economics in a sector like education where larger competitors are steeped in an intense land grab, Byju's will start cross selling their programs with a larger customer base.



ACQUISITIONS



## MGM STUDIOS BY AMAZON

On May 26, 2021 Amazon made the boldest move in the entertainment industry by acquiring MGM studios for \$8.45 billion. MGM's huge collection of 4000 films and 17000

TV shows is said to bolster Amazon studios, its film and TV division. The real financial value behind this deal is the treasure trove of IP in the deep catalog that Amazon plans to reimagine and develop together with MGM. Amazon has access to MGM's intellectual rights that covers a large collection of film franchises. It will increase the appeal of Prime Video and attract a broader customer base.



## A STUDY ON CONSUMER'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS DIGITAL PAYMENT APPS IN KOLKATA



### AUTHOR DETAILS

**ADITI PANDEY**  
BACHELOR OF  
MANAGEMENT STUDIES  
3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR  
ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

### INTRODUCTION

With the advancement in technology, an image of a person counting coins during checkouts is getting rare. There are several terms to define Digital Payment Apps: Cashless; Paperless; or Faceless.

As India ventures into a digitally empowered and technology equipped world with a hint of uncertainties with the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of Digital Payment Apps in different arenas has been on the rise. Though the digitization of wallets took place long back, its growth had a slow pace and has increased only in recent times. This is because of a lack of awareness of the use of such apps and ever-rising security concerns. Such a system can only be boosted when awareness and correct usage of such apps are created in the minds of the people. When put into play, India can see a significant expansion in the transactions made through such apps and move towards a cashless economy.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the top concerns while using Digital Payment apps.
- To categorise the different users of Digital Payment Apps.
- To offer appropriate recommendations in handling Digital Payments more conveniently.

### REVIEW OF BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Abbigeri S & Shettar M (2018) in their research paper titled "The Changing Trends in Payments: An Overview" stated that the Cyber fraud, a high rate of illiteracy, people's attitudes, and a lack of transparency and efficiency in the digital payment system are all major obstacles that could stymie policy implementation.

Kavitha M & Kumar K (2018) in their research paper titled, "A Study on Digital Payments System with Perspective of Customer's Adoption" stated that the combined result provides a significant policy roadmap for the country in terms of increasing cashless payments. The findings show that deploying technology for digital payments has increased the banking sector's efficiency and made it possible to achieve the goal of a cashless society.

Manikandan S & Jayakodi M (2017) in their research paper titled "An Empirical study on consumers' adoption of mobile wallet with special reference to Chennai city" stated that due to the government's demonetization policy, mobile wallet uses, and awareness has spread among Indians, forcing them to use them. The use of mobile wallet would automatically increase as security problems are addressed and risk factors are reduced.



### AUTHOR DETAILS

**DR. SUPRIYO PATRA**  
PROFESSOR-IN-CHARGE  
OF MANAGEMENT,  
B.M.S. DEPARTMENT  
ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA



**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this study, the data has been obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected using the questionnaire method and the form was created using Google Forms and distributed among peers using social media apps. The secondary data was collected from newspapers and websites.

Sample Design: The method of Convenience Sampling has been used to collect data from the respondents.

Sample Size: The sample size is 150. The study consists of both users (137 respondents) and non-users (13 respondents) of Digital Payment Apps.

Period of Study: The data was collected over a period of 5 days.

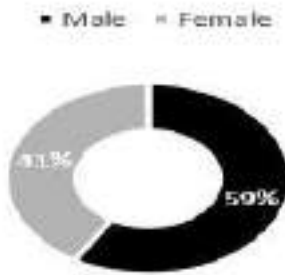
Survey Instrument: A structured questionnaire was sent to the people using social media apps.

Source of Data Collection: The data explicitly accounts for the perception of the people of Kolkata. Data

Analysis and Interpretation: The data has been analysed and interpreted using MS Excel and the use of graphs, charts, and tables. Further, Hypothesis Testing using the Chi-Square variable developed by Karl Pearson is also used.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

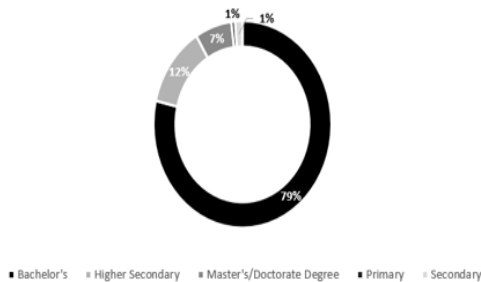
**i. Gender**



Interpretation: Out of the sample survey population conducted, we can see that 59% of the respondents are male and 41% are female. This indicates that the survey was rather very well balanced as the ratio of male is to female is not extreme but acceptable

*Illustration 1: Gender*

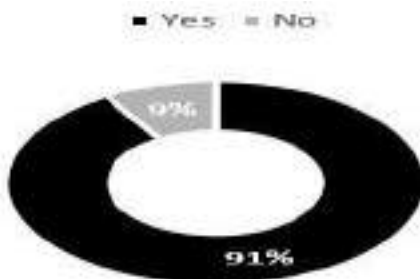
**ii. Education**



Interpretation: The chart outlines the breakup of the respondents concerning their educational qualification attained/currently being pursued by them. Out of the sample survey conducted, 79% have/currently pursuing a Bachelor's degree, 12% are from Higher Secondary group, 7% are from Master's/Doctorate background and the remaining 2% from Secondary (1%) and Primary (1%) backgrounds, respectively.

*Illustration 2: Education*

**iii. Do you use Digital Payment Apps?**

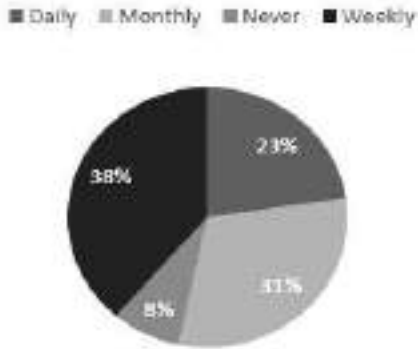


Interpretation: Out of 150 respondents, 91% have used or are currently using Digital Payment Apps and 9% have never used Digital Payment Apps. It can be interpreted that Digital Payment apps have gained a lot of ground in recent times, altogether constituting the Covid-19 period times where we can see a surge in cashless transactions among the young and old generations alike.

*Illustration 3: Do you use Digital Payment Apps?*



**iv. How Often Do You Use Digital Payment Apps?**



Interpretation: The above chart outlines the usage of Digital Payment Apps by the respondents. Out of 150 respondents, 23% use Digital Payment Apps daily, 38% and most of the respondents use such apps weekly, 31% use them monthly and the remaining 8% have never used Digital Payment Apps. This can particularly help in understanding the spending pattern of consumers using Digital Payment Apps and frequency of their respective usage and observe the rise which generally requires the alertness of the developers to improve their apps with better UI/UX design.

Illustration 4: How often do you use Digital Payment Apps?

**v. Preferred Payment App(s):**

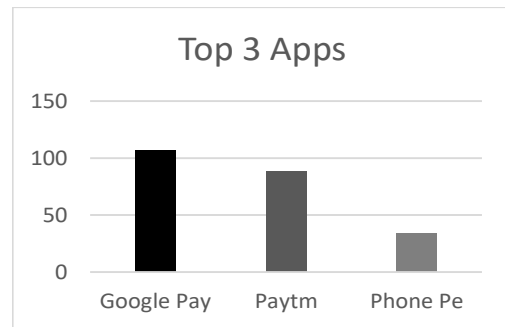
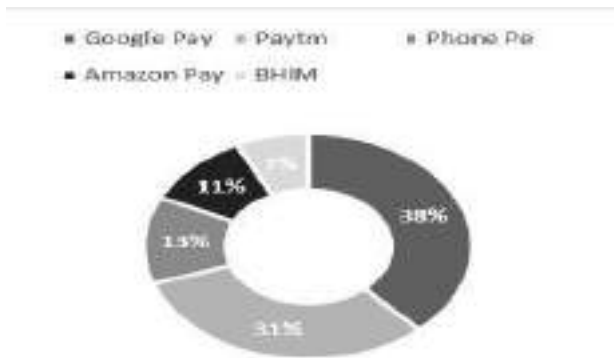


Illustration 5: Preferred Apps

Illustration 6: Top 3 Apps

Interpretation: The first chart reveals from the sample collected the Digital Payment Apps preferred and used by the respondents to carry out their transactions. Google Pay tops the list by taking up 38% in the preference chart, followed by Paytm (31%), Phone Pe (13%), and Amazon Pay (11%). BHIM app has the lowest preference of usage and is used by only 7% of the 150 respondents. From the first chart, we were able to pin it down to the top 3 apps with Google Pay playing the majority in order of preference of usage, followed by Paytm and Phone Pe with the latter being in tough competition with Amazon Pay with only a minor difference of 2%.

**vi. What is your Preferred Mode of Transaction, If Not Digital Payment Apps?**



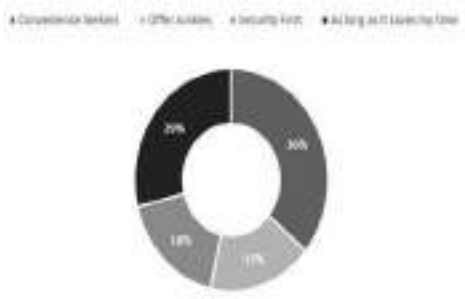
Interpretation: The above chart outlines the preferred mode apart from Digital Payment Apps. Cash transactions are always perceived to be safe and are preferred by 59.33% of the sample. Cash transactions are also used by people who do not own a bank account. Apart from cash, people who do have a bank account prefer using debit/credit cards (38.6%) for carrying out transactions followed by NEFT (1.33%), and Net Banking (0.67%) comprising only a marginal portion of the sample.

Illustration 7: What is your preferred mode of transaction, if not Digital Payment Apps?



Different modes of transactions have their respective sets of pros and cons. While there is the convenience component of Digital Payment Apps, cash has the “more secure” component which appeals to the major portion of the population. Of course, it is easier to hold information of all the cards available with the user than carrying a bunch of cards in your wallet, but people fear what might happen if your phone gets stolen or misplaced. Though, it rarely happens that with the misplacing of the phone, your bank account details also get misplaced, the fear component tends to hold its ground, especially among the older people.

**vii. Consumers can be classified based on their attitudes and preferences towards digital payments**



*Illustration 8: Classification of Consumers*

**Convenience Seekers**

Convenience Seekers comprise the strongest and active digital adopters. Consistent with its name, the group shows a great interest in treating their Digital Wallets like leather wallets (storing balance, coupons, tickets, cards, etc). They believe that transactions through Digital Payment Apps are much more convenient than carrying a roll of fifties in their wallets. Why carry a wad of cash on you, when you can simply install an app on your phone and make payments effortlessly when technology has made it a piece of cake for you?

**Offer Junkies**

Offer Junkies seek the best price using coupons, scratch cards, and other offers, and Digital Payment Apps aid in fulfilling their wish. Google Pay, for instance, provides users with cashback up to ₹1000 on making payments through the app.

They have a strong interest in ability to pay in points for making purchases. They move from app to app seeking the best offer available.

**Security First!**

The Security First gang are the cautious ones and are mostly digitally averse in nature. They seem to adopt every single precaution when performing transactions through Digital Payment Apps. They have heavy security concerns and seem to have completely taken up a low trust in Digital wallets. This group has so much completed a digital payment until their trust or channel security hurdles can be overawed.

They are the ones who prefer the traditional methods of transactions and always have cash on them to avoid getting into situations where they need to take out their phones for making payments with their face flushing with the immediacy of the situation.

**As long as it saves my time.**

The “A stitch in time saves nine” gang. Instead of taking the cash out of their wallets and counting it simultaneously; holding up the queue behind them while it waits with disapproving looks for poor John to count the ₹5 coins, they prefer the use of Digital Payment Apps to transfer money from their account to the payee’s.

They believe that if everyone starts transitioning from cash/card to Digital Payment Apps, then they would be able to save hundreds of hours.

Searching for the exact bill amount, counting out the exact change, and writing checks takes up a lot of time. It is a lot better to make payments with one QR code or a phone number.



viii. What do you use Digital Payment Apps for?



Illustration 9: What do you use Digital Payment Apps for?

Interpretation: The study also looked at the reasons for using Digital Payment Apps. Most of the population surveyed prefer using such apps for Recharge (78.67%) followed by Online Shopping (77.33%) closing onto Recharge with 116 out of 150 respondents with a minor difference of 2 (1.33%) respondents. 64% of the population surveyed prefer using Digital Payment Apps for Transferring Money and around 63.33% use it for booking Food or Movie Tickets. About 41.33% use such apps for Utility Bill Payments and lastly around 32% use them for Transportation (booking a cab via Uber/Ola) purposes. This column chart reveals that Digital Payment Apps have started putting their flags on every platform and can be used for a variety of purposes.

ix. What concerns did you have before using these Apps?



Interpretation: The pie chart breaks down the concerns that the respondents had/still have while using or adapting the technology of Digital Payment Apps. The study reveals that around 25% of the population were deeply concerned about any Hacking issue that might arise when transacting through Digital Payment Apps followed by Overspending concerns taking up 10% of the sample. While there is no denying the convenience using of cards/e-wallets, a lot of studies have revealed that parting with cash is felt more acutely than parting with money from your bank account.

Illustration 10: What concerns did you have before using these Apps?

Another concern faced by users is the issue of inevitable Transaction fee (19%) that comes up with the ease in making online payments. While there is no charge for making payments through UPI, a transaction made from UPI to a bank using NEFT, IMPS, or RTGS, a bank may charge you for it. The other concerns include Fraud (32%) and Theft (14%). With the rise in usage of Digital payment Apps, cases of online fraud and theft have also increased alongside. This only calls for taking up vigilant steps like not sharing confidential information OTP, PIN, etc. Also, with the increase in frauds and thefts, biometric authentication can become a reliable source. It is a distinct and pivotal payment method as it blends the three Ps into play: Precision, Performance, and Protection evolving into one convenient package.

**HYPOTHESIS TESTING USING CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS:**

**Education and use of Digital Payment Apps:**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no relation between education and use of Digital Payment Apps.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relation between education and use of Digital Payment Apps.



Table 1: Observed Values

| Yes/No | Education           |         |           |                  |            |              | Total |
|--------|---------------------|---------|-----------|------------------|------------|--------------|-------|
|        | No formal Education | Primary | Secondary | Higher Secondary | Bachelor's | Master's/PhD |       |
| Yes    | 0                   | 1       | 1         | 16               | 110        | 9            | 137   |
| No     | 0                   | 0       | 1         | 3                | 8          | 1            | 13    |
| Total  | 0                   | 1       | 2         | 19               | 118        | 10           | 150   |

Expected Values =  $\frac{\text{Row total} \times \text{Column Total}}{\text{Grand Total}}$

Table 2: Expected Values

|     | No formal Education | Primary | Secondary | Higher Secondary | Bachelor's | Master's/PhD |
|-----|---------------------|---------|-----------|------------------|------------|--------------|
| Yes | 0                   | 0.91    | 1.83      | 17.35            | 107.77     | 9.13         |
| No  | 0                   | 0.09    | 0.17      | 1.65             | 10.23      | 0.87         |

Degree of freedom = (No. of rows - 1) x (No. of columns - 1)  
 = (2 - 1) x (6 - 1) = 5

Level of significance ( $\alpha$ ): 0.05

Value of  $\chi^2$  with df = 5 according to the Chi-square table: 11.07 Computation of Chi-Square:

|  | O | E | O-E | O-E <sup>2</sup> | <u>O-E<sup>2</sup> / E</u> |
|--|---|---|-----|------------------|----------------------------|
|  | 0 | 0 | 0   | 0.000            | 0.000                      |



|              |            |               |             |              |             |
|--------------|------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
|              | 1          | 0.91          | 0.09        | 0.008        | 0.009       |
|              | 1          | 1.83          | -0.83       | 0.689        | 0.376       |
|              | 16         | 17.35         | -1.35       | 1.823        | 0.105       |
|              | 110        | 107.77        | 2.23        | 4.973        | 0.046       |
|              | 9          | 9.13          | -0.13       | 0.017        | 0.002       |
|              | 0          | 0             | 0           | 0.000        | 0.000       |
|              | 0          | 0.086         | -0.086      | 0.007        | 0.086       |
|              | 1          | 0.17          | 0.83        | 0.689        | 4.052       |
|              | 3          | 1.65          | 1.35        | 1.823        | 1.105       |
|              | 8          | 10.23         | -2.23       | 4.973        | 0.486       |
|              | 1          | 0.87          | 0.13        | 0.017        | 0.019       |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>150</b> | <b>150.00</b> | <b>0.00</b> | <b>15.02</b> | <b>6.29</b> |

Table 3

From the above tables, we have the following information:

$\chi^2$  Tabular = 11.07

$\chi^2$  Calculated = 6.29

Now, since  $\chi^2$  Tabular >  $\chi^2$  Calculated, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant relation between educational qualification of the respondents and their corresponding usage of Digital Payment Apps.

### CONCLUSION

- The study has successfully examined the attitude of the consumers towards Digital Payment Apps. The combined result provides a significant policy roadmap for the country in terms of increasing cashless payments.
- The Covid-19 period has been considered in the study and the results have proven that the volume of transactions and their consequent usage of such apps have increased during this period.
- On categorising the users based on four major aspects, it has been found that most of the users seek convenience and think of it as a top priority followed by security.
- It has also been observed that the position for the top-rated app is held by Google Pay and is the best app to use in terms of security, convenience, timesaving, and the added benefit of scratch cards received with almost each transaction of a certain limit.
- We have successfully discovered the top concerns of the users and categorised them based on the different aspects of Digital Payment Apps. We have also included a set of recommendations and security measures to avoid getting trapped into the means of deceptions and shams set by the fraudsters.

### RECOMMENDATION

To ensure the security of your funds and reduce the risk of fraudulent transactions, it is important to be aware and create awareness about the use of such apps and the dangers posed in using such apps.



Here are some measures you should take to protect your money from scammers.

- Financial information is never requested via SMS by government agencies, banks, or other financial institutions. Report a UPI scam to your bank or e-wallet provider, and get the wallet blocked to avoid further losses. You may also contact the police or a cyber-crime unit to report the incident.
- You can only download applications that have been checked and authenticated by Google Play Store or Apple Store. Passwords, OTPs, and PINs should only be sent to a trustworthy app if it asks for them. If you are not using a secure payment gateway or the official app, you should never enter this information. Also, never give out any personal information over the phone, even if the individual appears to be a bank or wallet provider official.
- Never dismiss the spam alert that appears on your phone when you use a digital payment app. An alert will appear if a user has been identified previously when you are transacting with them. If a user receives a request from an unknown account, UPI apps such as Google Pay, Phone Pe, and others issue an alert.
- Make it a habit to review your wallet receipts on a regular basis, just as you would your credit card bills. You will be able to tell if there has been a fraudulent transaction. Also, double-check any transaction-related SMS you receive on your phone. Limiting the number of top-ups in your mobile wallet is also a smart idea.

#### **Suggestions to create awareness on the use of Digital Payment Apps**

- The Government could organise training programmes to teach everyone how to use digital payment systems.
- The Government should provide continuous media coverage of the benefits of digital payments to society and individuals through television news/shows, radio, social media, and newspapers/magazines.
- The Government may grant tax breaks to retailers, merchants, and other suppliers who sell products and services online, thereby encouraging all merchants to become e-merchants.

#### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- The sample size used for the study is minor. Hence, the outcomes cannot be held as universal. The primary data for the research objectives was obtained exclusively from samples in Kolkata. Even though Kolkata is one of the country's most important cities, only 150 samples from the city cannot be considered a full representation of the country's population.
- Consumer's attitude changes continuously with the advancement of technology. What was favourable a year ago may not be relevant at all today. Sudden incidences can cause a breakthrough in usage of Digital Payment Apps. For instance, after the demonetisation policy by the Government of India, there was a major boost in the usage of Digital Payment Apps. Similarly, with the offset of the pandemic, the world saw a surge in the use of Digital Payment Apps.

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## A STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING CHOICE OF EDTECH PLATFORMS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS OF KOLKATA



### AUTHOR DETAILS

AKHIL ALEX MATTHEW

BACHELOR OF  
MANAGEMENT STUDIES

3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Opportunities in Higher Education Market in India

India, the 7<sup>th</sup> largest country in the world, has an estimated population of around 150 million of young people aged between 18 to 23 years. This vast market offers huge opportunities for development of the higher education sector in India. As per 2018 data, India has more than 33,000 colleges and 659 universities, which has been quite an exponential growth during the last five decades. The year 2012 recorded 21.4 million enrolments, which makes India the 3rd largest educational system in the world.

#### 1.2 Drawbacks of Higher Education System in India

Since independence, our education system has not been developed fully. Various governments changed during these six decades. UGC is constantly adapting and focusing on quality education in higher education sector. Still quality education remains a dream for many in this highly populated country. Some of the basic obstacles of higher education system in India are discussed below

- **Enrolment:** The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education is only 15% in India which is quite low as compared to the developed as well as, other developing countries. With the increase of enrolments at school level, the availability of quality higher education institutes is very low to meet the growing population in the country.
- **Equity:** There is no equity in GER among different sections of the society. According to previous research the GER in higher education in India among male and female varies to a great extent. There are regional variations too. Some states have high GER while as many are quite behind the national GER which point out a significant imbalance within the higher education system.
- **Quality:** Ensuring quality in higher education is one of the most difficult challenges being faced in India today. However, Government is tirelessly focusing on the quality education. Still Large number of colleges and universities in India are far from meeting the minimum requirements laid down by the UGC. Currently, major of our universities are not in a position to mark its place among the top universities of the world.
- **Infrastructure:** Poor infrastructure is another challenge to the higher education system of India, particularly in the institutes run by the public sector which suffer from poor physical facilities and



### AUTHOR DETAILS

DR. SUPRIYO PATRA

PROFESSOR-IN-CHARGE  
OF MANAGEMENT,

B.M.S. DEPARTMENT

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),

KOLKATA



infrastructure.

### **1.3 Bridging the Gap**

Since its inception, EdTech platforms have equalised standards in education, making knowledge and learning accessible and equitable for all, eventually leading to the democratisation of education. The smart interactive live classes, help millions of students to continue their education so that their learning cycle is not disrupted.

In a country like India where 12.6% of students drop out of Education annually due to problems like lack of infrastructure, migration difficulties, problems of accessibility to quality education, EdTechs or e-learning platforms can be a game changer. With majority of population having access to smartphones and cheap data services, India can revolutionize its education system and policies by introducing remote learning modes and EdTech in its educational infrastructure, thereby increasing the population of literacy in rural and urban areas of the country.

### **1.4 Pandemic- The age of e-learning**

During the covid-19 led nationwide lockdown, EdTech companies witnessed their long- term business goals achieved within six months.

Leading e-learning platform Coursera, saw Indian consumers zoom ahead of its other markets. It offered over 4,000+ courses free for college students to attract over 700,000+ users in the past six months. In professional skilling, almost five years' worth of market size was achieved in the past few months. Indian EdTech start-ups have received a total investment influx of \$2.22 billion in 2020 as compared to \$553 million in 2019, according to Indian Private Equity and Venture Capital Association (IVCA) and PGA Labs data. Indian EdTech start up, BYJU'S is on track to become the most valuable start up in India. Globally, before the coronavirus pandemic, EdTech sector was estimated to reach a value of US\$ 342 billion, growing at a CAGR of 13.1% between 2019 and 2025. The forecast revisions accounting for the impact of COVID-19 pandemic predict the global EdTech market to reach US\$ 404 billion, with a CAGR of 16.3% by 2025. The quick adoption of e-learning across educational institutions as well as an urgent need for upskilling courses by working-class individuals are driving the tech embracement in the COVID-19 pandemic scenario.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- To know the preference of respondents between online education mode and offline mode.
- To know the respondent's preference towards EdTech platforms available in the market.
- To understand the factors preferred by respondents while choosing an online platform for educational purposes.
- To assess if online education mode can be continued even after the pandemic

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Mishra and Misra (2021) through their research found that 54 Commonwealth Countries, spread across Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe and Pacific over the years, emphasized using distance education and technologies to improve access to quality learning opportunities. The research provides an overview of E-learning in the Commonwealth countries by looking into their developments in policies, projects practices.

As per Aditya and Permadi (2019) there are still gaps between male and female students while assessing e-learning usage outcomes. The research based on a sample of 223 students registered as e-learning class participants from 2 different campuses in Indonesia concluded that two out of



6 aspects of learning outcomes that show the significant difference between assessment of male and female students: usefulness and course content.

Kasiyah, Sadita, Santoso, Soeradijono and Suhartanto (2017) in their research indicated that students have a good technological competency, have moderate competency in interaction with learning content and lack of interaction skills with the learning community when students engage in online learning compared to face-to-face learning mode.

According to the research by Collazos, Fardoun, AlSekait, Pereira and Moreira (2021) despite many online platforms offering different opportunities to support teaching-learning process in lockdown scenarios, due to Covid-19 pandemic, many of the platforms do not have essential aspects to offer good communication between teachers and students.

Tripathi and Jauhari (2020) in their research conclude that integrating EdTech in education system will help reduce cost and improve efficiency of the system.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Type of Research

The following study was conducted using a convenience sampling survey method to collect primary data. Since the study is focused on college students of Kolkata, research and analysis is only based on the respondents who are college going students of Kolkata.

Data type and collection

Primary Source of data: A well-structured questionnaire was personally administrated to the selected sample to collect the primary data. The data was collected from the respondents by filling up of a questionnaire which was formed using Google forms.

Sampling design: A convenience sampling technique was used to collect data from the respondents. The selection is purely depending on chance. So, while conducting the survey, 226 respondents were selected.

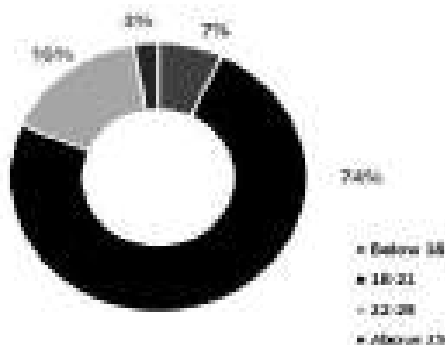
Sample Size: For the present study, 226 respondents were selected. Out of these 226 respondents 221 were EdTech platform users.

Sample Description: The respondents of this research paper were 226 out of which 221 respondents were users of EdTech in particular as the research was focused on the student preference and factors while deciding their choice of EdTech platforms.

Hypothesis Testing: Using T-test for sample with unique variances, Hypothesis testing has been done for the following Null Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub>**: There is no significant difference between Male and Female respondents in terms of preference between online and offline mode of learning

**DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**



1. Age: The respondents were from 4 categories of age group. 16% of the respondents were below 18. 74% of the respondents belonged to the age group 18-21, 16% of the respondents belonged to the age group 22-25 and 3% were above the age of 25.

Illustration 1: Age

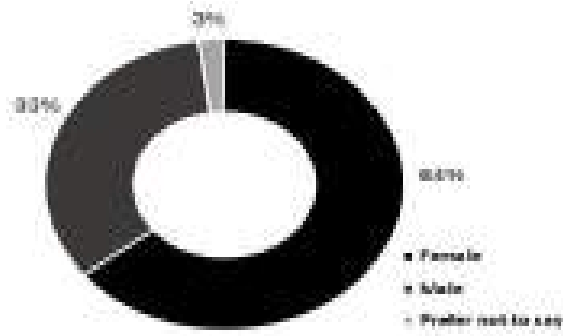


Illustration 2: Gender

## 2. Gender

In total, there were 226 respondents who filled the survey which consisted of 63% females, 36% of male respondents and 1% respondents who preferred not to say.

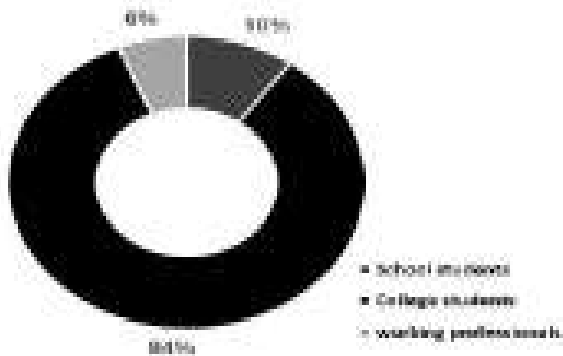


Illustration 3: Qualification

## 3. Qualification

The respondents consisted of 10% school students, 84% (189 respondents) college students and 6% working professionals.

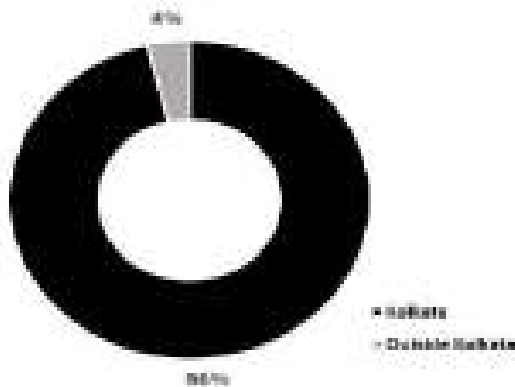


Illustration 4: City of Higher Education

## 4. City of Higher Education

With respect to the above data which had 84% college students, 96% (182 respondents) of them were from Kolkata and 4% were from outside Kolkata.

\* Since the research paper is primarily focused on population of college students of Kolkata, the sample size has been narrowed down to 182 which is the total number of college students of Kolkata. Hence the below analyses is based on the responses of the 182 college students of Kolkata

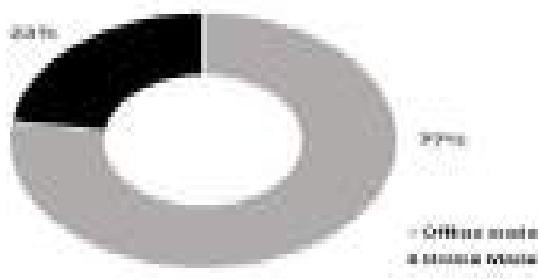
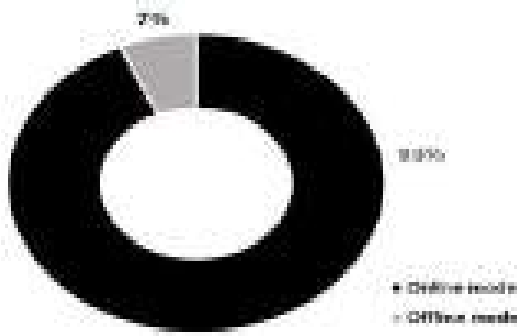


Illustration 5: Preferred mode of learning for Higher Education courses

## 5. Preferred mode of learning for Higher Education courses

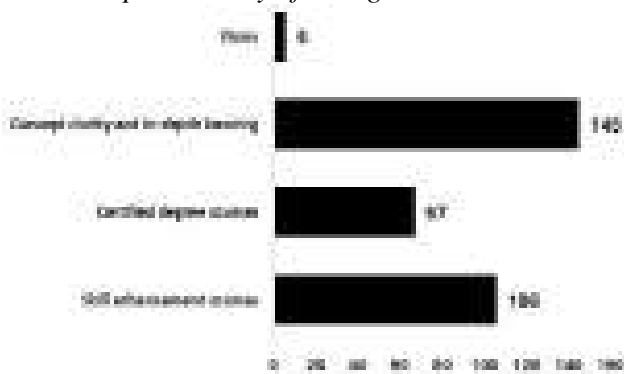
78% of the students preferred offline mode and 22% preferred online mode.



6. Preferred mode of learning for Skill enhancement course and conceptual clarity of college students in Kolkata

93% of the students preferred online mode for skill enhancement courses and 7% preferred offline mode.

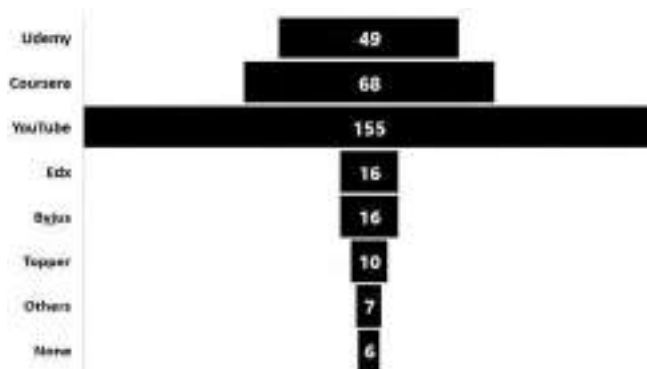
Illustration 6: Preferred mode of learning for Skill enhancement course and conceptual clarity of college students in Kolkata



7. Purpose of using EdTech platforms

Respondents were asked to select the purposes of using Edtech platforms and concept clarity topped the list with 45% followed by skill enhancement courses, 33%, certified degree course 21% and none 6%. This question was asked using a checkbox feature.

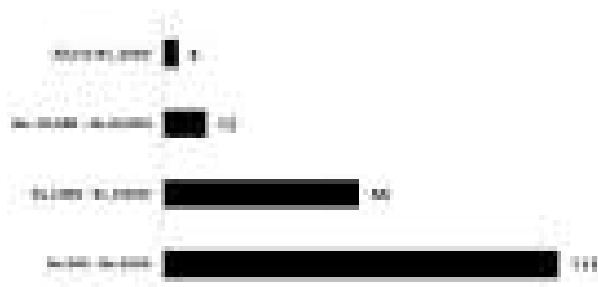
Illustration 7: Purpose of using EdTech platforms



8. EdTech Platforms primarily used

YouTube topped the list with 48% student preference, followed by 22% for Coursera, 16% for Udemy, 4% Edx, 4% Byjus, 3% Topper, 2% other platforms and 1% didn't use EdTech platforms for learning

Illustration 8: EdTech Platforms primarily used



9. Monthly Subscription charges colleges students of Kolkata are willing to pay for EdTech Platforms

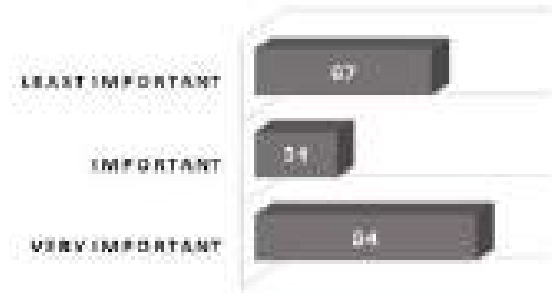
61% of students are willing to pay Rs.500– Rs.2000 for a monthly subscription for EdTech platforms, 30% can pay Rs. 2001- Rs. 10,000, 7% can pay Rs.10, 000 – Rs.20,000 and only 2% are willing to pay above Rs.20,000. Thus students prefer low-cost subscription charges while choosing EdTech platforms.

Illustration 9: Monthly Subscription charges colleges students of Kolkata are willing to pay for EdTech Platforms



10. Important the factors while choosing EdTech platforms

a) Cost of Subscription



46% respondents consider cost of subscription as a very important factor followed by 17% for important and 38% for least important

Illustration 10: Cost of Subscription

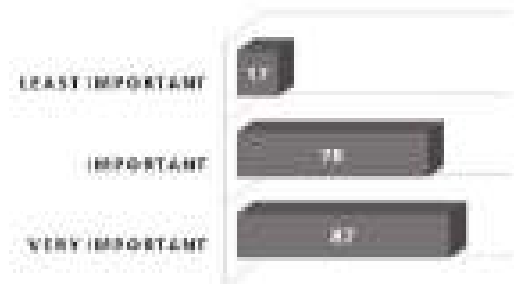
b) Content of the course



66% respondents consider content of the course as a very important factor followed by 27% for important and 7% for least important

Illustration 11: Content of the course

c) Qualification of the educator



48% respondents considered Qualification of Educator as a very important factor followed by 43% for important and 9% for least important.

Illustration 12: Qualification of the educator

e) Doubt solving and interaction

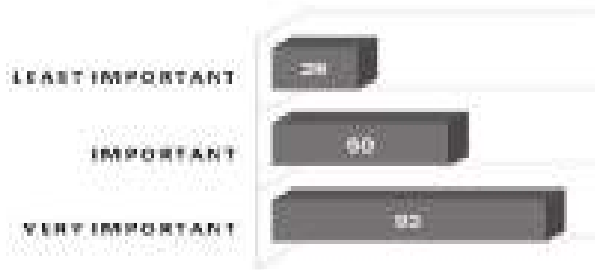


50% respondents consider doubt solving and interaction as a very important factor followed by 31% for important and 19% for least important

Illustration 13: Doubt solving and interaction



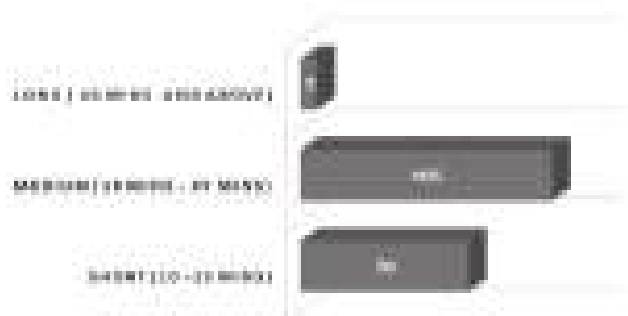
f) Download modules and offline view



51% respondents consider download and offline view as a very important factor followed by 33% for important and 16% for least important.

Illustration 14: Download modules and offline view

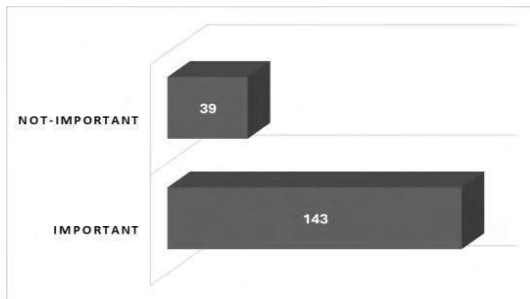
g) Length of module videos preferred



38% respondents preferred Short(10-15min) videos for modules, 58% for Medium(16-45mins) videos and 4% for long (46 mins and above) videos.

Illustration 15: Length of module videos preferred

h) Certification at completion of course



79% respondents preferred certificates at completion as an Important factor and 21% for not an important factor.

Illustration 16: Certification at completion of course

- From the above data 46% of the students consider cost of subscription as very important factor, 66% consider content of the course as very important factor, 48% consider Qualification of the educator as a very important factor, 50% consider doubt solving and interaction as a very important factor and 51% consider option to download modules and view offline as a very important factor.
- However, 56% of the students consider Graphics and User Interface only as an important factor but not very important factor.
- Over 58% students prefer the length of the videos to be medium (20-40 mins), 38% short (10-20, mins) and just 4% prefer long videos (Above 1 hour)



- 79% of students prefer platforms which offer certificate on completion of course on the online platform.

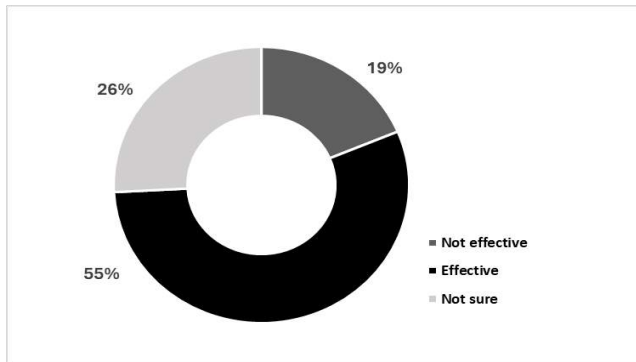


Illustration 17: Effectiveness of Free educational platforms (E.g., YouTube) over subscription-based platforms

11. Effectiveness of Free educational platforms (E.g., YouTube) over subscription-based platforms

Among the college Students of Kolkata 55% of the students were of the opinion that free educational platforms like YouTube are more effective than subscription-based platforms. Whereas 19% are of the opinion that free platforms are less effective and 26% were not sure

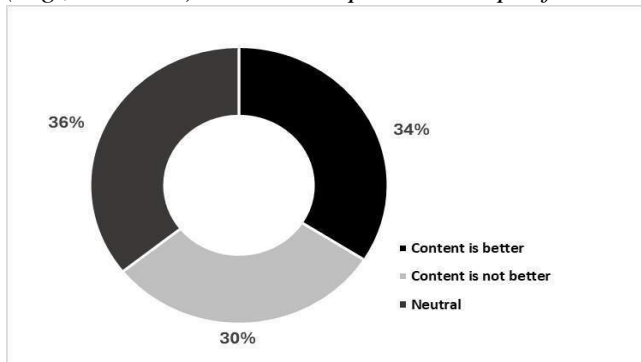


Illustration 18: Quality of Content on EdTech platforms in comparison to textbooks and physical learning

12. Quality of Content on EdTech platforms in comparison to textbooks and physical learning

About 36% of the students consider content on EdTech platforms is at par compared to the content of textbooks and physical teaching. 34% consider content on EdTech to be better and 30% consider content not to be better.

**IMPACT OF COVID-19**



Illustration 19: Subscriptions made by respondents to any EdTech platforms during the lockdown

13. Subscriptions made by respondents to any EdTech platforms during the lockdown

Among the college Students of Kolkata, 58% of the students bought subscriptions to EdTech platforms during the pandemic when physical classes were suspended. Whereas 42% did not buy any subscription or availed free educational platforms such as YouTube.



Illustration 20: Preference to permanently switch to online-mode of education

14. Preference to permanently switch to online-mode of education

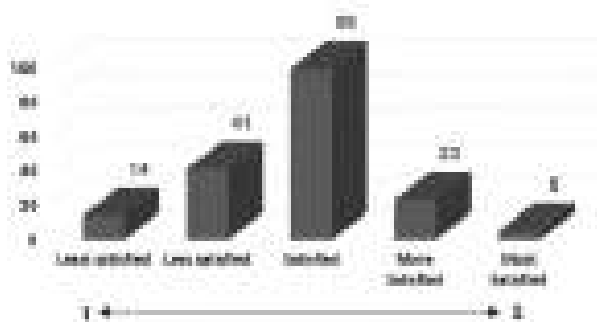
After over 1 year of suspending physical classes and shifting to online mode of education, 88% of the college students of Kolkata want to return to physical classes and 21% want to continue with existing mode of online education.



15. Overall preference for mode of learning of college students

Considering all pros and cons of online education, 73% of college students of Kolkata want to return to On-campus education, whereas 27% students prefer online mode of education.

Illustration 21: Overall preference for mode of learning of college students



16. Overall Satisfaction level of college students on learning over EdTech Platforms

After thorough analysis, 54% of the students stated that they are satisfied with EdTech platforms in the domain of learning, 22% are less satisfied, 13% are more satisfied, 8% are least satisfied and 3% are most satisfied. This question was answered by respondents by choosing a number between 1 (least satisfied) and 5 (most satisfied).

Illustration 22: Overall Satisfaction level of college students on learning over EdTech Platforms

**TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS**

Stating the hypothesis

- Null Hypothesis:

**H** : There is no significant difference between Male and Female respondents in terms of preference between online and offline mode of learning

- Alternative Hypothesis

**H1**: There is significant difference between Male and Female respondents in terms of preference between online and offline mode of learning.

Table 1: t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

|                              | Male               | Female      |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Mean                         | 1.417910448        | 1.2         |
| Variance                     | 0.246947083        | 0.161403509 |
| Observations                 | 67                 | 115         |
| Hypothesized Mean Difference | 0                  |             |
| Df                           | 116                |             |
| <b>t Stat</b>                | <b>3.054566743</b> |             |
| P(T<=t) one-tail             | 0.001398198        |             |
| t Critical one-tail          | 1.658095744        |             |
| P(T<=t) two-tail             | 0.002596397        |             |
| <b>t Critical two-tail</b>   | <b>1.980626002</b> |             |

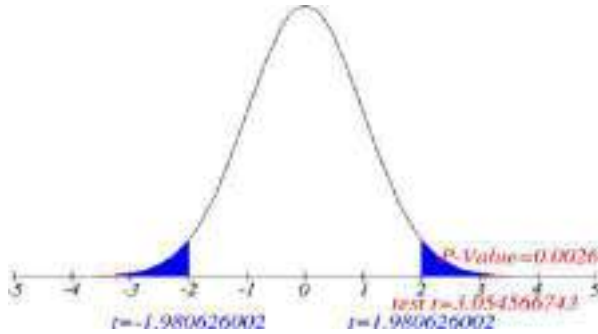


Illustration 23: Graph

**ANALYSIS**

From the above table we infer that

- t-statistic is more than t-critical value ( t-stat > t critical)
- The data has a p value of 0.0026 which is less than  $\alpha = 0.05$
- The t- statistic value lies inside the rejection region. Hence, due to the above reasons

Null Hypothesis **H** : Reject

There is significant difference between male and female respondents in terms of preference between online and offline mode of learning.

According to data collected from respondents, 73% of respondents who preferred offline mode were female and 84% of respondents who preferred online mode were male

Hence there is significant difference in preference of mode of education with respect to gender of respondent

**CONCLUSION**

E-learning platforms or EdTech platforms are the technological wonders of the 21st Century. The global EdTech market size was valued at USD 89.49 billion in 2020 and is expected to reach USD 106.04 billion in 2021 which is much fuelled by the ongoing pandemic. With over 58% of students who subscribed to EdTech platforms during the pandemic according to the study just on the college students on Kolkata, it is quite evident that even though the Pandemic was the worst time for the overall global market in terms of consumer usage, it is golden phase for the EdTech market.

**RECOMMENDATION**

- As per the research innovative, interactive and cheap platforms are favoured by a large population of students. EdTech companies should look forward to introducing more engaging as well as give students the option to communicate more through the platforms to their peers as well with educators and trainers.
- Recurring advertisement campaigns, high level of succession rates, qualified trainers and good content of the course will help in adding more consumers to the market.
- With students continuing their education within the walls of their houses and looking forward to returning the colleges, the EdTech platforms will see a decline in student engagement on the platforms. Hence EdTech companies can partner with different colleges and educational institutions to provide quality skill enhancement courses or various other courses by top



educators at a cheap cost as it will forego the high cost for the institution for hiring a skilled trainer as well open a population of students for the companies to market and add to their customer base.

### **LIMITATIONS**

- An underlying assumption for the entire project is that the details and the feedback received from the population is true.
- It was difficult to find respondents as they were busy in their schedule, and collection of data was very difficult. Therefore, the study had to be carried out based on the availability of respondents.
- The research was done with a sample of just 182 college students of Kolkata which cannot be regarded as the entire student population of Kolkata.

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## A STUDY ON CONSUMER PREFERENCE IN MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS AMONG LADIES OF KOLKATA

India has come a long way in the department of menstrual products and menstrual hygiene, but still there are certain issues that are not spoken of quite often like what are the alternatives available and how are certain products harmful for us and our environment.

There has been development and improvement in literacy but still people are unaware of the options and are using products that they have been taught about or forced. This study was conducted to understand the awareness and preferences of products people know of and are most likely to use. Many people still refuse to talk about these problems and confront or ask for help as our society considers it a taboo. There has been development from using cloths to sanitary pads, but these are equally harmful to body and environment.

In recent times, India has made growth in women care department and have launched few products which are safer for women as well as environment. Having complete knowledge and choosing correct products can save women from life threatening diseases.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

"31.27 percent of urban girls and 71.42 percent of rural girls reused pads throughout menstruation period," according to Dr. Paria (2014). Only 131 (47.63 percent) of urban girls and 101 (37.96 percent) of rural girls found cleaning of external genitalia adequate. In this study, hygiene habits in urban and rural areas were shown to be different."

"Conventional sanitary pads and tampons available in the market are filled with plastic," according to Upadhyay (2019). Most women in the globe use these menstruation products for at least 4-6 days every month. This means that a significant amount of plastic waste is generated each month around the world. Sanitary items, which are often constructed of plastic, take over 500 years to decompose after being discarded."

"Girls and women have very little or no information of reproductive tract infections caused by lack of personal hygiene during menstruation time," according to Kaur and Kaur (2018).



#### AUTHOR DETAILS

**KHUSHI KABRA**  
BACHELOR OF  
MANAGEMENT STUDIES  
3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR  
ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA



#### AUTHOR DETAILS

**DR. SUPRIYO PATRA**  
PROFESSOR-IN-CHARGE  
OF MANAGEMENT,  
B.M.S. DEPARTMENT  
ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA



Women in rural region don't access to sanitary goods or don't know much about the different varieties and how to use them, or they can't afford due to the high cost."

"When it comes to tampons, awareness is the most crucial concern," Ramnani (2018) noted. All of the misunderstandings will become reality until and unless the female population learns about the benefits of this option"

All of the misunderstandings will become reality until and unless the female population learns about the benefits of this option."

" Girls generally don't have access to information on menstruation or any education on the topic," according to Bains (2020). As a result, many are unaware of the various ways for controlling menstrual flow. Shopkeepers don't have enough demand for tampons and menstruation cups since there isn't enough knowledge about them. The majority of the information that women have about these products comes from female relatives or acquaintances, not from schooling. That's why the taboo is passed down from generation to generation, from one female to the next."

## **OBJECTIVES**

The study was conducted for the following objectives:

- One of the main objectives is to find out the preference of the ladies of Kolkata. Preference in menstrual products like sanitary pads, tampons, and menstrual cups.
- Another important objective is to check the awareness of the consumer regarding availability of different products and the impact of these menstrual products on environment and human body.
- To find the conclusion on the preferred brand and reasons for choosing the brand and reasons for choosing a particular product.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The set of methodologies and procedures utilised in collecting and assessing measures of the variables stated in the problem investigation is referred to as a research design. A cross-sectional study pattern was applied to obtain data entries from females differing in demographics such as age.

### **Sampling Techniques**

Sampling technique can be used in a research survey for optimum derivation.

In this research, Simple Convenience Sampling Technique has been used, which is randomly intercepted and administered and is used by sending structured questionnaires to the respondents.

### **Sample Size**

Data was collected through a questionnaire. The sample size consists of 220 female respondents, residing in Kolkata.

### **Period of study**

The questionnaire was circulated to female participants of different age group and the form was active for 2 weeks.

### **Source of data collection**

To achieve the above study, we have used primary and secondary research.

### **Source of data collection**

To achieve the above study, we have used primary and secondary research.

- Primary Research: For research work, I have created a questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed through social media and data was collected accordingly. They form was filled by female individuals only. People from all age groups were targeted.
- Secondary Research: Research was done by thorough reading of articles and e-books.



**Method of analysis:** The data has been analysed based on the result of the questionnaire in the form of a pie chart which shows the different statistics and percentages.

**DATA, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

Following output was derived from the research conducted:

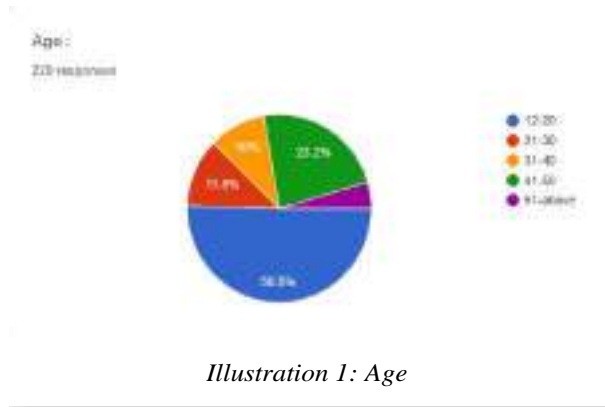


Illustration 1: Age

1. Age: We can clearly see here that most of the population of our research is in between the age of 12-20 that is 111 respondents (50.5%), about 26 respondents (11.8%) are of the age group 21-30, 22(10%) in the age of 31-40 and 51(23.2%) in the age group of 41-50 and 10(4.5%) between 51-above.

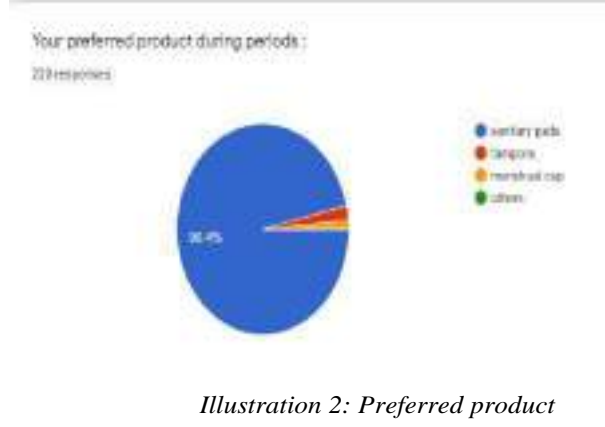


Illustration 2: Preferred product

2. Preferred product: Here, we can see that the most preferred product is sanitary pad 96.4% 212 respondents prefer this product, almost everyone is using pads. Tampons have 2.3% which is preference of 5 respondents and menstrual cups is almost non-existent that is 1.4% which is the preference of 3 respondents only. Respondents who choose tampons and menstrual cups are in the age group 12-20 and 21-30, which shows that young age people are somewhat aware of the products maybe through social media and are more likely to try out different products.

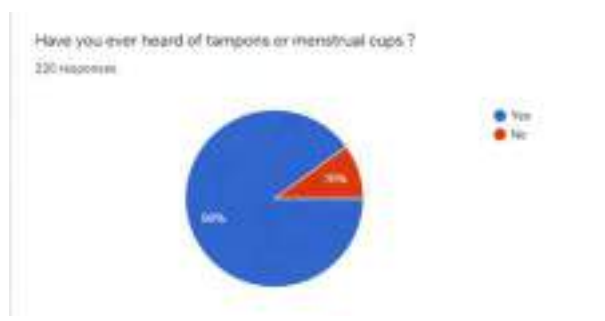


Illustration 3: Awareness

3. Awareness: This data shows that about 90% of the respondents that is 198 people are aware of the alternate product available in the market and 10% have never heard of tampons and menstrual cups, 22 respondents. The 10% belongs to the age group of 41-50 and 51 and above, which shows people of higher age are aware of substitute products as many are about to hit menopause.

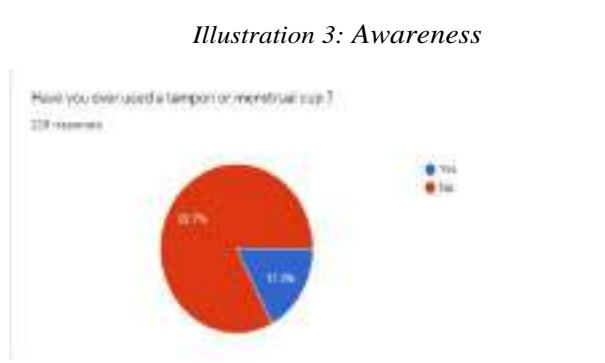


Illustration 4: Usage

4. Usage: Through this we can clearly determine that people have surely heard of tampon and menstrual cups but not many have tried it. 82.7% of the population, 182 respondents have not tried it. Only 12.5% have tried it 38 respondents which are mostly of the age group 20-30.



Does your local medical stores have tampons or menstrual cups?  
220 responses

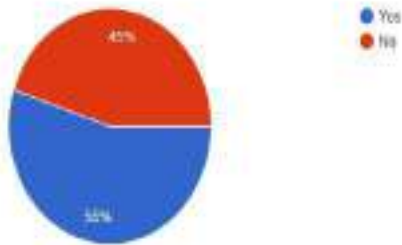


Illustration 5: Availability

5. Availability: Through this we determine that many local medical stores do not supply these products. 55% people have these products available at their nearby stores, whereas 44% don't have the option to buy it. From this we can conclude that maybe these products are not well known to people and hence there is no demand for these products and that is why shopkeepers do not stock these products. One more conclusion can be drawn that since these products are mostly available online, it is not easily accessible to everyone.

Preferred brand of sanitary product:  
228 responses

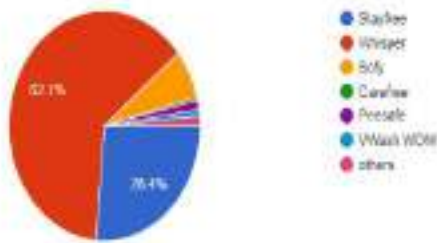


Illustration 6: Brand preference

6. Brand preference: As it can be clearly seen that Whisper is the most preferred brand with 62.7% of the population, 138 users. Second most preferred brand is Stayfree with 58 users, 26.4% of the population. These two brands have been the longest existing brands in menstrual products so people have been using it since a long time so they accustomed to using it and are comfortable with it and would not like to change to another brand. These brands have developed consumer trust and other emerging brands like Carefree (0.5%) and Pee Safe (1.4%) and VWash (0.9%) have below 5 users. Sofy (6.8%) is another brand which is gaining a good consumer base.

Factors affecting your preference:  
228 responses



Illustration 7: Factors

7. Factors: Factors that makes a particular brand a preference is very important to know. Here the most important factor is comfort. Factors like cost and recommendations from peers play an important role in decision making. Cost of sanitary pads of different companies are very similar and close by, which may not influence the buying decision of the customer. Among Indians word of mouth is given a lot of importance.



Did you know that sanitary pads take upto 100s of years to decompose which is hazardous to environment?  
223 responses

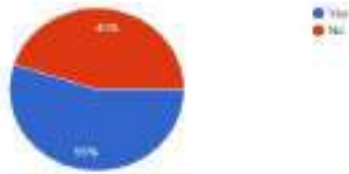


Illustration 8: Environment

Did you know that regular usage of pads can cause yeast and bacterial infection and can even lead to cancer?  
125 responses

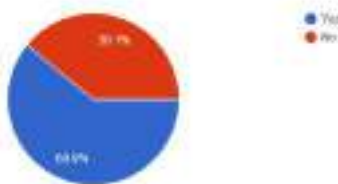


Illustration 9: Impact on health

Keeping these facts in mind would you switch to menstrual cups?  
223 responses



Illustration 10: Switch to another product

If no, then why?  
223 responses

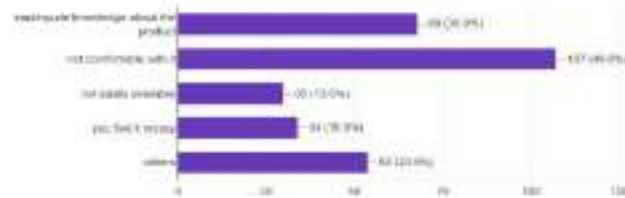


Illustration 11: Reasons

8. Environment: People are not aware of the hazardous effects of sanitary pads. These take over 100s of years to decompose. 55% of the respondents know about the fact and 45% are unaware.

9. Impact on health: This is a problem that many women face and are still suffering from it. Many people were not even aware about the fact that pads are harmful for our body and can cause major health issues like cancer. 39.1% of the females are in the shadow and are unaware of some life changing facts.

10. Switch to another product: Even after knowing how harmful sanitary pads still more than half of the population can won't switch to better alternatives. 61.8% voted for no. It is observed that the 38.2% population who voted for yes are of the younger age group that is 20-30.

11. Reasons: The top two reasons out of the options are inadequate knowledge and not being comfortable. Here we can assume that people are not comfortable because they have inadequate knowledge about the product, or they are not open to the idea of trying other products.



Do you feel comfortable talking about this to female friends and family members?  
 (2) responses



12. Comfortable in sharing problems:  
 We can see that it is comfortable for females to share their problems with other females that is 96.8%.

Illustration 12: Comfortable in sharing problems

## CONCLUSION

The study's primary findings are that first, respondents are only partially aware of the facts, and that even after becoming aware, people are too acclimated to their former lifestyle to alter it even for their own good. We learned about the factors that influence customer decision-making before purchasing a product and how people evaluate different parts of a product before purchasing it through this research.

## SCOPE OF FURTHER STUDY

- The information provided in the research work might be helpful for anyone doing an extensive study on this topic or any other topic related to female healthcare or environmental hazards caused by these products.
- This topic can be extended with addition of organic and biodegradable sanitary pads.

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## THE ROARING COMEBACKS OF CORPORATE GIANTS

In business, trouble might manifest itself as a public relations disaster, bad management, a recession, or even labor issues. Even the most successful businesses across the globe have failed at some point in time. Very often some of the most well-known brands in the market go bankrupt and fall off the map. In such a situation the business is only left with two choices- come up with a great comeback strategy or goes down with losses and shut down the business. If managed with a brilliant strategy, rock bottom might be the turning point a firm needs to start climbing up to the top of the corporate ladder.

To make a great comeback, a massive rebranding campaign is required. Some companies have endured in the face of adversity, staging unparalleled corporate comebacks to re-establish themselves as viable, lucrative businesses. Here are some of the world-famous companies that engineered the most impressive comebacks and came back from the brink of bankruptcy.

### APPLE



*Illustration 1 (Source: iDropnews.com)*

Apple is long considered as the greatest company of all time by tech-savvy people and it is the first-ever public company to reach \$3 trillion in market value, roughly 500 days after it first hit the \$2 trillion level on Aug. 20, 2020.

But this monumental moment only happened after Apple successfully pulled off a historic turnaround when the company was on the verge of going bankrupt.



#### AUTHOR DETAILS

UPASANA CHATTERJEE

B.COM (EVENING)

2<sup>nd</sup> YEAR

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA



#### AUTHOR DETAILS

DR. SOMA NATH

ASSISANT PROFESSOR

DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMERCE (EVENING)

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA



**How did Apple hit rock bottom?**

After CEO Steve Jobs left Apple in 1985, the business fell into a ten-year downward spiral as its competitors took over the tech market. In 1997 when all other tech companies were reaching heights, Apple had annual losses of over a whopping \$1 billion. The board members even tried to sell the company but unfortunately, there were no takers. A group of Silicon Valley experts was even requested to provide recommendations on 'How to Save Apple?' Some of the suggestions included selling Apple to IBM, merging it with Sony or Sega, or Partnering with Oracle. They even suggested that Apple should transform itself from a computer manufacturing company to a consumer electronics company or it should hire a design firm like Porsche to construct a really attractive machine.

**But how did Apple save itself?**

In 1997 co-founder Steve Jobs returned to Apple. Jobs was called in as the interim CEO after the company had been failing to make profits for 12 years and was faced with cleaning up a corporate-sized disaster. He quickly acquired control of the firm and made three major decisions to bring Apple into financial solvency.

1. Steve Jobs obtained capital infusion from Microsoft. Microsoft agreed to invest \$150 million in Apple stock and the deal was announced at the '97 Macworld Expo. In exchange, Microsoft Office was made available for the Macintosh and the Internet Explorer was made the default browser, though not the only one, on the Mac.
2. Jobs expanded his product line to include iMacs, iPods, and iPhones. The PowerBook G4 was released in 2000, followed by the iPod in 2001, paving the way for Apple's transition from office supplies to personal electronics, culminating in the release of the first-ever iPhone in 2007.
3. Apple Stores were also established, placing his products in the spotlight that is in the front and center.

Apple's comeback story shows how difficult but courageous actions may change the course of events. They got rid of things that were no longer functioning and focused their efforts on areas where they might thrive. Today Apple is one of the greatest companies in the world and their comeback and massive success were squarely on Jobs and his team.

**STARBUCKS**



*Illustration 2 (Source: independent.co.uk)*



Starbucks is the largest coffee retailer in the world and is one of the best consumer experience-led brands. This Seattle-based coffee giant was founded in 1971 and as of today, it has around 32000 stores across the globe. The price range of Starbucks has always been higher than that of other coffee shops but it unquestionably offers us great service and a warm environment that makes it a perfect spot for working away from the office. For all these reasons we know Starbucks as a massively successful brand but many of us don't know how it managed to pull itself out of the financial crisis of 2008 by using social media to match its operations with customer needs.

### **The downfall of Starbucks**

Due to its high prices, Starbucks suffered during the 2008 economic downturn, as customers sought out cheaper alternatives for their daily coffee. Starbucks was compelled to close 600 locations that were not profitable. By March 30, 2008, it failed to make profits and its earnings had dropped by 28% compared to that of 2007. By the next year, it shut down another 300 outlets and continued to downsize by laying off another 6,700 workers.

Starbucks' reputation plummeted to new lows.

### **The turning point**

On January 8, 2008, Howard D. Schultz, who served as the CEO since 1982 when it had as few as 4 outlets, replaced Jim Donald as CEO of Starbucks, following an eight-year gap.

Upon his return, Schultz analyzed the worsening condition of Starbucks. In addition, Starbucks was struggling to fight its rival McDonald's, which began opening espresso-serving coffee shops in 2008. To rise from the face of obscurity, Starbucks, under the guidance of Schultz, decided to shift its focus from bureaucracy and decided to focus on improving customer attachment. He also said that Starbucks' large-scale development has resulted in a bureaucracy that has obscured the company's difficulties. To make a turnaround, Starbucks came up with a set of unique strategies.

1. Employees were encouraged to think openly about the company and offer plans and ideas in this setting. As a result, a notion of community engagement was created. To give importance to not only its employees but also to its customers, Starbucks rolled out —My Starbucks Idea in March 2008. As a part of this campaign, customers were encouraged to provide feedback on a variety of topics, including items, services, layout, advertising, CSR, in-store music, and so on. Around 1.3 million individuals contributed over 93,000 ideas on social media, while monthly page visits increased to 5.5 million. Soon, Starbucks was back on track and over a hundred proposals were executed. It gained a large following as a result of this approach. It successfully rekindled brand trust by offering people a place to express their thoughts and opinions about the company, and by reacting to them. This social media marketing strategy turned out to be a massive success.
2. Starbucks was technologically more advanced than its competitors. It integrated and strengthened its social media community through iPhone app features including shop location, nutrition-based information, and rewards program.
3. Through the 'MyStarbucksSignature' project, consumers were allowed to create their signature beverages (hot or cold coffee), name them, and share them with the community.
4. The marketing teams began a drive in 2008 to increase consumer visits to stores during the morning hours. It offered a complimentary pastry with the purchase of a coffee before 10:30 a.m. The campaign gained popularity online, with over a million people queuing at Starbucks locations around the United States.

All these social media campaigns were less expensive compared to other promotional methods and it helped Starbucks regain its reputation as a luxurious coffee brand.



## MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT



*Illustration 3 (Source: jackofalltechs.com)*

If you are a diehard fan of MCU, you must have watched Spider-Man: No Way Home, and since its December premiere on the big screen, No Way Home has broken one record after another. On its way to becoming one of the most successful films of all time, the film is the first Hollywood film to accomplish pre-pandemic level business. Overseas, No Way Home has grossed over \$1.02 billion for a worldwide total of \$1.77 billion, making it the sixth highest-grossing film of all time which is a huge success for Marvel. Marvel's Disney+ jams even kept fans pleased for the whole year of 2021. Today, Marvel's net worth stands at around \$10 billion. But just like a darkest hour moment may be found in almost every great superhuman movie, Marvel's darkest hour hit around 25 years back when it went bankrupt.

### **How Marvel went bankrupt**

Marvel's commercial success had reached a high by the early 1990s, owing to the frequently spectacular art and storyline in such books as Fantastic Four and The Amazing Spider-Man. Marvel's stock value plummeted after a succession of collapsing financial booms and shady business agreements; shares that were previously worth \$35.75 each in 1993 had plummeted to \$2.375 three years later. Following an unpleasant brawl amongst a group of extremely wealthy investors, the company's future appeared to be in jeopardy for a while. Nonetheless, Marvel clawed its way out of the ashes a decade later as a film industry juggernaut, despite the corporate rock bottom it hit that haunted the firm in late 1996 and for many months following.

The company declared bankruptcy two years before the release of Blade, the first contemporary Marvel film. Blade was a moderate hit, but X-Men helped restart the contemporary age of superhero films, and Spider-Man made almost \$400 million. Those Marvel movies started to generate a lot of money, but it was for everyone but Marvel. Blade grossed \$70 million in the United States, while Marvel only got a pittance of \$25,000. Marvel gained no money from the popularity of X-Men due to a flat-fee agreement.

### **The heroic comeback of Marvel**

In 2003, David Maisel, an Endeavor talent agent, came up with a revolutionary idea of creating Marvel's own production house and producing in-house titles to retain 100% profits. In 2005, Marvel achieved a huge breakthrough when it struck a contract with Merrill Lynch. Marvel was putting up its crown assets — figures like Captain America — as collateral in the sale, which seemed hazardous. If the movies fail to produce money, the superheroes will be sold to the bank. Nevertheless, Marvel Studios, an internal production business that would "give Marvel ultimate creative control" over its films, was unveiled after the Marvel board accepted Maisel's concept and a seven-year, \$525 million funding pact with Merrill Lynch was disclosed. Marvel said Iron



Man will be its first independent production shortly after the transaction with Merill Lynch was completed. Iron Man grossed over \$500 million, and Marvel has never looked back. The next watershed moment occurred in 2009 when Disney bought Marvel for a staggering \$4.3 billion.

Marvel has had a stunning turnaround from a firm that was failing to make profits 20 years ago. Marvel, like a superhero, triumphed in the face of adversity in 1996, pulling a multibillion-dollar win from the jaws of loss.

## **CONCLUSION**

Surviving a downturn with financial performance that is barely acceptable to the company's many stakeholders might be enough for a successful comeback. In other circumstances, the recovery may result in the business obtaining long-term, higher performance, enhancing its competitive position in the market. Companies that have completed a turnaround are often better in terms of management, operations, and market response. They are better equipped to plan, manage, and respond to changes in their corporate environment now that they have gone through so much change throughout the turnaround. Of course, not every company can achieve a successful turnaround in this manner. Some firms may succeed in reducing losses, only to discover that they are unable to maintain a satisfactory return on investment. When this happens, the firm's managers may opt to sell it to a corporation with the resources to outperform it. Even if this was not the expected conclusion of the turnaround program, it may nevertheless be considered a success. Indeed, under new ownership, the company may thrive and provide even better outcomes. Turnarounds may be a stressful and unpredictable moment. The key to success is to ensure that the company is focused on delivering quick results, with top management adopting a, results-oriented leadership style that builds momentum and serves as a catalyst for change.

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## THE “BIG QUIT” CRISIS AND HOW AUTOMATION WILL LEAD TO THE BIG BACKFIRE



### AUTHOR DETAILS

**ADITYA BHAUMIK**  
BACHELOR OF COMMERCE  
(MORNING)  
2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR  
ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

The pandemic has taught us that we don't need to be in offices to efficiently perform a variety of duties that were previously thought to be mostly in-person jobs.

The emerging landscape of digital business has provided employees with greater flexibility, more spare time, and a greater sense of freedom and control over their work-life. People would not want to go back to the status quo now that they've had a taste of what's possible.

### What is The Big Quit?

The "Big Quit," also known as the "Great Resignation" is a post-vaccination phenomenon characterised by an unprecedented number of individuals abandoning their employment and re-evaluating their professions.

Professor Anthony Klotz of Texas A&M University proposed the notion after millions of employees voluntarily departed their employment last year as a result of dramatic adjustments implemented by corporations due to the pandemic.

Resignations were greater among low-wage workers than among those earning higher wages, with retail, hospitality, warehousing, healthcare, transportation, education, and other industries suffering the most. In April 2021, a record 4 million workers in the United States will leave their occupations, the majority of whom will be in low-wage, inflexible industries like retail.

The same thing is happening in higher-paying industries, and even highly sought-after corporations like Apple are rushing to avert mass resignations with return-to-work policies.

### The Case of India

In India, too, with a dramatic increase in attrition rates in the December quarter, the 'great resignation' is at its peak in the previous three years. According to a recent LinkedIn poll, 82 per cent of India's young professionals desire to change employment this year. Some of the primary reasons that employees contemplate changing employment include improved work-life balance, greater appreciation, improved working flexibility, and higher pay. Frequent disruptions caused by covid have diminished job security in various service sector positions, resulting in an employee migration from these industries.

The travel and hospitality sector has taken the bulk of the impact. While the hotel business has lost 30% of its employees due to fewer students enrolling in new courses, the tourist industry has seen nearly 60% of its workers shift to other, more secure jobs. As a result, many companies are now confronting a severe human capital shortage. Employers are at a disadvantage since the outbreak has resulted in a significant increase in demand for IT services as businesses expedite their digital strategy. Many experts switched positions in the IT and ITeS industries, indicating churn.



This has resulted in a recruiting frenzy among Indian IT enterprises in 2022. Revenue growth at industry behemoth Infosys, for example, more than quadrupled to 21 per cent year on year in Q2, 2021 from pre-pandemic levels.

| Top 3 IT companies | Attrition rate in Q3 FY22 | Attrition rate in Q2 FY22 |
|--------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Infosys            | 25.5%                     | 20.1%                     |
| TCS                | 15.3%                     | 11.9%                     |
| Wipro              | 22.7%                     | 20.5%                     |

Illustration 1: Attrition Rates in the top 3 IT companies of India

Cognizant Technology Solutions lost a staggering 37 per cent of its 300,000-plus India-dominated talent pool on a yearly basis in the September quarter, compared to 21 per cent before the outbreak. There has been a significant increase in demand for larger houses as individuals seek to incorporate home offices and e-schooling in their residences. While the situation in India is not as bad as it is in the United States, studies show that things are becoming worse.

### Rest of the World

The tendency of resigning was also observed elsewhere. In OECD nations, about 14 million players have left the labour force and are classed as "not working" or "voluntarily unemployed". Many nations in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Britain, have seen a decline in skilled labour force participation.

An interesting trend observed in the US is that the majority of the workforce quitting their employment are mid-level professionals. This also implies that these individuals have a market worth outside of their current company, as well as the expertise and contacts to secure better employment prospects or select start-ups — something which younger professionals lack and senior-level employees cannot do since their retirement is near.

### Why are so many people quitting their jobs?

#### 1. Rise in start-ups:

This has two impacts –

a. Hiring for start-ups has increased - In recent years, we've seen an increase in the number of start-ups employing directly from universities. As a result, the present employees will have more options to switch if they so want.

b. New ventures - People are leaving their employment in greater numbers to create their own businesses. In the previous decade, India's whole start-up ecosystem has gone a long way. With increased cash availability and broadband penetration, we are seeing new businesses create world-class products for Indian as well as global customers. In 2021, we witnessed 42 unicorns, which is 10% more than the previous year.

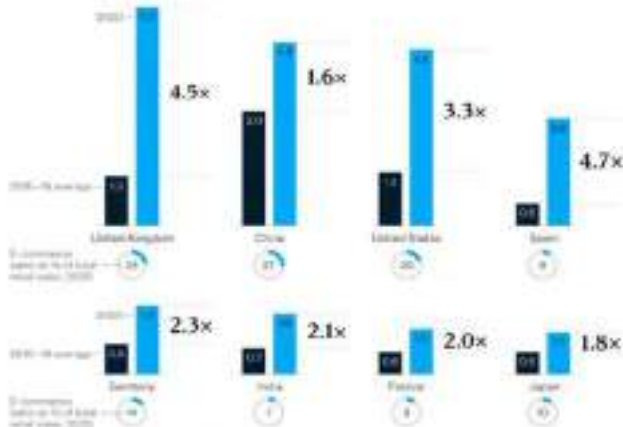
#### 2. Growth of remote jobs:

A FlexJobs poll of 2,100 employees issued in April, shows the top perks of remote work are the elimination of commuting and cost benefits. Working remotely saves more than a third of participants over \$5,000 a year.



E-commerce has grown two to five times faster than before the pandemic.

Year-over-year growth of e-commerce as share of total retail sales, percentage points



Source: McKinsey

Illustration 2: A survey of 2,181 total respondents (FlexJobs employees)

According to Gallup, 45 per cent of full-time employees worked entirely or partially remotely in September. Employees now have more options since they can work from home. Individuals now have exposure to thousands of databases that were previously regionally restricted. Companies in the United States and Europe have realised that hiring people from developing nations such as India is significantly more cost-effective. As a result, there will be more remote opportunities available for not just the present workforce, but also university students and others with no experience.

### 3. Work-life balance:

The epidemic has taught us all a lesson in remote work and work-life balance. As a result, for some employees, the work-life balance improved, while for others, it was thrown into disarray. This prompted individuals to consider what type of work-life balance they desired and whether transferring to another organisation might enhance their current situation.

According to a Microsoft poll performed in 31 countries, roughly 41 per cent of employees want to quit their occupations.

#### Review of Studies

Many studies have been conducted about the Big Quit in India and the rest of the world. According to such studies, the pandemic is the single most important reason driving greater attrition rates not just in the West but also in India. A major emphasis has been on the employer-employee relationship, job satisfaction and the opportunity cost of employees.

#### MIT Sloan Management Review

A study published in the MIT Sloan Management Review concluded that record attrition is being driven mostly by a hostile work culture. Glassdoor review evaluations from more than 600 organisations revealed that in predicting attrition, toxic work culture was 10 times more relevant than income. It was the most common factor that caused workers to quit.

#Quitmyjob has recently been one of the most prominent hashtags on Tiktok and Instagram, with a large number of "I resigned" videos being submitted on a weekly basis. Surprisingly significant numbers of people are adopting the "antiwork" ethos and marching out of their employment. Over the previous year, the Reddit site "r/antiwork," has accumulated over 920,000 subscribers and averaged over 1,400 daily postings.

According to the study, the industries with the greatest rates of attrition include retail clothing, management consultancy services, internet, enterprise application (all of which witnessed above 14% rates of attrition). Specialised retail, fast food, hotels and leisure, and research hospitals, (all of which witnessed 11% rates of attrition). It was also discovered that owing to work cultures, the attrition rates of firms within each industry differed greatly. For instance, in the Aerospace industry, Boeing had an attrition rate of 6.2 per cent, whereas, for SpaceX, it was 21.2 per cent.



These discrepancies might reflect how much corporate leadership, rather than merely the macro-economic factors in an industry, influences work culture and attrition.

- Other significant predictors of attrition are:
- Job insecurity
- An inadequate reaction to Covid-19
- Inability to acknowledge employee performance

### **Forbes Poll**

- 95 per cent of the workforce say they are prepared to leave their companies.
- Since April 2021, over four million Americans have resigned; 68 per cent believe they will resign if they are compelled to return to work.
- 3 million women have departed due to family responsibilities.

Here's what today's workers are seeking:

- Impatient employees are more inclined to migrate to organisations that offer fresh prospects that their present employer is reluctant or unable to deliver.
- They're looking for promotions that they can't seem to acquire at work, as well as a decent wage boost.
- They want to be able to work from home and have the flexibility in their daily lives that they've grown accustomed to.
- They are searching for visionary leaders to work with and are no longer prepared to put up with incompetent supervisors.
- After going through a lot in the last year and a half, many people are rethinking their career choices and looking for work where they can contribute meaningfully. They are striving for a sense of purpose and shared vision at work.

### **Bloomberg:**

Nearly 40% of white-collar workers would sooner quit their employment than give up workplace flexibility.

### **US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)**

In September 2021, 4.4 million people resigned, a 17% rise over August.

In July 2021, the number of quits as a percentage of total employment reached a new high of 2.9 per cent.

### **The Big Quit - Trends**

Let's have a look at some facts to better comprehend the shifting work scene.

1. Attrition in IT Industry: Looking at the statistics from India's top five IT players, we can see very significant turnover rates in 2021. This fiscal year, the top four IT companies alone will hire 160k college grads, and this does not include lateral hiring.



Illustration 3: Employee attrition rates in the Indian IT sector

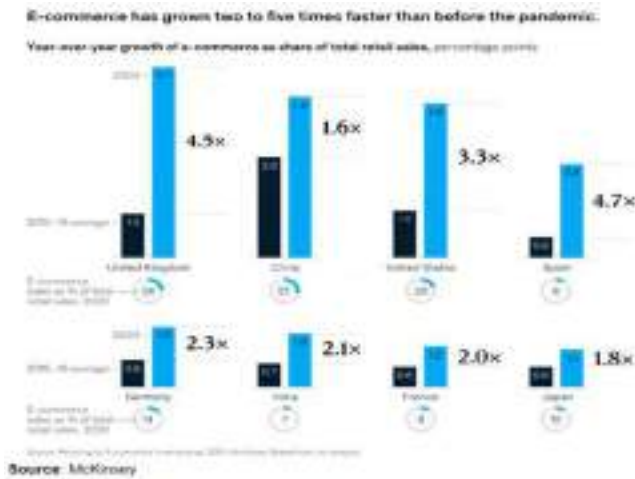


Illustration 4: Worldwide year-on-year growth of e-commerce as share of total retail sales

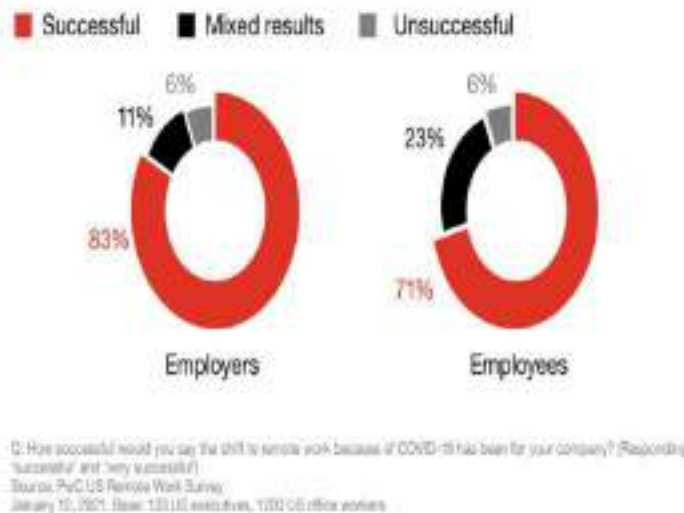


Illustration 5 : Landscape of remote work

2. Rapid Growth of E-Commerce: Covid has increased e-commerce adoption in India, with start-ups such as Practo expanding 10X between April and November 2020. When compared to pre-pandemic levels, E-commerce expanded 2-5X quicker on average. The expansion created additional job possibilities in the E-commerce sector.

3. Landscape of remote work: According to Gallup, 9 out of 10 remote employees want to continue working from home in some capacity. These statistics, along with the fact that firms may save significant amounts of money, indicates that remote work isn't going away. Furthermore, as the world shifts online, corporations such as Facebook and Microsoft are investing heavily in remote employment within their metaverse. This depicts the future of remote employment, which opens up more chances for everyone.

## The Big Backfire

You've certainly heard about the large number of people who have departed their jobs this year. Have you considered what comes next? As more and more employees quit their jobs, the remaining employees and firms face more pressure to fill in the gap and pick up the pace of work. Businesses have no choice but to be more efficient in order to exist. The problem arises when we



fail to grasp the repercussions of our collective decision to create these situations. And there are repercussions. Businesses face higher wage bills as a result of the higher employee turnover and labour shortages. Such costs must be recovered and will eventually be passed on to consumers. During this time, consumers are also trying to outsource or find substitute suppliers in order to bypass rising prices. This suggests that the cost increase may lose the firm business with core clients and, in the worst-case scenario, lead to the company's extinction, resulting in job losses at all levels. That tipping point is approaching fast, and the path to it has been created by outrageous retail inflation observed not only in India but globally. Consumers will protest the rise in prices, and those same consumers will have abandoned their jobs, thereby contributing to the increase in the cost of items supplied by companies. Technology-enabled the growth of reliable remote workspaces and video conferencing platforms, resulting in huge resignations. The same technology will be responsible for the job market's demise.

### **What happens when human labour is no longer cost-effective (the tipping point)?**

Businesses are constantly innovating. They automate and locate manpower in locations where people want to work. The pandemic taught individuals that they can perform a wide range of tasks from the comfort of their own homes. They'll eventually realise that a large range of tasks can be automated or outsourced to regions where salary expectations are far lower. No job is immune to automation. Technology is increasingly evolving to replace skilled and specialised professional jobs, particularly in the industrial and IT sector. Even if organisations do not want to go down this path, the long-term costs related to attracting and retaining people will force them to reduce personnel, outsource, and automate. People who quit their jobs in search of better opportunities will realise that there is nothing to fall back on. AI, innovation, and automation are all on the way and the “Big Quit” is simply hastening this adaptation.

### **The Solution**

The most reasonable and practicable solution is for value-adding employees to stick to their jobs, and for businesses to promote a healthy work environment for their employees. However, this is not as easy as it sounds, and automation has already made significant inroads. What about those of us who hope to find work in the future? The antidote to automation are the human components that make humans genuinely indispensable: Enthusiasm; Empathy; Innovation; Aspiration; Commitment. Automation is unavoidable, but it is far from being humane. It cannot provide the human touch and insight into jobs. Businesses will use automation to enhance their workforce productivity and efficiency instead of completely replacing them.

### **Conclusion**

Rise in working remotely, shift to digital payments, good internet access, and adoption of automation - all of this, along with the major driver being COVID, has radically transformed the work environment. One could now work for a Fortune 500 firm or a Unicorn start-up from anywhere on the planet. Opportunities are significantly greater than they were ten years ago. Change is here, and it's safe to assume that it's here to stay, regardless of what side of the argument you're on.

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## USE OF SENSORY BRANDING IN ENHANCING RECALL VALUE OF CUSTOMERS



### AUTHOR DETAILS

ARITRO KUNDU

BACHELOR OF  
MANAGEMENT STUDIES

3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

“I'm Lovin' It!” One can hear it before even reading it. When American star singer Justin Timberlake was roped in to sing McDonald's iconic jingle back in 2003, little did the company know that it would soon become one of the most popular lines in the world of branding. Timberlake reportedly mentioned later in his career that he regretted this decision, but McDonald's certainly did not. Contrary to this, their total revenue went up by 11.23% in 2004 i.e., the next financial year, indicating a positive effect on sales. Even today, this particular line acts both as a visual and auditory stimulus to all those who had been exposed to it earlier, and have since associated it with the brand. When one sees or hears the words, “I'm Lovin' It!” tasty burgers, Ronald McDonald - the clown, etc. come to his/her mind. Such is the power of sensory branding.



*Illustration 1 (Source: IMDb)*

But McDonald's is not the only example. There exist many such brands that use sensory branding as a weapon to create an identity for themselves in the marketing war. Some use it to generate awareness about a new brand amongst consumers, while others may do so to increase brand recall. In the first case, when a company tries to connect its brand with their TA (Target Audience), they must understand that they are

dealing with human beings after all. The power of sensory branding is as good as people's responsiveness to their senses. A branching question may be asked with regard to this. What is the science behind using the subconscious to establish brand identity? Thankfully, there is an answer to this question. Given that people generally respond to stimuli through any of their five senses, the sensory memory gets stored in their subconscious mind. 95% of the human brain is subconscious. So, there is ample capacity to absorb such information, in the form of signals. Here's another interesting fact. Studies have shown people can remember a scent with 65% accuracy after one year. This explains the reason behind companies adopting this branding technique across industries. For instance, Singapore Airlines has promoted its fragrance in the form of its scent brand Stefan Floridian Waters since the 1990s, by pumping it in their flight cabin space, using it as the perfume worn by their flight attendants, and also in hot towels served to the passengers. The aroma being a blend of rose, lavender and citrus is a unique experience



for a first-time flier of Singapore Airlines. By stimulating the olfactory system of the individual, the brand not only propagates the scent, but also the feeling of comfort, assurance, familiarity, quality, and good customer service.



*Illustration 2 (Source: Sci Culture)*

Clearly, sensory branding has played a major role in acting as a growth enabler for both McDonald's and Singapore Airlines over the years. However, this technique has also been used by brands to enhance what is known as customer recall value. Brand recall is a psychological phenomenon, which considers the brand to be an entity possessing certain unique characteristics. These characteristics are not subdued. They are made to be openly experienced by the TA to create a brand presence in their minds. These traits can trigger the senses of consumers, who would then associate them with that brand. An example of

this could be Apple's retail outlets' design. Apple has standardized the layout of its retail stores across the world, and there is a purpose behind this strategy. This is actually a sensory branding



*Illustration 3 (Source: Apple Insider)*

move, but since it has been executed in a very subtle manner through design, it may not be obvious to a common person. Apple's physical stores are designed to be transparent from the outside looking in and vice versa. The walls are kept plain white without any distracting images or posters and the stores wear a minimal look overall. As intended, this gives a feeling of trust, sophistication, and clarity to the people visiting their

outlets. Now how does this affect recall value? Every time someone spots a similar-looking store in a mall or even in isolation, the first brand that probably comes to their mind is Apple. Even the logo of the brand may not be needed to establish this, the visual characteristics are enough. Many other brands have tried to emulate this same sensory branding approach, using the consumer's eye as the receptor.

What about taste? It is almost unthinkable for any brand to use taste as a sense to attract their TA virtually (through television, internet, and other digital media). But physically, the best way to go about it is to use an element of the sales promotional mix referred to as sampling. Free sampling of a brand's offerings is a desirable way to introduce the brand or the products under the brand, to potential customers. A lot of food and beverage manufacturing companies use sampling to aid sensory branding, across regions. Let's consider Pretzel Crisps, a unique chips brand under Campbell Soup Company. Pretzel Crisps was launched in 2004. It was a pretzel (knot-like baked pastry of German origin) shaped chip which was a new concept in the market at that point in time. But the taste was not completely alien, as most Americans had by then, had tried a pretzel or a chip. So, the brand decided to target the local populous i.e., typical American consumers, by sampling the chips through existing channels for chips and pretzels in the target geographies.



Illustration 4 (Source: Amazon.com)

Using the people’s existing knowledge of such snacks, Pretzel Crisps were able to make themselves prominent and also generated decently high recall value from the sampling process. This can be evidenced by an article published by Upserve, a popular restaurant management company, which reports that almost 25% of the individuals who sampled the Pretzel Chips during the promotion ended up purchasing the product.

The scope of sensory branding in today’s world is endless. India as a market is an opportunity for further experimentation in this area. Larger scientific branding techniques such as neuromarketing are also being

increasingly employed by companies to play with the psyche of consumers. Companies/brands like Oreo, Spotify, Hyatt, and others have actively tried using sensory branding in different ways, to create an identity for themselves amongst Indian consumers. More trendy approaches are also being made in the form of digital sensory marketing, a subset of sensory branding.

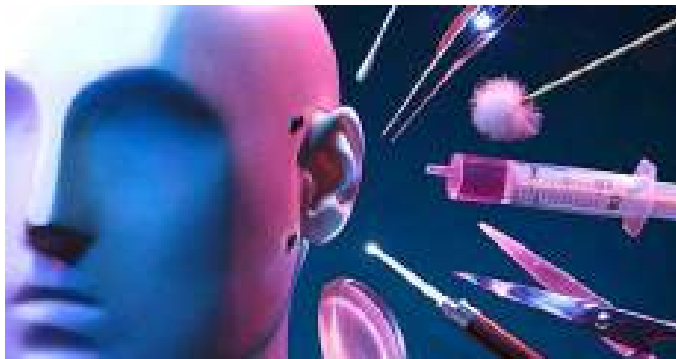


Illustration 5 (Source: Diaridelallengua)

This has led to a shift in the paradigm of how sensory branding has traditionally been done by brands. An example of digital sensory marketing is ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response). BEHR, an American paint and wood care product supplier is one of the well-known companies to have adopted this approach. They created a sensory experience for social media fans through an ASMR video of the

painting process, complete with soothing sounds and satisfying visual effects like dripping paint. ASMR videos are widely watched on platforms like YouTube, Vimeo, etc., and have a dedicated viewer group. Hence, using existing trends on the internet to create desirable content for people is an innovative way to expand the customer base.



Illustration 6 (Source: Shutterstock)



How sensory branding is done also has an impact on the perception of the individuals subject to it, about the concerned brand. Brand recall value can only be enhanced if some value is created in the first place, in the mind of the consumers. However, sensory branding if used in the right way, can create a long-lasting impact, as in the case of the brands that could successfully utilize it. Though it is a concept that still needs research and understanding of its finer aspects, the bottom-line remains that sensory branding is one of the most interesting branding techniques out there.

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## HOW ACCURATE ETA'S SAVED AIRLINES MILLIONS



### AUTHOR DETAILS

ARUSHI BAJORIA

B.Sc STATISTICS

2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

While at an airport, our lives revolve around the Estimated Time of Arrival and Estimated Time of Departure of our flights. But have you ever stopped to wonder how the ETA (or Estimated Time of Arrival) of aircrafts is actually calculated?

In the 1990s and before, it was the pilots' duty to report the accurate times of arrival of their aircraft. These estimations were supposed to be forwarded as they approached the airport to land their flight. Pilots often reported imprecise or faulty ETAs as they were multitasking between keeping the airplane steady, preparing for the landing, coordinating with the air-traffic control and doing a million other things to ensure a safe touch-down. Inaccurate ETAs were the source of a lot of frustration. It would not only hamper the plans of

the passengers and crew, but it would also cost the airline millions of dollars each year. If planes land before the ETA, the crew and passengers would be confined to the aircraft while they waited for the ground crew to get ready. If the plane lands after the ETA, the ground crew would be ready and be sitting idle, increasing the costs the airline must incur. Neither of these situations are not optimal.

A domestic US Airline Carrier noticed, during an internal audit, that almost 30% of their flights into their major hub had a 5-minute gap between their estimated and actual time of arrival, with at least 10% having a gap of more than 10 minutes. This was driving up their overheads substantially, and they decided to take matters into their own hands. They believed that there had to be a better way of estimating ETAs than following the industry trend of depending on error-prone humans. They contacted PASSUR Aerospace, a data company which provided assistance in decision-making in aviation, to help them predict better ETAs in 2001. PASSUR had begun using publicly available data about flight schedules, local weather and data about the nearby flights to estimate the ETAs. This, clubbed with the data the airline carrier had collected over the years, made it possible for PASSUR to create a better solution for the problem – Right ETA. Right ETA was a mechanism for estimating accurate ETAs using the vast quantity of data at hand, and it used sophisticated algorithms which tended to improve accuracy over time.

PASSUR installed radar stations near airports to gather more accurate data about flights and weather to predict almost spot-on ETAs for incoming flights.

They started with only a handful of such installations, but they had 150+ radar stations installed by 2012. Every 4.6 seconds, PASSUR collects immense amounts of data about every flight their radars can pick. They store the said data to allow their models to learn from and better predict ETAs in the future. The large amount of data collected, both in quantity and varied multi-dimensional varieties, allows for sophisticated analysis and pattern-tracking to make Right ETA even more accurate.



The working of Right ETA is best explained by - “Right ETA essentially works by asking itself “What happened all the previous times a plane approached this airport under these conditions? When did it actually land?” Right ETAs ability to correct itself due to the things it has learnt from processing the floods of data allows it to almost totally eliminate the gap between the Estimated and Actual times of Arrival.

PASSUR believes that they have caused the airlines to save millions of dollars every year through Right ETA and provides airline with very valuable data on when their plans tend to land. The aviation industry has now moved on from depending on pilots and hoping they would report accurate ETAs and now depend on Big Data to make more reliable and precise ETA predictions.

Using data caused airlines to make better predictions, and better predictions lead to better, more beneficial decisions. Most companies, even in today’s world, depend on the decisions a select few individuals (a part of their top management) make, and these decisions seriously affect the outcome and output of their firm. These decisions are often made on the back of the intuition of the decision-makers as well as their “experience and expertise”, but seldom on the data. Human intuition is not the best decision maker and humans are prone to make errors and have biases. This makes an argument for encouraging the decision-makers to make their policies on the basis of the vast amount of data at hand, and deviate from making baseless assumptions. Data-backed decisions tend to be more transparent and provide better results. Companies recognise this and there has been a positive trend in the number of companies making data-backed decisions in the past decade.

I would like to end on the clarifying note that using data to make decisions doesn’t eliminate the need for humans to be the final decision-makers. Managers are vital for asking the right questions and using proper data to draw relevant inferences. A perfect synergy between humans using available data to their advantage would result in better decisions in the future!

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## TORCHES OF FREEDOM- THE FIRST EVER PR CAMPAIGN



### AUTHOR DETAILS

**ASHMITA MUKHERJEE**  
 BACHELOR OF COMMERCE  
 (EVENING)  
 1<sup>st</sup> YEAR  
 ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
 (AUTONOMOUS),  
 KOLKATA

### INTRODUCTION

Prior to the twentieth century smoking was considered to be a habit that was corrupt and inappropriate for women. Cigarettes were used by Dutch artists as a symbol of human foolishness in the 17th century and in the 19th century, the public perceived the women who consumed cigarettes to be fallen and prostitutes and not fit to be a part of the society.

Women's smoking was seen as immoral and some states even tried to persuade women to stop smoking by enforcing laws. In 1923, women constituted only 5% of the consumers of cigarettes. However, in 1929 the figure increased to 12% and 33.3% in the year 1965.

The reason behind this massive transformation in consumption habits was the world's first PR campaign popularly known as the Torches of Freedom led by Edward Bernays, the father of Public Relations. The phrase "torches of freedom" refers to cigarettes that became a symbol of gender equality. The historic campaign involved women's aspiration to end misogyny by being equal with men and a mastermind who knew exactly what was to be done in that situation.



*Illustration 1 (Source: New World Encyclopedia)*

### EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE TORCHES OF FREEDOM:

- In 1904, a lady with the name of Jennie Lasher was imprisoned for 30 days as it was claimed that she had put her children's morals at risk by smoking in front of them.
- In 1908, the New York City Board of Aldermen mutually came upon a decision and passed an ordinance that made it illegal for women to smoke in public.



### AUTHOR DETAILS

**AMBUSHREE MONDAL**  
 BACHELOR OF COMMERCE  
 (EVENING)  
 1<sup>st</sup> YEAR  
 ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
 (AUTONOMOUS),  
 KOLKATA



- In 1921, a bill was proposed which did not allow women to smoke in the District of Columbia. There were also a group of women who took a stand against female smoking.
- The International Tobacco League influenced the film-makers to refrain from showing women smoking cigarettes in movies unless the role played by the women was shown as a woman of questionable character and young girls were forced to sign pledges to never smoke tobacco by some women's groups that viewed smoking as an immoral activity and a threat.

### THE PR CAMPAIGN

In late 1920s, tobacco companies selectively advertised to women fearing the social taboo and made sure that they never made any derogatory remarks against women for smoking. Due to the presence of such restrictions and a social taboo, women were not in the list of target consumers of tobacco companies. George Washington Hill realised in 1928 that they were missing out on another half of human population that could be their potential consumers.

According to him it would be like a gold mine in front of their yard if women started smoking. Hill hired Edward Bernays to realize the same. Bernays was successful in understanding the psychology and opportunities from the social movements at that time and framed the world's first PR Strategy. He was going to do something that would soon be the headline of newspapers across the globe.



*Illustration 2: George Washington Hill  
(Source: New World Encyclopedia)*



*Illustration 3: Edward Bernays  
(Source: New World Encyclopedia)*

On the occasion of the Easter Sunday parade, 1929 as people crowded the fifth avenue in New York, a group of some highly respected models and women of the city marched down the roads smoking the torches of freedom in the presence of common people, journalists, photographers and even dignitaries. People were shocked at this event and the news spread like wildfire. It continued to appear in the newspaper for many days after making the headline "An ancient prejudice has been removed".



*Illustration 4: The march  
(Source: New World Encyclopedia)*



*Illustration 5: Headlines  
(Source: New World Encyclopedia)*



## CONSEQUENCES

During World War I women had to take over the jobs and “roles” of men who had to go to war. It was around this time that the first wave of feminism took place that aimed at resolving many social and legal issues including Women’s right to vote. A few women began smoking even though it was still considered a taboo act. For them it became an instrument to challenge social norms and fight for equality and the same position as men in the society. Gradually, cigarettes became a symbol of rebellious independence. Therefore this social movement created a foundation for the campaign to become a success. On being appointed by the president of the American Tobacco Company, Bernays consulted with A.A Brill, a psychoanalyst and obtained valuable insights. He informed Bernays that it was a natural tendency for women to smoke due to their oral fixation and that their increased involvement in mainstream jobs and activities masked their feminine traits. Bernays started with his plan by convincing French fashion designers to include a specific shade of green in their latest fashion line which was the colour of the packaging of lucky strikes, the leading cigarette brand at that time. The owner of the brand informed him that changing the colour of their packaging would be very expensive therefore he decided to incorporate green in women’s fashion.



*Illustration 6: Lucky strike packaging  
(Source: WHO International)*



*Illustration 7: Green in fashion  
(Source: New World Encyclopedia)*

He also organised a green gala and invited eminent members of the society to discuss public smoking. The idea was to penetrate into the lives, habits , tastes and preferences of women and encourage them to smoke. He succeeded in making women’s liberation as the central theme of the entire campaign.

Bernays paid models to march down the fifth avenue following Bertha Hunt , who was in fact Bernays’ secretary and pre-informed journalists to cover the ‘scandalous’ event. Similar marches took place in San Francisco, Boston and Detroit. Philip Morris, a British tobacconist and cigarette importer even sponsored a lecture on the “art of smoking”.

Cigarettes are even advertised as a fat free replacement of snacks to match the emerging trend of slim figure. Bernays campaign was a huge success as the tobacco consumption in women more than doubled. As per reports the percentage of women consuming cigarettes in New York City is around 22 percent in today’s time and 9 percent globally. Bernays strategy is an example of intelligent and conscious manipulation of human opinions.

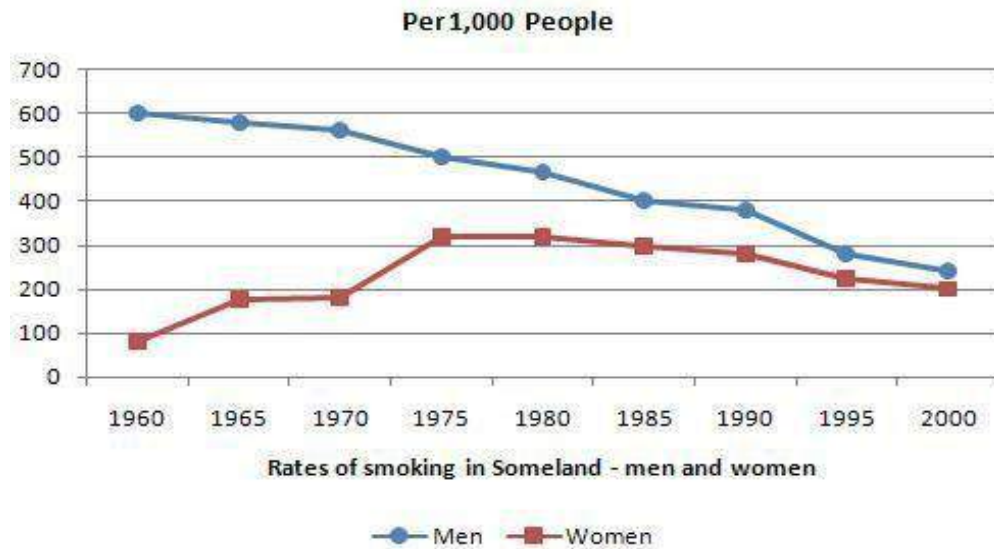


Illustration 7 (Data Source: Essay Forum)

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## EUROPEAN FOOTBALL



### AUTHOR DETAILS

**DARIUS CYRUS MODI**

B.COM (MORNING)

2<sup>nd</sup> YEAR

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

In today's world, sports play a vital role in keeping people entertained. They also provide careers for the athletes. There are many kinds of sports: ball sports, motor sports and physical, hand-to-hand sports. Among the ball sports, football is the most popular in the world. Over half the world is involved in the sport, in some capacity or the other. Players, coaches, managers, owners, board members, kitmen, grounds people, ball boys, referees and most importantly, the fans.

### FANS

No one can deny the impact of the fans in the game, charging up the teams from the stands. The home crowd, larger in numbers, create a very hostile atmosphere that can cause even the most strong-willed individual to become weak at the knees. A simple example of this in Anfield, Liverpool FC's home ground. It is one of the most electric stadiums in England, if not in Europe. The fans come into the stadium, energised to the maximum. Teams come to Anfield hoping to win, but the atmosphere inside the stadium is such that, by halftime, the visiting team would be hoping for just a draw. Liverpool did not win an English Premier League title for nearly thirty years, but they did win two UEFA Champions League Titles in 2005 and 2019. The most significant home game that they played in those two campaigns was arguably against Barcelona, where they were three goals down in the first leg, away from home.

The teams came into Anfield, Liverpool without two key players. That did not matter, as the atmosphere in the stadium looked to shake the wills of the Barcelona players. Liverpool had two men who set up four goals between them, to claw back and win 4-0 that night, and 4-3 on aggregate, sending them into a second consecutive UEFA Champions League Final, which they eventually won. The following season, Liverpool raced ahead of everyone else to win their first English Premier League title in nearly thirty years. They went on an unbeaten streak that lasted 44 games in the Premier League, stretching back to the season prior. But before that match, they had won every game in that season, drawing only one.

They were riding on the confidence that they had attained by winning the Champions League the previous season. The fans were behind them as well, and the team thrived on the pressure.

Another example of fans getting behind a team can be found in Germany. Here, the fans are very invested in their teams. The clubs are literally owned by the fans, who enjoy a holding of fifty per cent of the shares, plus one additional share of the club. Some exceptions are: Bayer Leverkusen, VfL Wolfsburg, 1899 Hoffenheim, RB Leipzig. So no matter what happens, the fans will be asked of their opinions and it will not be taken lightly. Every team has a strong backing and even when they are out for the count, the fans still get behind them, even if all they do is give a small confidence boost to the players. If we take the example of Borussia Dortmund's "Yellow Wall",



the freestanding grandstand with the capacity of 25,000. Imagine rolling up to Signal Iduna Park (Dortmund’s home stadium), as an opposing player, and seeing a giant wall of yellow behind the goalkeeper. I do not think that anyone would want to be in that situation. This is what an opposition player sees when he faces the Yellow Wall.



Illustration 1 (Source : Bundesliga)

In Spain, Athletic Bilbao, Osasuna, Barcelona and Real Madrid are four clubs not organised as limited companies, but remain as registered associations due to a grandfather clause of the late 1980s. Unlike a limited company, it is not possible to purchase shares in these club, but only membership. Each club member (*socio*) has a vote to elect democratically the club president and board of directors. The club president cannot invest his own money into the

club and the club can only spend what it earns, which is mainly derived through merchandise sales, television rights and ticket sales. This means that each club is owned by its own registered supporters. FC Barcelona has over 1,50,000 *socios*, Real Madrid counts over 1,00,000 *socios*, Athletic Club over 40,000 and Osasuna over 15,000. Over in Italy, the Milan derby has produced one of the most iconic pictures. This was during a Derby where the fans of both sides were on another level of support, with flares, banners and chants. Due to the flares coming onto the pitch, the match had to be stopped for a while, with the following picture being taken just before everyone was escorted back to the dressing rooms. This picture of Rui Costa and Materazzi would go on to become the face of the Milan derby for some time.



Illustration 2 (Source : SportBible)

## OWNERS, MANAGERS AND COACHES

Moving over from the fans, the managers, the coaches and the owners are those who bring out the best in their players. Whether it is Jose Mourinho’s roughhouse mercenary tactics, with 10 men in front of the goal, Sir Alex Ferguson’s all-attack mentality, Rinus Michels’ Total Football tactics where everyone can play in every position, Pep Guardiola’s fluid 4-3-3 to a 4-4-2 to a 4-3-4 to fox opposition managers, Zinedine Zindane’s “Tomorrow is a final.” mentality, all the managers have one thing in common: They have all won trophies in every league that they have managed in. The owners are heavily invested in the squad, as most of them come from countries where football is among the main sports. For example, Chelsea’s Roman Abramovich is from Russia, and has a habit of sacking his managers if they fail to get him results, more than any other owner in the



English Premier League. Some owners are from the U.S.A., such as Liverpool's John Henry and Manchester United's Glazer family. Whenever managers come into a job, they survey the dressing room that is going to start the season, see the team leaders and then decide on the style of play that they want to see. Now, people often get confused between "managers" and "coaches". An easy way to look at this is: Managers are involved with making sure players are happy with life at the club. Coaches are those that implement the style of play that the manager wants. Some managers are also coaches. An example of this is Antonio Conte. He was placed in a managerial role at Inter Milan, in Italy, but he also took part in the coaching at the club, propelling them to a Serie A title.

Managers are those people who sort out problems within the dressing room. They have to maintain the team and make sure there is little friction within the squad. They also make sure that the ego of a player is at a low, as the players are not bigger than the club.

A very good example of such a manager is Sir Alex Ferguson. He spent 26 years at Manchester United, bringing 38 trophies to Old Trafford. Whenever some player had a problem, or was getting too big for his boots, there were generally two options: Drop the player for the next few games, or sell the player to another club, where the player would have to fight for a place in the first team. Jose Mourinho was a manager who wanted players to play in a defensive approach, ready to strike on the counter-attack.

If someone did not want to play that way, it was the bench for him. Some managers have faith in the players to play their own natural way and win the games. To quote the Brazilian national team coach Scolari: "One day, I walked into the locker room to talk about tactics, but seeing Ronaldo, Kaka, Adriano, Roberto Carlos and Cafu in front of me, I just told them 'Get on the pitch and be yourself, I'll let you know if I make any changes.'"

If I give the two examples of Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi, their managers shaped the team around them most of the time. Messi would get assists from Dani Alves, Xavi and Iniesta while he was at Barcelona. Cristiano Ronaldo got his service from Modric, Kroos, Casemiro and Marcelo in Real Madrid. Ronaldo is now back at Manchester United, the target man for all goals. Some managers do not keep gameplans, but they know that being positive will get them the required results. This phrase is what I like to call: All vibes, no tactics. The other extreme is: All tactics, no vibes. In this second extreme, there is no place for a luxury player, one who decides when to turn up into the prime version of themselves. It is all or nothing as far as the coaches and managers are concerned. Either one plays for the badge, or one can sit on the bench.

That in essence is the impact of fans, owners, managers and coaches in European football. Ignoring all the politics that happens behind the scenes, all the exchange of unparliamentary language and aggressive body language, somethings do not change. That is all I have to say on the matter.

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## THE EUPHORIC RISE OF CRYPTO



### AUTHOR DETAILS

**DIKSHA AGARWAL**

BACHELOR OF COMMERCE  
(EVENING)

1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

With cryptocurrency prices remaining extremely volatile, based on news of regulatory crackdowns, environmental concerns, and increased tax scrutiny even as interest in crypto assets from reputable investors has grown and legacy financial institutions have launched new crypto offerings, cryptocurrency is undoubtedly on our minds. But where did it all begin? Let's start with the basics to get a better understanding of this.

In October 2008, an anonymous person or group of persons using the pseudonym Satoshi Nakamoto created Bitcoin and the Bitcoin blockchain, which was explained in a nine-page white paper titled "Bitcoin: A Peer-to-Peer Electronic Cash System." In January 2009, the first Bitcoin transaction took place. The goal of this innovation was to make it possible for anyone on the Bitcoin



*Illustration 1 (Source: Getty Images)*

platform to electronically transfer money from one source to another without going via a centralised financial institution. The Bitcoin blockchain technology has failed to replace fiat currencies like the dollar or the euro in international transactions however, its most significant achievement has been in spurring the creation of blockchains with far-faster transaction speeds and significantly more functionality. Next, the Ethereum blockchain was introduced in 2015 and it has also become the most widely used

blockchain for various applications. Just like the Bitcoin blockchain, it has its own cryptocurrency, called Ether, and shares the primary tenets of the Bitcoin blockchain. However, there is a major difference between Bitcoin and Ethereum's blockchain. The Bitcoin blockchain supports only very simple transaction instructions, while Ethereum provides extensive functionality to build decentralized applications on its blockchain. Similarly, many new private as well as public cryptocurrencies started entering the scene - some of which actually solved investor's problems and others that were solely based upon a trending idea to loot the investor's hard-earned money.

Although cryptocurrencies have seen significant volatility in global markets since their inception, it was not until 2020, when the economy collapsed due to the pandemic, that Bitcoin's prices began to climb euphorically. Currently, over 14,500 distinct cryptocurrencies are publicly traded (as of November 19, 2021). With so much talk about blockchain being the next big thing, it looked like there were two camps: the Supporters and the Advocates; leaving aside the speculators who were only interested in cryptocurrencies because they were increasing in value, but they had little interest in the currency's long-term acceptability. We'll try to comprehend both of their viewpoints.

**Digital boom**

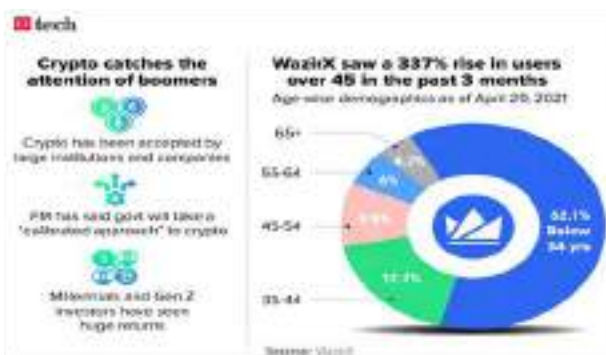
Cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin tend to have limited supply, which has shot up their price in the face of large money printing by central banks around the world following the outbreak.



Cryptocurrencies have a wide range of backers. Some people like the fact that cryptocurrency frees central banks from managing the money supply, because central banks tend to devalue money over time through inflation, while others like the blockchain technology, which is a decentralised processing and recording system that can be more secure than traditional payment systems. The volatility connected with these currencies appears to be a key source of concern for the advocates. Furthermore, while the

*Illustration 2 (Data Source: CoinDes)*

value of cryptocurrencies may rise, many investors regard them as speculative investments rather than legitimate ones. Why is that? Cryptocurrencies, like real currencies, do not generate cash flow, thus you must spend more for the coin than you did to benefit.



*Illustration 3 (Source: WazirX)*

India is slowly but steadily becoming a new global centre for bitcoin, with millennials and Generation Z predominantly driving this expansion. Along with metro areas, crypto usage has accelerated in India's Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities as well, showing that these digital tokens are becoming more widely accepted and this growth is taking place even after considering the fact that the government has yet to provide regulatory clarity on the future of digital currencies. The Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official

Digital Currency Bill, 2021, remains the focus of attention, as it will define the country's virtual coin trading future. The bill is currently seeking Union Cabinet approval, after which it will be submitted in parliament. While the government had previously stated that private cryptocurrencies would be banned, it has since changed its mind, with authorities implying that trading operations may be controlled, a scenario that is supported by all major cryptocurrency exchanges in the nation. Whether India emerges as a global hub for cryptocurrencies or the government bans them, the idea introduced by the fabricated "Satoshi Nakamoto" is definitely revolutionary and is here to stay. It would be amusing to see the future of such currencies and if and how it disrupts the entire banking system around the world.

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## THE ELECTRIC REVOLUTION



### AUTHOR DETAILS

KRISHINA AGARWAL

BACHELOR OF  
MANAGEMENT STUDIES

1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

“Revolutions have never lightened the burden, they have only shifted it to another shoulder” -George Bernard Shaw

The industrial revolution gave way to new technologies and methodologies, intruding on new structures and enforcing behavioural change in people across the globe. Initially, it was acknowledged and admired by everyone as a miracle making people's life easy and transferring the burden over to machines and it is verifiable, but on flipping the coin we also see the burden-shifting back onto us in several different ways which were unforeseen. Taking into consideration the economic, environmental and survival aspects, it turned out to be a nightmare for many.

Although this was a massive revolution in history, for now, we are witnessing another Electric Revolution which is a small petal in comparison to this flower but has the same essence.

The electric energy drive today has a mission to remove the use of fuels and non-renewable energy to its maximum possible extent and this excites people, but at what cost? We hardly try to find out. The promises made by this today are most likely projected to remove burden economically and most importantly, environmentally. But, this can also have the transfer back onto us, repeating the past. The motive being to infuse electric energy in every mechanism available would decline demands for other sources of energy and will be beneficial for the environment. Also, the operating costs of such machines would drop by a significant margin as electricity is cheaper than other fossil fuels due to new power plants and methods of attaining energy. Taking the Electric Vehicle drive into the limelight, it has been in practice since 1996 but became popular and efficient for mass consumption in recent years as it also drags the attention of people towards something new and friendly. The Electric Vehicle (EV) model has a setup of running entirely on battery consumption, eliminating the use of hazardous energy to 0%.

The generation being concerned towards the environment as well as requiring something cost-efficient, be it on low maintenance or operating charges, prefer this segment of the automobile over old and is anticipated to grow a hundred folds in coming future. After a decade of rapid growth, in 2020 the global electric car stock hit the 10 million mark, a 43% increase over 2019, and representing a 1% stock share. Global electric car sales share rose 70% to a record 4.6% in 2020. The EV sector demand is expected to grow by 13.3% of the 27.4% overall automobile demand by 2030. It also paves a way for a 37 and 18-fold increase in demand for cobalt and lithium (relative to 2015 levels), respectively.

Numerous factors contributed to increased electric car registrations in 2020 for crossing 3 million new registrations. Several governments provided or extended fiscal incentives that buffered electric car purchases from the downturn in car markets. With over USD 14 billion in direct-purchase incentives and tax deductions for electric cars, a 25% rise year-on-year.

As this was a big step taken towards the automobile industry, there were challenges and obstacles which were dealt with.



The rise in demand for electric vehicles across the globe also gave rise to the problem of its charging stations. The companies have still been battling this issue and seem to finally develop adequate stations in corners where the cars are driven. The companies developing EVs has to meet up the

performance and efficiency of fuel-driven cars in order to stand as competition in the market and bring a revolution. Due to a sudden hike in demand for semiconductors and chips than traditional carmakers, it is not being met due to a shortage in supply and production process. The industries and sector officers need to resolve such issues for it to become transparent and dominating in the market. At last, the major competition faced is by the people themselves unconsciously as 80% still do not have faith and trust over battery-driven vehicles and feel old methods to be safer and more reliable for a fluent experience. The major change needs to be a behavioural one.

As mentioned, the revolution always tends to shift its burden onto other shoulders, we can see a slight shift from the conception and project it to further worsen in future. The batteries used in EVs have a major component of lithium and cobalt in them, which tends to be expensive and make the batteries and cars costly which is a one-time expenditure by the customers, thus not really saving their money in the name of long-term fuel expenditure. Keeping in mind the environmental benefits, Electric vehicles emit significant pollutants and residues during the process of production of batteries and electronics, which covers up the entire pollution caused by a fuel-driven car by 70% at one go. The old mechanism is made used for several years noticing minimal car explosions due to coolant leaks or gas tank pressures, but the Electric vehicles have reportedly led to notable car blasts in past years due to battery explosions or flammable reactions. Thus, till the present day, it has turned out to be verifiable but also has its own hidden backlogs which brings it into equal steps with old mechanics to some extent.

Time ahead, it is most likely for the EV sector to gain a good position in the market and dominate the industry by 2040, totally eliminating the traditional fuel vehicles but in most possibilities, it might also turn out to be a burden upon the electrical power usage and its supply. Also, the disruptions caused by it and battery chemicals in the environment and high maintenance costs would turn out to be non-pocket friendly in near future. It is a human's habit to admire and acknowledge a new venture initially, but as time fades by they consider it to be a burden and expect better outcomes than the previous one. Similarly, this EV drive is projected to become a troubling situation for people in the coming generations.

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# ANALYSING THE BIG QUIT



## AUTHOR DETAILS

**ROHINI DATTA**

B.SC. ECONOMICS  
HONORS

2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

### ABSTRACT

In 2021, the phenomenon of “The Big Quit” came into picture where large number of employees in both corporate and smaller firms voluntarily resign. This is due to a number of reasons caused due to the sudden change in the flow of economy by the global Coronavirus pandemic. Managers need to overcome this phenomenon to ensure longevity and proper functioning of their firms. This article seeks to analyse the reasons leading to “The Big Quit” and the steps which can be taken to curb it.

### Impact of the pandemic on corporate firms and employment

The global Coronavirus pandemic has brought about a gigantic change in all the sectors of the economy. Health, education,

business and all the other sectors are facing huge challenges. According to the US Bureau of Labour Statistics, 4 million people resigned in 2021 in the US. Though this rate declined in 2021, risk of infection due to discovery of new variants and recurring lockdowns have kept the unemployment rate fluctuating. In 2020, unemployment was majorly a result of the abrupt change in the entire economy due to the Covid 19 pandemic. However, 2021 saw an unprecedented rise in the number of voluntary resignations among the employees in both corporate firms and smaller firms. According to an article by MIT Sloan, more than 24 million employees in the US left their jobs between April and September 2021. This huge rise in voluntary resignations throughout the world especially in the corporate culture has caused many to term this phenomenon as “The Big Quit”. There are a number of reasons for this phenomenon

### Analysing the factors responsible for “The Big Quit”

MIT Sloan analysed 34 million employee profiles in the US to diagnose the reasons behind the huge number of resignations between April and September 2021. When asked about reasons why the employees quit their jobs, they received the following responses:



Illustration 1 (Data Source: MIT Sloan) 98

**Toxic Corporate Culture:** This means that the workers are unsatisfied with the office work environment due to politics, bureaucracy or behaviour of co-workers thus hampering their productivity. Lack of measures ensuring equity, diversity and inclusion has made employees feel disrespected in the work environment. These reports of unethical behaviour are a major driving force behind the “the Big Quit”.



**Job Insecurity:** The survey found out that employees unsure and sceptical about their company's future are more likely to leave their jobs. When the company is not performing well, employees tend to leave their current jobs to a more secure job.

**High levels of innovation:** It has been recorded that high technology companies like Tesla and SpaceX have experienced greater attrition rates in comparison to low technology firms. High technology firms meant that the workers would have to put in greater work hours and effort to their job though it may be challenging and interesting. However, such practice is difficult to endure in the long run.

**Lack of Recognition:** Companies which fail to distinguish between productive, sincere employees and unproductive, lazy ones are likely to face higher attrition rates. High working employees who are likely to face lower informal or financial recognition for their efforts frequently quit their jobs.

**Poor response to the Pandemic:** Employees with the view that their firm has poorly tackled Covid 19 are more likely to quit their job.

**Additional reasons:**

**Search for new challenges:** To beat the stagnancy and monotonous lifestyle imposed on them by the pandemic, many employees are seeking jobs that challenge them. In September 2021, Amazon India conducted a survey in which 50% of the job seekers were looking for jobs in the fields they had little to no experience in.

**New perspective of thinking:** The pandemic has led to many individuals introspecting on their decisions and purpose of life. Many people have discovered that they like working from home, spending more time with their families, and learning new skills via online courses. They like not having to meet annoying colleagues or bosses face to face. The cost of transportation is saved. As a result, many workers are choosing to quit rather than coming to work when the restrictions are partly lifted.

### **Measures to curb the “Big Quit”**

The MIT Sloan study also analysed the short-term measures which can be taken by firms to increase employee retention. Some of the suggested directions are as follows:

**Lateral career opportunities and Remote work arrangements:** It is a common observation that all the employees do not work to receive promotions or additional responsibilities. They like to work on new challenges to break from the monotony. Availability of lateral career opportunities and remote work arrangements in a firm can thus significantly contribute towards greater employee retention.

**Corporate Social Events:** Conducting social events like happy hours and games effectively builds the interest of an employee in the workspace. They get to know their workplace better and develop closer bonds with their colleagues.

**Predictable Schedules:** Firms with indefinite work hours and no proper schedule are likely to create greater resentment among the employees. Working according to a schedule can greatly help in enhancing employee retention.

**Additional steps managers can employ:** Managers should actively listen to their employee's concerns and ensure a safe and healthy work environment. They should make sure that the sincere employees who are an asset for the company do not feel aloof and are recognised for their skills. More sensitivity on the part of managers can actively help in curbing this phenomenon.



### “The Big Quit” in India

In contrast to the developed economies, the situation in India is a bit different. Supaul Chanda, vice president at Experis of Manpower Group said that most of the people quitting their jobs in India are joining another job, and a section of the population is quitting their job to do something of their own, like a start-up. Hiring rates are very high in the corporate sector. So, there is simply a change in balance and the number of people quitting their jobs and leaving the workforce forever is very small. In India the situation has been characterised as “great churn” instead of “The Big Quit”. This is possibly due to the difference in income levels of developing and developed economies. Unemployment benefits in a country like the US is high, which is not the case with developing economies like India.

### How long will “The Big Quit” last?

According to the Labour Department data sets, the rate of hiring in the US exceeds the rate of employees quitting jobs in September 2021, with 6.5 million hires outnumbering 2 million people who quit their jobs. Though this high rate has come down a bit in the coming months, it has almost reached pre pandemic levels. The number of layoffs has remained more or less constant. This indicates that “The Big Quit” is not likely to last very long. U.S. economist John Millar wrote an in-depth analysis on this phenomenon and said that these quits are mostly driven by causes related to health concerns posed by the pandemic; it is not a result of some the resignations are a symptom of underlying forces affecting labour market participation.

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## IS BIG DATA RELIABLE? A HARMS-BENEFITS ANALYSIS OF OUR GROWING DEPENDENCE ON DATA



### AUTHOR DETAILS

SAMPARNA MITTRA

BSC. ECONOMICS

1<sup>st</sup> Year

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

### INTRODUCTION

Data has been universally acknowledged as the future of mankind. We use data in all fields of work- business, finance, law, psychology, healthcare, governance, and even academics. The importance of data cannot be underestimated, and with increasing availability of data and easier modes of data collection in this digitized world, we have come to rely on data for almost everything.

However, data can be dangerous as well. With increase in accessibility to data comes the chances of misuse of data. Cyber phishing, data breaches, hacking, non-consensual collection of personal sensitive data are commonplace incidents nowadays. That gives rise to the question- is it worth relying so much on

data which can be so easily manipulated and stolen? This article seeks to answer that question through analysis of both the benefits and harms of dependence on and usage of data<sup>1</sup>. We, as individuals or organizations, of the 21st century, rely heavily on data. If we think about our daily life, we collect data and store it- we store emails, contacts, past records of conversations, pictures, and facts about people we know. All this does count as data on a very personal level. We store this data, which, in fact, is very private and highly sensitive to the privacy of any individual, on clouds, or devices, or even storage units. What would happen if this data went into wrong hands? What would happen is somehow that cloud or device is hacked or the storage unit is stolen? These are not improbable events, and the answer is that in both cases, there would be severe compromise of privacy of not only the person who had stored the data but also the people whose data they had stored. This data can be misused to even harm the people involved. Another example of how data is collected and stored in our daily lives is seen in the accounts we create in the apps that we use every day. Even a simple grocery shopping app stores sensitive data about a user such as their name, age, address, phone number, email, and monetary payment details, etc. While the app may not misuse this data, and instead does require this data for improving the service it provides to you, if this database comes into the hands of someone with malicious intent, it can be easily misused<sup>2</sup>.

These appear to be minor examples but they accurately represent the risks of data breaches that exist in this world even at bigger levels. In spite of the existence of such threats, we go ahead and depend on data even more nowadays. Is that a rational decision? Should we continue our dependency on data?

### THE NEED FOR DATA

The first question we must answer is why we need data in the first place. There are several advantages of collecting, storing and analyzing data in the process of carrying out our household, business or government activities. British mathematician Clive Humby said, "Data is the new oil,"



and in the modern perspective, his words could not have been truer. Today, the benefits of ‘Big Data’, i.e., data collected through a variety of sources at near real-time and stored in vast scales, are widely-appreciated<sup>3</sup>.

Modern marketing techniques rely heavily on data. Collection and analysis of consumer’s data can be used to understand the market of the commodity, to estimate the sales and revenue, to understand market sentiments, to decide on which method of advertisement appeals most to consumers, etc. Not only do companies collect data from their consumers but also from their workers and resources. It improves managerial and technical efficiency, encourages utilization of resources in best possible manner, and enables the betterment of business models and strategies. The Chinese government authorities recently stated that they recognize data as “a new factor of production”<sup>4</sup>, such is its importance in the field of production and business.

Data also helps in other sectors. Let us take the example of think tanks, research organizations and academicians. The collection of Big Data on publicly available platforms has made it increasingly easy to use this data for research purposes and study new ideas with credible facts and figures. Numerical data from verified and famous sources are trusted widely, making such data increasingly useful to researchers from all fields.

Data also plays a crucial role in aiding governance. In modern democracies, access to data about citizens helps the government in many ways. Firstly, modern data collection systems have increased the efficiency of representative democracies as polls, surveys, votes and referendums can be easily held. Secondly, even if the government comes up with biased data, the opposition parties can use the data from unbiased, neutral organizations which are credible, to counter the government’s data easily. The general increased availability of verified data is a powerful tool in the hands of a citizen too as it allows them to understand the impacts that the government policy is having on the country and accordingly cast their votes.

Common examples of how Big Data plays a crucial role in our lives is seen in Netflix and Spotify<sup>5</sup>. Each year, Spotify releases a “Spotify Wrapped” for each of its users, which includes personalized details of what genres, artists or kinds of music the user listened to over the year and how they compare with other fans listening to same genres or artists. This is a hit feature that has worked as a fantastic marketing mechanism. It uses Big Data to deliver a satisfying experience to customers, working on a fundamental human principle of being self-centered and the need to know more about oneself. After this feature was launched, several other apps began using similar customer-personalization techniques as part of their marketing policies.

Similarly, Netflix, one of the largest OTT streaming apps used across the world, also collects data and analyses it to deliver a personalized experience for its customers- through recommendations, understanding the taste of the customer and providing similar suggestions of content to catch their eye, and many other ways. These are a few common uses of data collection and analytics that we see applied in our lives every day, and in fact, enjoy the benefits of these new data-driven technologies too.

Hence, the various advantages of the availability of data makes it evident why we are increasingly relying on big data- its usage, collection, storage and analysis- for various functions in our lives. However, with new methods of better availability and collection of data come new forms of harms for mankind, which shall be discussed in the next section.

### **THE COSTS OF DEPENDENCE ON DATA**

Before we even approach the risks of data theft, we must understand simply the costs involved in collection and storage of such Big Data. An article in Bangkok Post<sup>6</sup> says, “Data is rapidly becoming similar to landfill sites.” Although, at first sight, it may seem to be an exaggeration, it is



quite true. Data needs to be stored, whether physically or virtually. If stored physically, two problems arise: immense amount of land space is required to store such vast quantity of data. The Citadel, which is the biggest data storage center in the world, is 250 times bigger than the White House. Such a facility shall also need maintenance and regulation, leading to more costs. Secondly, in most developing and underdeveloped countries, the technology of hardware has not developed at the same pace as the technology for software that has entered the markets from companies in developed nations. Unless this technology for storage develops rapidly, the data of people are at risk of getting lost. Furthermore, even if the data is stored on cloud, there is not unlimited space on the cloud either. There needs to be immense investments to store the data in a safe manner on cloud platforms as well.

The second issue that arises is that of relevancy of data. Since any piece of data collected from any person may be helpful to some other person or company at any point of time, it is not possible to sift through all the data to gather only relevant material and discard irrelevant data. Furthermore, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of data collected due to the constant risk of human error. An estimate states that in the US economy, an approximate cost of \$3.1 trillion was incurred in 2016 to sift through poor quality data, 'Bad Data'<sup>7</sup>, by either correcting them, or disposing them despite collecting them, or improving the quality of data provided to customers. This is an expense that can be avoided if data collection quality is improved. This can be ensured only if data is collected by technology free from human error, but such technology will again require a lot of efforts and investment.

### **THREATS TO DATA SECURITY**

Another major area of concern that arises is the variety of threats to data security. Such threats can be from multiple sources: internet hackers, companies trying to collect our data without explicit consent, or even governments collecting excessive private data.

Data stored with companies can be hacked and breached through various mechanisms- phishing, insider attacks, and ransomware and data loss from clouds where data is stored<sup>8</sup>. In the last few years, we have seen multiple examples of data breaches in very famous companies. Simply, in 2021, there were massive data breaches in companies like Dominos, Mobikwik, Facebook, Air India and Upstox, where the data of crores of Indians was compromised<sup>9</sup>. The risk of data breaches is high and need massive investments to be checked.

The losses caused due to data breaches are multifold<sup>10</sup>. Firstly, they cause financial losses to both the company from whose database the data was breached and the people whose data was lost. Secondly, it results in loss of reputation and trust of the customers in that company, which may take several more years to build back again. Thirdly, the customers whose sensitive data was lost may file lawsuits against these companies, leading to further losses of reputation and profits for the company. Thus, companies need to invest heavily to install a rigorous policy for cyber security.

Furthermore, as companies become more dependent on data, they begin to collect data and track their customers without taking explicit consent, leading to violation of consumer privacy. Some of the biggest cases of violation of data privacy are that of Yahoo, Vizio, and Facebook<sup>11</sup>. Yahoo had reviewed the emails and exposed account information of over 500 million users- while getting hacked, it simultaneously handed over this data to the NSA. Another incident happened with Vizio, who sold television sets at very low prices, but in turn, tracked their consumer's viewing preferences through their television without taking consent.

The Facebook-Cambridge Analytica scandal<sup>12</sup> was perhaps the biggest data breach scandal in recent times, where private data of up to 87 million users was collected without consent. This



data was actively hacked by malicious sources and Facebook itself, and exploited against the will of the users. Even WhatsApp authorities acknowledged to have sold their users' data to Facebook for \$22 billion. Also, it was at this time that the US Presidential elections and Brexit votes took place, in which campaigning took place on Facebook too, among other social media sites, and this means that the data collected in the Cambridge Analytica scandal also affected these key political events.

Another concern arises when we consider how much data is collected and stored with governments as well. Data collection and storage technology have developed very quickly but the government mechanisms have not developed as quickly yet. Although governments have begun collecting data from people using similar mechanisms as the private companies, the laws and data privacy frameworks have not developed equally. This raises concerns about how much data citizens are willing to share with their governments, knowing that governments can easily misuse this data to discriminate against minorities, or other communities for social or political reasons.

In this context, much concern was raised in India over Aadhaar. Although in a previous judgement, the Supreme Court had declared the Right to Privacy as a fundamental right, however, since the introduction of the Aadhaar Card, the government has allowed private and sensitive information from the Aadhaar Card (to which even bank account details, PAN card details and other financial details have been linked in recent times) to be shared to multiple state agencies. Essentially, this raises the question whether Indian bureaucrats have full access to a lot of sensitive data about their citizens which can be used at any time for any purpose, such as tracking people against their will, for so-called governmental needs<sup>13</sup>. The framework for Data Privacy is also not good enough in India to protect its citizens.

Moreover, data collected by governments even for so-called just purposes may prove to be counteractive to its intention. An example can be taken from the use of historical data for the recent predictive policing policy in the USA. This is actually harming the African American community more as historically they have been the larger population of criminals, and also a basic structural bias against the Black communities exists in the criminal justice system of the USA, but that is no basis to assume that future generations of African Americans will also be criminals<sup>14</sup>. Hence the dependence on this data-driven policy of preventive policing is doing more harm than benefit and is proof of how data can actually not be effective in some cases.

## CONCLUSION

At the end of all this analysis and harms-benefits analysis, we end up with more questions than answers. What degree of preventive framework needs to be established by governments and companies to ensure data security? What precautions can we as consumers take? What is the way out of this reliance on data, which seems to have become a double-edged sword?

Can we allow unethically collected data to be used for our benefits? While we can suggest companies to abide to existing privacy guidelines and ensure to take consent from consumers before collecting or using their data in any way, governments to legislate data privacy laws that are up-to-date, and consumers to become more wary of the role Big Data plays in our lives; it is only if individual economic agents of this world become aware of the harms and benefits of Big Data that we can improve towards a better world where data is a fundamental part of our systems but also safe and secure.



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FOOTNOTES

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## INTERSECTION OF PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC BRANDS: THE BRAND PERSONALITY OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION



### AUTHOR DETAILS

**SAMUEL S MITRA**

STAFF AND RESEARCH  
SCHOLAR IN COMMERCE

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

Most people are more or less aware of the basic concept of “brand” if not at least have come across the term “brand”. Brand in general terms is defined as a “name, term, sign, symbol, or combination of them that is designed to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and differentiate them from competitors”. “Brand Personality” is yet another concept deeply associated with the term “brand”, which actually refers to a “set of human personality traits that are both applicable and relevant to brands”. So the important question here is what exactly does the brand personality of a college look like? From the author’s individual viewpoint, it is more of a person and less of a place. In order to make the correct decision of where one fits the best, it is to be decided on the larger brand that fits oneself, whether college or university? Whether home country or abroad?

The next comes “sub-brand”. This basically belongs to the category of long-standing values and culture of a Higher Education Institution (HEI). Prospective students get allured towards certain brands and often makes decisions on the basis of whether they feel like they fit in with the brand.

Another relevant question that needs to be addressed is that does emotional resonance has any roles to play while making an academic decision? From a psychological viewpoint, it makes sense that students have the proclivity to apply in those HEIs whose student bodies resonate with the student’s applicants, as people tend to like those people who are similar to each other in traits. This is reinforced by a “college culture” that emphasizes on the significance of selecting a HEI that is a perfect fit not only academically but also personality wise. Yet another aspect that perches emotions over rationale in the decision making of the HEI is “access to information”. Sometimes it becomes quite difficult to ascertain the differentiation with a huge amount of and a plethora of information available about various HEIs. Reputed HEIs do ensure intimacy about campus once students find their niche.

An area of urgent introspection needing to be answered is the role of the brand of HEI in the college process of the students. More than anything else, it is the aura of the HEI that makes a student choose it. The feeling of belongingness to a HEI is quite a special feeling. Moreover, the rapport with the students and teachers are essential ingredients shaping up the integrity of the role of a HEI brand from the perspective of the college process of students. Given the complexity and the volume of offers that student are faced with in their process of searching for a perfect HEI, it makes sense that students tune out noise and choose the most lucid comprehensive offer, i.e., HEI Brand Personality.

### TAKEAWAYS FOR A HEI FROM STUDENT DECISION MAKING

The process of selection of a perfect HEI is indeed quite gruelling on part of the prospective students who are required to market themselves and their achievements to taste success in a competitive and complex application process.



But pressures do mount on HEI even to allure students in a hyperbolic education marketplace. This implies heading towards a greater emphasis on branding and acknowledging that the appeal of a HEI lies beyond its academics. HEIs who find themselves not enough satiated with their respective brand reputation face the enormous challenge of adjusting themselves to the perception of the students. But this is not an easy task. Brand Personalities are both relevant and stubborn where re-branding is also possible but does not happen overnight. The weight put on the brand personality of HEI by its prospective students over other considerations indicates that HEIs need to be attuned to the type of student their present brand personalities are drawing into the applicant pool. In the modern era of social media dominated marketplace and star ratings, nobody is immune to the strength and authority of a brand.

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## METaverse AND MARKETING



### AUTHOR DETAILS

SOUHITYA SAMANTA  
 BACHELOR OF COMMERCE  
 (MORNING)  
 2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR  
 ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
 (AUTONOMOUS),  
 KOLKATA

***“Today I think, we LOOK AT the internet. But I think, in the future you’re going to BE IN the experiences.”***

***- Mark Zuckerberg, October, 2021***

Decades back it was the ‘.com’ boom, then came social media platforms and now it is time for VR, AR and Artificial Intelligence - The blending of our online and offline lives started gradually through these small, informal steps and became robust as time passed. The world is becoming smarter every single day and with the revolution of digital spaces, the stage has been set for society to embrace a brave new hybrid world.

Neal Stephenson, the author of “Snow Crash”, visioned a generation of the internet way back. His book “Snow Crash” imagines a bleak future where the global economy has collapsed, and the federal governments have lost most of their power to a handful of corporate giants.

In such a time, the novel’s main character Hiro Protagonist escapes into a virtual reality – the “Metaverse”. He could access the metaverse by wearing goggles and earphones and can appear within the digital world as his own customized avatar.

All this seemed like an idyllic and illusionary escape back then. But now, it’s not.

Enter: the metaverse.



*Illustration 1 (Source: Times Now)*



Let us back up for a moment. Metaverse is designed to be an ecosystem where users interact as avatars and which operates as a digital environment but is characterized by certain “real” aspects: Individualized identities, currencies, and, increasingly familiar products.



*Illustration 2*

Technology has been advancing at a very fast pace. Popular games like Fortnite, Roblox have already shifted to the metaverse sphere where players can experience virtual reality. No wonder man and machine are soon becoming one, allowing digital consumers to launch their preferred experience just by closing their eyes. The aim is to offer a hyper-real alternative world or a parallel universe different from the one that we are currently living in.

Metaverse is going to disrupt many things, one of them being marketing. If digital marketing had helped connect potential customers with brands, marketing in the metaverse will give these customers an experiential opportunity during their purchasing journey by enhancing realism in every aspect.

At present, only gaming platforms are the only means to practise such marketing, however, with the increase in such Web3 digital spaces, brands and businesses will get more and more familiar with metaverse marketing. Big brands like Coca-Cola, Samsung and Volkswagen all have their virtual billboards within several Web3 games. Bid stack, the in-game advertising platform, revealed that through gameplay realism was enhanced by 95% and buyer’s willingness to purchase increased by 12%.

From meetings to company-wide town halls, everything is going to change in the various models of marketing, be it B2B, B2C or D2C. The fun-fact is that with the transition from humans to digital avatars in the metaverse, a model of D2A(Direct-to-avatars) is expected to come in place where business will help people (as digital avatars) in shopping, trading, travelling, socializing and interacting with one another.

This brings us to the most important point which is how brands are going to benefit from this and how feasible will this be selling their products and services to their ideal customer?

Strategic marketing campaigns for targeted audiences can be an answer to this question. For example, Deliveroo planned a marketing campaign on Animal Crossing: New Horizons – a stand-alone metaverse. Through this, the online food delivery company deployed virtual riders in the game for various island-wide deliveries. The game players received not only a surprise delivery on their virtual island but also a promo code that they could activate in real life. Henceforth, within the first hour alone, Deliveroo’s marketing campaign gained three million in-game engagement.

Similarly, by introducing real-life causes in the metaverse businesses increase the brand engagement. Hellmann’s, a mayonnaise brand committed to reducing food waste to Animal Crossing as well. The company recreated its own virtual island and invited players to donate their virtual spoiled turnips for a cause. This helped Hellmann donate 50,000 meals to a food waste charity. It can be observed that consumer behaviour can be accurately studied in the metaverse, contrary to the Web2 version of tracking audience activities only via cookies and sometimes through in-exact algorithm.



Metaverse brings forth a new way to gather user data. Through virtual and augmented reality systems, brands can measure engagement the old-fashioned way instead of the data-insights such as cookies. Realistic avatars can try on clothing; test out a new sofa inside virtual storefronts, thus bringing in the possibilities that come with a blended shopping experience. As a customer spends time observing or trying items in the metaverse, marketers gain real-time information about their preferences and can determine exactly how long they interact with products or the entire company. Hence, brands will start taking notice and adapt to the meta landscape with this type of engagement at the top of mind.



*Illustration 3 (Source: CNBC)*

In this context, it can be assumed that the metaverse platform will also be a good marketplace for retail of virtual goods to digital avatars. Online identities are crucial in the metaverse, where avatars represent people. According to a study, 92% of people value customization in creating their virtual avatars. Just

like in real life, people in the 3D environment are expected to spend a lot of money on self-expression. This is the reason why the direct-to-avatar (D2A) economy will be emerging, allowing companies to sell and retail their virtual products directly to avatars.

In order to promote these virtual products, businesses can partner with VR or 3D platforms with open marketplaces to create wearable and tradeable digital products like garments, technologies and more. The clothing and wearable sector can take advantage of augmented reality by giving users the opportunity to visualize and wear their products in real time.

Since humans are by nature collectors, in virtual spaces, collectibles in the form of NFTs will be used as digital assets. This means that original ownership of a collectible, such as digital art, music is encrypted and unchangeable till the time the owner sells it to another. The marketplace for all these products will grow rapidly in the metaverse. At present we already have *Open Sea* – a peer-to-peer marketplace for NFTs, rare digital items and crypto collectibles. NFTs or non-fungible tokens can help trace the production and distribution of one's virtual apparel. An NFT art marketplace can turn the virtual goods into an NFT, put it up for sale, and can be further bundled with exclusive benefits or be used as rewards.

Time and again, experiential marketing have proved to be the most important drivers of customer engagement. This is what the metaverse marketplace is focussed on creating. Studies have shown that brands who focus on building experiences gain 25% more brand loyalty than those who don't. By offering an extraordinary experience helps push the audiences out of their comfort zone. This can impact their perspective of a particular brand and help create long lasting bonds with them. Interactive live concerts, events and advergames when channelled through metaverse will create great experiences that will improve customer loyalty and referral with increased reach and engagement and long-term results.

However, any new technology comes with its share of cons. The creation of virtual marketplace is a high-cost factor in itself. There are requirements for robust promotional campaigns, endless creativity along with chances of high risk and steep financial barrier.

“The future, the future, all comes down to the future.” The answer to all the arguments on how



feasible the metaverse will be, lies in the future. One thing remains clear that businesses are going to adapt themselves to the ever-changing dimensions of internet and consumer demand, hence marketing their brands accordingly.

Consumers are willing to devote their time and attention to things and experiences that are meaningful. In a Metaverse where bringing reality is close to possible, brands and businesses will have to shift the conversation from what is to what could be.



*Illustration 5 (Source: Arch Daily)*

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## CAN OTT PLATFORMS AND FILM THEATRES COEXIST IN INDIA IN THE FUTURE?



### AUTHOR DETAILS

SUDAKSHINA PAUL

BACHELOR OF COMMERCE

2<sup>nd</sup> YEAR

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

### INTRODUCTION

These are exceptional times, and the world slowly and unwillingly understands that life will not be the same after COVID-19. With so many activities moving to the virtual realm, it seemed only inevitable that film, one of the world's most popular forms of entertainment, would follow suit. With the majority of people confined to their homes around the world due to the pandemic, and relying largely on TV and the Internet for news and entertainment, it seemed like a natural move for filmmakers to release films directly on OTT platforms.

Cinephiles have applauded the decision to hold digital premieres because it not only delivers entertainment to viewers in the comfort of their own homes, but it is also cost effective. Films are a big lure for India's increasing internet viewers, who are spending more time watching content online than ever before thanks to cheap bandwidth and smart phones.

Every day, technological advancements present filmmakers with new ways to be more creative and an advantage in telling more tales. According to a forecast by the National Association of Software and Service Companies, India has over 40 OTT platforms, most of which are in regional languages. With movie theatres closed due to the pandemic, people flocked to OTT platforms to watch some of the best films that might not have gotten a theatrical release or attracted a large audience otherwise.

### PERFORMANCE OF RECENTLY RELEASED FILMS AT THE THEATRES/OTT PLATFORMS

**GEHRAIYAAN:** As of today, i.e., 17<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2022, the Deepika Padukone starrer, Gehraiyaan is the most talked about film as it revolves around repercussions of infidelity. Gehraiyaan, which was reportedly made on a budget of over 40 crores, might easily have generated around 33-35 crores throughout the course of its run. The love drama film Gehraiyaan was not shown in Indian theatres, instead it was distributed on the online OTT platform Amazon Prime Video, where it performed well. It has been suggested that if this film had been released in cinemas rather than online, it would have been a super flop.

**BADHAI DO:** Despite the fact that Badhaai Do is not a traditional romantic story and there is no national holiday dedicated to Valentine's Day, the film did well and earned 1.85 crores. One can only hope that it was more a matter of the substance being enjoyed by people rather than the particular day, as it would imply the picture would have a longer run. The film has so far grossed 9.67 crores, with a target of 13 crores by the end of the first week.



**PUSHPA:** Taran Adarsh, a trade analyst, says that despite the film being launched on OTT on January 14, only the Hindi dubbed version of the Allu Arjun starrer, which enjoyed a theatrical release on 17th December, 2021 has managed to gross Rs 100 crore at the box office. "Despite night curfews, occupancy limitations, and lockdown in various states, as well as the film's digital availability, the picture has not slowed in the box office, demonstrating that people are interested in going to theatres provided the content is good. I believe that film will not go away, and that no other medium can endanger its existence," he adds.

### **OPINION OF FAMOUS ARTISTS ON THE SUBJECT MATTER**

**Ajay Devgn:** The mediums will coexist, according to the actor: "There will be a nice balance between both." It's as though you're eating. You can't eat outside seven days a week, but after four days, there will be food at home. So, why would you go to a restaurant or place an order?" "You liked OTT platforms for 2-3 days, then once a week or twice a week you need to go out and have a large screen experience," the actor said, adding that even after eating "home meals," people still eat out. That's how it is."

**Varun Dhawan:** "Times have demonstrated that both mediums can coexist," Varun Dhawan said about OTT outlets and theatres. He went on to say that it doesn't matter where a film premieres as long as the work is properly mounted. Varun, who will next be seen in films like 'Bhediya' and 'Jug Jugg Jeeyo,' stated, "The idea is...wherever...films release, people should be able to enjoy them."

**Pratik Gandhi:** The runaway popularity of Pratik Gandhi's show Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story, which aired on SonyLiv, made him a household figure. Both mediums, according to the actor, have their own appeal. He says that he sees OTT as a new route, but not a danger to movie theatres in any way whatsoever.

**Madhur Bhandarkar:** The acclaimed filmmaker, Madhur Bhandarkar stated that the shutdown over the last one and a half years has made people cinema literate by allowing them to view a lot of Indian and foreign films on OTT. Despite this, the experience of coming to the movies and eating popcorn, Coke, and snacks will never fade away, and they will always want to return to the theatre. He predicted that it would take some time before one or two films become box office hits. People may be hesitant to view movies at movie theatres until then.

**Suresh Babu:** He says that theatrical releases have a lot of potential. He further adds that he is aware that his earnings can be any amount; for example, if he makes a film for Rs 10 crore and it grosses Rs 100 crore, his profits can be any amount. He says that if he makes the appropriate picture, there's a 90% chance of success. This feature isn't present in OTT. Also, the prestige and grandeur that comes with a theatrical release is unrivalled. On OTT, it may be more difficult to establish stars because the heroic moments in the film only work well as part of a larger cinematic experience. This is why tentpole films perform well in theatres and independent films do not. When Indie films are launched on OTT, they do extremely well. As a result, everything has its own set of pros and cons.

**Tigamshu Dhulia:** Following the debut of his first web show, The Great Indian Murder, filmmaker Tigamshu Dhulia believes that footfall in theatres would decline. "The two mediums will coexist," he adds, "but only large ticket or tent pole films with superstar performers will have a strong box-office run, while the remainder of the content would be consumed on OTT."



**PRE PANDEMIC SCENARIO :** Prior to the pandemic, the Indian film industry had a major contribution towards the country's economy. The last ten years (2010-2019) have been going great for the film industry as a whole. Box office earnings rose by a whopping 25.53% in 2019 and hence, it was a strong year for the entire film industry. However, the present condition has sparked a number of concerns regarding the present and future of India's huge film industry.



Illustration 1 (Data source: EY-FICCI Report 2020)

**SCENARIO DURING THE PANDEMIC:**

In March 2020, the Indian film industry came to a halt, with filming being postponed and cinemas closing. The postponing of big-budget films like Sooryavanshi and 83 was the first setback. Filmed entertainment revenues declined by 62% in 2020, while theatre revenues fell by 80 %, according to the *EY-FICCI report, 2021*.

Film releases, distribution methods, revenue, and other factors were affected as a result of the restrictions Covid 19 brought along with itself. While the film industry struggled,OTT platforms experienced a never-before-seen surge leaving everyone wondering. They jumped in at the right time and acquired the digital rights to movies, absence of theatres giving them an upper hand. As a result, OTT will have 29 million paid subscribers by 2020. Digital rights have climbed to Rs. 35.4 billion, according to EY-FICCI 2021. OTT is becoming more popular as more people use the internet.

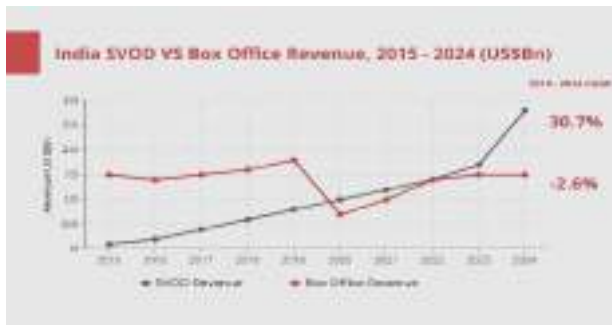


Illustration 2 (Data source: ET Brand Equity)

**WHY OTT IS GAINING POPULARITY:**

Even though OTT platforms were quite household names even before the pandemic, however, with people were confined to their houses, Internet penetration reached to another level altogether. With varied price methods and targeted marketing, OTT capitalized on this digital wave, making it way easier for people to watch movies.

**Pricing Model:** OTT offers a variety of unique pricing methods, ranging from subscription-based models to pay-per-view to advertising-based video on demand. Customers can choose between hybrid models on some platforms, such as Disney+Hotstar and Zee5. To make streaming more cheaply for subscribers, many Subscription Video-on-demand (SVOD) platforms are experimenting with pack durations and sachet pricing schemes which will in turn, drive the youth to a larger extent, their targeted audience.

**Age group:** A survey conducted on 350 subscribers of OTT platforms reveals that the most active users lie between the ages, 20-35, thus the content on the platforms is adjusted according to their tastes and preferences.

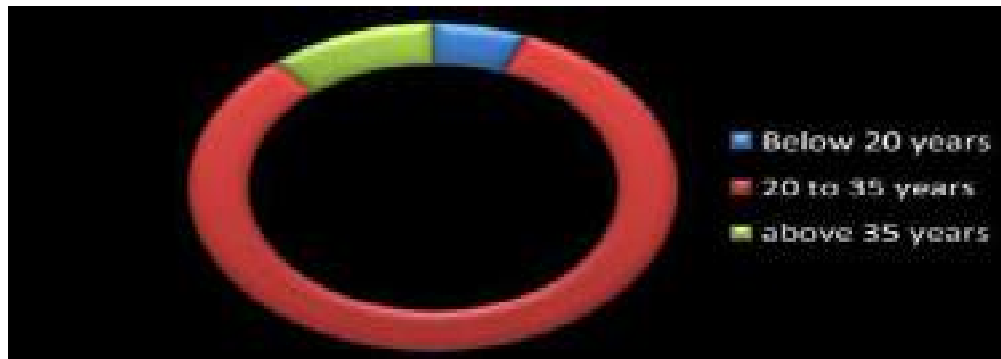


Illustration 3 (Data source: Survey conducted by Revathi Devaki PC, Dr. Dinesh Babu)

India has the second-largest digital population after the United States. Its online video market has a user base of over 300 million people.

A significant portion of the revenue is set aside for digital advertising by the platforms.



### OTT: Paid Subscribers in India

Illustration 4 (Data source: ET Prime)

**POST PANDEMIC ERA:** The only constant is change, and media firms are demonstrating this with their disruptions and innovations. The rise of the industry, sometimes referred to as "the giant wave" has already started, and it will only get bigger from here. To make it huge, OTT players are leaving no stone untouched. While improving technologies, the creators are heavily spending in content, to the point where, in the last two years, Manoj Bajpayee has received more attention than Ranveer Singh. This is the power of OTT, and with Virtual Reality (VR) businesses making significant

progress, who knows what the future holds in ten years. India is quickly becoming the fastest-growing OTT market in the world. According to PWC, the industry is increasing at a 28.6% CAGR and could reach \$2.9 billion by 2024. OTT, in fact, is reaching out to every nook and corner in search of the perfect audience.

**Regional content-** 90 % of people like to consume content in their native language, hence OTT is interacting with the audience through regional content. Voot, SonyLiv, and Zees, among our own platforms, are significantly investing in this type of content, with Zees already streaming material in 12 regional languages.

OTT providers are producing binge-worthy original content in addition to streaming movies. In 2020, around 220 original titles were released; in 2021, that number is expected to rise to 500. According to the EY-FICCI report 2021, an investment of INR 19.2 billion is expected in 2021. From 2021 to 2025, this figure could rise to INR300 billion.

Because of the pandemic, aggressive promotions, which used to be worth INR 25-30 crore, may be curtailed. Marketing costs are expected to drop by 20% to 30% in the near future.

PVR, for example, did not create any cash flow throughout the lockdown. The corporation had to



stick to its cash flow promises, therefore some of the developments were put on hold for the time being.

### **CONCLUSION**

Personally, I feel that both these platforms do not pose as threat to each other, however all the people involved in the industry should aspire to build a future where these coexist in harmony. I believe that nothing can steal the glamour and grandeur away from cinema halls, however the comfort that OTT platforms come with is a major boon in this busy world.

It's vital to have a strong grasp of payment, product, and content preferences relevant to each area for streaming services to succeed in India. It's also critical for Indian OTT providers to look beyond their boundaries and figure out how to effectively serve their overseas audiences mainly NRIs, who may be more willing to pay for OTT services that give them a flavour of home. Any OTT platform with global ambitions needs to get the correct balance of offerings, promotions, and payment mechanisms for each location in order to achieve the goals they have set for themselves. As for the success of the theatrical business, if films are made with big stars or? and are promoted significantly, people will not shy away from visiting theatres. Thus, the scope of both of them coexisting in the future is huge.

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## TALENT MANAGEMENT AND HOW IT AFFECTS THE PERFORMANCE OF AN ORGANIZATION



### AUTHOR DETAILS

TISHYO CHATTERJEE  
 BACHELOR OF COMMERCE  
 (MORNING)  
 2<sup>nd</sup> YEAR  
 ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
 (AUTONOMOUS),  
 KOLKATA

### ABSTRACT

Nowadays hierarchical ability is its primary source of the upper hand. Hierarchical execution relies upon the presentation of its staff. If the staff of the association has a one-of-a-kind capacity, they will want to isolate themselves from their opponents. In this competition, the upkeep of gifted specialists is an overwhelming undertaking for HR chiefs and recipients. Overseeing ability is an undeniably challenging and touchy errand. The Right Talent Discovery makes authoritative technique all the more remarkable. Worldwide exchange now the monetary circumstance has improved for all work searchers the worldwide work market, yet there are as yet huge ability deficiencies in various areas and in various nations, this drives which compound the issue of "Ability Differences". As today the business world necessities somebody who can do a ton of things, observing ability turns out to be undeniably challenging. Thus, seeing the "right" individual for a specific occupation turns out to be difficult. Not simply revelation and safeguarding talented labourers have turned into a significant test association. The present business climate requires HR to work decisively to assemble representative commitment which is an incredible apparatus for overseeing ability. Ability Management is centred on how individuals get in; climb across or outside the association. Ability Management will in all actuality do prevail with the help of solid authoritative construction. As all that ability can change the fate of a business, Talent Managers should be given a greater job association. Whenever an association utilizes the executive's compelling methodologies, which further develop worker commitment which likewise assists with working on authoritative execution. Work relations have expanded efficiency. This Current exploration expects to distinguish the connection between the ability of the executives and the tasks of the association. This study gives the proof of strong exploration in light of writing refreshes made thusly. The analyst means to utilize various texts, research papers, and texts in sequential requests to recognize the positive connection between the ability of the executives and the activities of the association. This verification of the examination paper will give data to HR supervisors to fabricate Talent the executives as an instrument for staff advancement procedures coordinated effort and hierarchical improvement execution.

Keywords: Talent Retention, Employee Engagement, Organizational Performance.



### **Why Is Talent Management So Important?**

The idea of the ability of the executives was not new. This thought arose in the 1990s. In any case, the work was only that isn't thought of as vital for HR administrators. It was as of late viewed as one of the extra obligations of HR Managers. Be that as it may, in the present serious professional workplace exceptional thoughtfulness regarding the ability of the executives in their authoritative design. The ability of the executives is a vital element in the authoritative turn of events. As

1. The best ability can change the eventual fate of a business.
2. Ability of the board affects individuals' assets and the executive's frameworks.
3. Hewitt Best Employers in Asia 2005 study plainly shows that driving bosses record over 60 income development by 30% more development in income per movement and half other rental expenses.
4. Research has plainly shown that there is a connection between awesome and the best ability, the consequence of the association. A recent report from Hackett Group has observed the best organizations 15 Percent overseeing ability to move above peers
5. The setting in which the business works turns out to be more intricate. A new, adaptable item innovation, new market, and so on currently set a strain on the business. Talented labourers can effortlessly tackle this large number of issues.
6. As per a review by the All-India Management Association (AIMA), 90% of Indian organizations dislike ability maintenance. Right now, the market for starvation as many investigations plainly show that the present association is dealing with issues about ability maintenance and procurement, the ability of the board has been perhaps the main issue challenge for HR staff. Throughout the most recent ten years numerous associations face difficulties as far as productivity is great ability, the last level expanded, slight decrease and so forth. The HR chief should check if staff give them, at that point, start treatment. For this multitude of reasons, Talent Management has turned into a significant test for HR chiefs. Overseeing ability essentially includes acquiring, holding, and dealing with the best ability. Overseeing ability in the present setting has become vital. Ability the board alludes to another arrangement of combination staff, to create and hold existing staff to draw in exceptionally gifted specialists to work for your organization. You must live and be steady in the advancement of any business association. In the present association ability revelation is considered as perhaps the most difficult issue for the HR chief. To win this "Battle of Talents", the revelation of abilities and ability upkeep is vital.

Numerous business chiefs say that ability is a vital variable at home and all over the planet previously. Observing ability is a drawn-out technique in employing. Incorporates ID, fascination, to create, draw in and hold proficient staff. Ability revelation incorporates every one of the little circles around you finding, drawing in, and drawing in profoundly talented individuals in your association. Today numerous associations distinguish Talent Discovery as a connected methodology to the objective of the association. The requirement for quality work has turned into the foundation of the Talent Management technique. As indicated by a concentrate by Deloitte Negotiations in 2007, a significant test for the association was recruiting the ideal individuals to meet the motivation behind the procedure and to keep up with it. Observing the right ability is troublesome 100% of the time. Ability should match the requirements of the gig and it should end up accomplishing the essential objective of the association. World work today the market is dealing with the issue of "absence of ability" [i.e., the ability doesn't match the arrangement of abilities and requirements]. Nothing is correct in an examination between the interest and supply of important ability. The present organization needs somebody who can do numerous things. Associations have



gained direct headway to refined ability designated to different positions. Associations change occupations' depictions relying upon the conditions and the planned reason. This has been the case making finding the ideal possibility for the most reasonable occupation hard. It shows that not the accessibility of representatives but rather the accessibility of gifted labourers is incredibly hard. The association ought to hence consider "Ability Diversity" as a vital capacity. Associations also consider showing new abilities and procedures to their competitors. This makes the Acquisition of Talent a vocation truly challenging for HR chiefs. Finding ability won't simply occur after some time of need. The association ought to follow this as a continuation of interaction. Conventional employment happens when an opening appears. At the point when an individual leaves or resigns or is advanced. Associations are under tension. They are in peril of Talent procurement to get away "to fill I box" thinking the one that works best and generally near building the abilities expected to make progress. Customary recruiting is to fill openings. The disclosure of ability takes a drawn-out view that it isn't just to fill present-day positions, yet in addition to distinguishing gifts for future openings. These future positions might be apparent by checking out the arrangement of the executive's framework or by weight examination. Today, ability revelation programs cover the whole pre-work life cycle, from the up-and-comer obtaining and correspondence the executive's interviews to the board and business climate. For now, associations are applying innovations to its securing altering, for example, web-based media, video devices, work matching web search tools, and so on Critical discoveries from the Bersin and Associates report, "Ability Acquisition Programs 2009: Facts, Practice Analysis, Trends, and Profiles Providers." "This previous year, the ability to secure markets has changed a ton. In this period of downturn, organizations invest in some opportunities to reconsider their present ability systems. Arrangement suppliers react by amplification of their connections and item contributions. The progressions incorporate new ones pointed toward supplanting resumes, an expansion called suppliers of arrangements in worldwide business sectors, free access items, and administrations in the securing of ability, mix with the person-to-person communication destinations, as well as market mix. "Switch to conventional reboot arrangement suppliers; they are now in the market. At the start of the video, Vype Power Job fox has supplanted customary relaunch. Ability suppliers of securing system, for example, prophet, ADP, Silk Road and so on Web-based media additionally assumes a key part in this like LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and so on Ability Acquisition Program: a program specifically incorporates the accompanying key parts:

1. Development of a current abilities list
2. Recognizable proof of current ability needs industry to help future development
3. Estimation of the hole between the two Implementation of specific conclusion systems an ability hole to address the issues of the current business and draw in new organizations
4. ID of hindrances to holding gifts against the execution of those therapeutic measures.

#### **Ability Applications:**

The principal objective of the association: is to assemble a solid economy, a stage for the obtaining of strong enterprises and also an extension of existing ventures. Centre region: addresses the focal point of the list of work deterrents and assesses the existing rundown of abilities and makes answers to accomplish a definitive objective. Applications that connect systems to the fundamental objective

As follows:

1. Foster existing ability
2. Make shared methodology minutes



3. Demonstrate the significance of worldwide openness fascinating businesses
4. Present novel thoughts for ability in schooling, political, and business discussions.
5. Expanding people group obligation to advance staff levels
6. Create and execute movement and recovery programs
7. Merging industry needs to employ basic abilities and support the city's development objectives.
8. Make the focus on adaptable shutting programs for the ability hole. This program and ability to obtain programs shift from one association to another and rely upon work subtleties. Disclosure of Talents - As a Strategy Historically associations have been administrators employing process as the main thing, but many are presently awakening that the world has changed significantly. There isn't anything more you can do to single out a few majors looking for one position. A few changes in our lives associated with land brought the scale-up for an extremely capable individual searching for another open door. Innovation has likewise made the occupation simpler for the two bosses and workers. Innovation and securing methods are referenced previously. It has carried critical advantages to associations. The most recent review led by Accenture in a joint effort with Economist Intelligence Unit observed that organizations are progressively going to land snatching and minimal expense conveyance Organizations need to assemble their ability securing plan and accessible HR the board framework (HRMS) and outsider work suppliers' in-time use. To track down the ability the interest in the framework to be compelling should be incorporated with outsider arrangements, for example, personal investigations suppliers, test suppliers, and circulation board merchants. Tragically, an excessive number of organizations settle on innovative transitory choices and afterward neglect to see the significance of having the option to divide information among frameworks up to and vacation is running out.

### **Talent Retention and Employee Engagement**

Ability Retention and Staff Interaction Procedures and Talent Management strategies that show obligation to HR bring about more impacted specialists and low wages. Subsequently, Labour Relations colossally affect staff efficiency and ability maintenance. Worker Involvement and Talent Management consolidated can abuse a significant line (Lockwood, 2006). In the present serious field keeping gifted labourers is a significant human asset challenging the entryway. Presently like never before in business history, associations really must treat individuals well. Transforming from the modern period to the age of the information labourer clears the earth, really the entire world. Today the information economy, individual information, abilities, and connections are an incredible resource for an association and a vital wellspring of the upper hand. To be a productive cutthroat association ought to have exceptionally gifted labourers. A ton of examinations intend that regardless of a given day, 76% of representatives need more open positions... There are many contentions which means observing Talent has become more troublesome than before capacity as well as the other way around. Yet, in our view, the maintenance of ability is an undeniably challenging assignment as the association needs to construct trust among workers. The expense related to individuals has expanded to a general more than 66% of the association's expenses. I'm growing up, drawing inability and maintenance is viewed as a significant driver of investor worth and key results. As per a review finished by the Corporate Leadership Council (Driving Performance and Maintenance by Employee Engagement, 2004), existing staff volunteers improve and are 87% less inclined to do as such wipe. The method involved with building an Employee Dialog proceeds. Viable Labour Relationships advance a spot for advancement, improvement, learning, backing, gift, and acknowledgment (Lockwood). Lockwood, (2006) presumes that it is a work in progress insight lastly, the custom of the Organization that decides Staff Involvement and ability maintenance. Successful Talent



Management requires solid coordinated effort in Leadership, Business Procurement, and Staff Marriage (Lockwood, 2006). Drawing in and choosing ability is only the start and can appear to be exceptionally basic in stages. Even though Earnings and advantages can start to draw in more modern specialists Organizations have perceived the significance of Labour Relations. Marriage is more than that fulfilment. Fulfilled workers are blissful right now with pay, advantages, and soul. This fulfilment might be the consequence of delay to show additional work or achievement; thus, makes an agreeable specialist with the norm. On the off chance that not, taking part workers to show up great characteristics, for example,

1. Creating and making
2. Assuming individual liability to get things going
3. A genuine craving to make the organization a triumph too collectively
4. To have an enthusiastic relationship with the Association and with its objective and vision time is expiring.

## **CONCLUSION**

Abilities the executives are distinguished as one of numerous The HR challenge is to address the issues of the business top to the bottom past tomorrow. You want to live again the maintainable improvement of any business association. Disregarding the ability of the executives is a self-destructive association particularly in the present status of these organizations with the high contest. In the current market for hungry ability, one of the greatest difficulties associations face is effectively drawing in, testing, preparing, and holding a skilled staff. Ability Management is a suffering course of arranging, recruiting, creating, making due, and laborers' pay all through the association. Representatives are the just application that does anything for a remarkable association. It makes serious benefits and assists with making manageable development for the organization. Organizations all over the planet are additionally dealing with the issue of absence of ability. Many positions have no privileges for gifted specialists. Drawing in the right ability and staying with them is nothing to joke about the challenge for the present HR directors. Thus, the ability of the board is a colossal and troublesome undertaking for administrators. Business mark and worker association might be utilized as an essential device for putting away and overseeing ability. In "Battle of Talents", Talent has won. Accordingly, organizations today view Talent Management as a Strategy weapon in the clash of Talents.

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## BREAKING DOWN THE BAD BANK AND ITS REQUIREMENT



### AUTHOR DETAILS

**YASH SINGH**

BACHELORS OF  
MANAGEMENT STUDIES

3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR

ST. XAVIER'S COLLEGE  
(AUTONOMOUS),  
KOLKATA

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced the formation of India's first "Bad Bank" last year that will assist in getting rid of the non-performing assets in the economy. This framework is said to be functioning smoothly with the incorporation of two entities- NARCL and IDRCL. The government had also announced the use of Rs. 30,600 crores as a guarantee for this structure. To understand this entire procedure better, one first needs to understand the functioning of each of the prior mentioned entities and the implementation of the guarantee.

### UNDERSTANDING THE FUNCTIONING OF A BANK

A basic bank functions by taking deposits from the public in return for paying them a certain rate of interest and lending the same deposits to borrowers in return for charging them a higher rate of interest than what is to be paid to the depositors. This way the bank is earning income on its interest rate spread.

For the banks, the borrowers are seen as assets as they are obligated to receive money from them, and the depositors are seen as liabilities as they are obligated to make payments to them. Of these borrowers, some tend to default. Looking at the credit quality, the banks also estimate the probability of the individuals or corporations defaulting.

The lower the credit quality, the riskier the borrowers are and the higher is the probability of them defaulting. Thus, the banks should give out loans in alignment with their value at risk (VaR), which gives the minimum amount of capital that should be maintained by it to function in crisis-driven times.

### THE ROLE OF NARCL AND IDRCL

If at any given time, the bank's receivables defaulted tend to be greater than its estimated defaults, the bank may face a situation where it is not able to pay back in full to its depositors and ultimately lead to a bank run that would result in depositors rushing to withdraw their money.

If such scenarios become prolonged, the banks may descend, leading to economic distress. The debtors of the bank not being able to repay them are termed from the bank's perspective as non-performing assets (NPAs). To instil people's faith in banks, the government has introduced the National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL) and Indian Debt Resolution Company Limited (IDRCL).

Under the proposed framework, the NARCL will purchase the NPAs from the bank at a mutually agreed-upon value. This value may be the net of a haircut. It will pay 15% of the agreed net value upfront in cash, and the remaining 85% in security receipts. In the meantime,



the banks will write back 15% of the amount of bad debt that was instantly recovered by NARCL. Following this, the IDRCL will manage the assets and will be looping in some turnaround experts that will aid them in liquidating these assets. Only after the liquidation of their respective NPAs by IDRCL will the banks be able to redeem the security receipts. The security receipts issued by NARCL are backed by the government's guarantee worth Rs. 30,600 crores. In case the assets are not realised at face value, the difference between the same and the realised value will be paid for from this guarantee.

In terms of ownership of the NARCL, the state-owned banks hold 51% stake, whereas 49% of the stake is held by the FIs or debt management companies.



*Illustration 1 (Source: The Financial Pandora)*

### **REQUIREMENT OF THIS STRUCTURE**

The creation of a bad bank was proposed by the Indian Banks' Association last year for swift resolution of NPAs, acting to which the finance minister has launched this framework.

Although there are asset reconstruction companies (ARCs) present to aid banks in times of misery, its functioning has often been under scrutiny. In the case of ARCs, there has not been any guarantee backing them as in the case of the bad bank. The banks dealing with ARCs are paid either in cash, security receipts, or a mix of both. However, the security deposits are not redeemable unless the assets are sold off.

Moreover, the ARCs imply a very steep discounting rate on the distressed assets of the banks as their sole agenda is to make a profit out of the agony of the banks. The proposed bad bank will have a public sector character and majority ownership is likely to be state-owned. It is not expected to value the distressed assets at a steep discount to profit from the bank.

In addition to the upfront cash payment helping in gradual profitability, the concept of this structure is to realise the value locked in these assets and restore this value to the banks. They can further use this as growth capital, eventually leading to the banking system becoming more robust.



## CONCLUSION

In its bulletin for February 2022, the RBI has mentioned that the NARCL will be alleviating the banks of their NPAs and further help in kickstarting a credit cycle. However, the point to be kept in consideration is that currently, India has about 5.40 lakh crores worth of gross non-performing assets of the public sector banks (PSBs) alone.

Thus, the bad banks can help in making the creditworthiness of the banks better in the short run. For the banks to survive in the long term, there needs to be superior internal controls and transparency in place. Without these attributes, the banks will work the way have been, while the government will be at their rescue with the taxpayers' hard-earned money.

With approvals worth Rs. 82,845 crores already identified by the NARCL, of which Rs. 50,000 crores are to be transferred by March 2022; the bad bank is all set to commence its operations. It will be key to see whether it helps in overturning the banking sector and shed some positive light on it, or whether it goes on to be a short-term benefit exploited by the banks.

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# WHAT I'D DO DIFFERENTLY

Who knew that three years could also mean ten months? We certainly did not. It was a regular weekend when we received a notice from the college that it would remain closed for the next two weeks. We were excited about this out-of-the-blue vacation. But God had other plans for us.

As the days passed, we'd hope to be back on campus. But it took around two years for that day to come. We had spent just seven months on campus, but SXC made us feel at home. We could barter anything to get the lost times back, but that is not how life works. Our classrooms shifted to virtual meeting rooms. Classroom shenanigans took a backseat because now all we could come up with was 'connectivity issues'.

I clearly remember the first week of college; nervous faces all around. Everyone was trying to build connections. I was fortunate to have met some amazing people then, who are my closest friends now. The pandemic cut down on our time together, but we still managed to stick together and make infinite memories.

As an outgoing student, I have both regrets and memories to cherish. I do have a lot to look back upon with a smile but at the same time, I wish I would have done things differently. I wish I had attended more classes, and bunked even more of them. Attending classes one day, chatting at the Green Benches, the next. I wish I had split time equally between all the food stalls outside college. I wish my friends would have let me sleep peacefully in class. For

someone who had not even explored college campus that well, I'd probably like to live each day in a new way. To the next batches - make sure that you make the most of your numbered college days. For you never know when this experience will get shorter than it already is. Make memories both inside and outside the classroom. Interact with as many people as you can. Choose your own family because they will make college worth remembering, just like mine did. Form relationships that will last a lifetime and create memories that you will cherish forever!

-Yukti Lunawat

# SHARE THE DREAM

The Olympic Games are the world's foremost sports competition with over 200 nations taking part. A leading international sporting event, it features summer and winter sports where thousands of athletes from all over the world compete in a range of sports. Normally held every four years, this edition of the game commenced in Tokyo from 23rd July and concluded on the 8th of August, 2021. To promote a future full of eternal hope in the hearts of people all over the world, the mascot was Miraitowa, derived from the Japanese words mirai and towa meaning future and eternity respectively.

This year brought the debut of five new sports such as:

**3x3 Basketball**- 3x3 is the largest urban team sport in the world where the game is played in 1 unique main court. The event is structured in 17 different sessions of 4 games. The top two teams of the group qualified for the finals. The first place was awarded to USA from the women's category and Latvia from the men's category.

**Skateboarding** - The International Olympic Committee introduced skateboarding to attract young audiences. At the 2021 games, while Yuto Horigome won first place in the men's street competition,



13-year-old Momiji Nishiya became Japan's youngest-ever gold medal winner.

**Sport Climbing** - Sport Climbing consists of three different divisions. First there is speed climbing, a two-person race on a fixed route. Then there is bouldering, involving climbing as many routes as possible without safety ropes within four minutes. Lastly, there is lead climbing, athletes ascending as high as possible on a 15-meter wall. The 18-year-old Spaniard Alberto Ginés López has taken the first-ever Olympic gold medal in sport climbing.

**Surfing** - The International Surfing Association had been campaigning for the inclusion of surfing in the Olympics since 1995, and it finally transpired. It included six rounds of surfing where the athletes were divided into groups, with the bottom two being eliminated after each round. Carissa Moore from the women's category and Italo Ferreira from the men's category bagged the gold medals.

**Karate** - Karate joined the league of taekwondo and wrestling as an official Olympic sport. Athletes took part in two disciplines, kata(form) and kumite(sparring), with a total eight gold medals being awarded: two for kata (one for men, one for women) and six for kumite (three weight categories for both men and women).

Luigi Busa from Italy bagged the gold medal.

## **INDIA'S PERFORMANCE AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN SPORTS**

This year, India sent their largest-ever contingent with over 120 athletes taking part in a variety of sports. The Games started off with a bang for India with weightlifter Saikhom Mirabai Chanu grabbing the silver medal on the very first day. Neeraj Chopra created history as the only second Indian to win an individual Olympic gold by winning the men's javelin throw final. He ended India's 121-year wait for an athletics medal with his gold in the sport. PV Sindhu became the first Indian woman athlete to win two individual Olympic medals. She beat China's He Bing Jiao to win the bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympics. Indian men's hockey team led by Manpreet Singh rewrote history as it claimed an Olympics medal after 41 years, defeating Germany 5-4 to win the bronze medal at Tokyo Olympics adding to India's record-shattering medal tally at the Games. The Indian women's hockey team led by Rani Rampal missed a historic bronze medal, but made a place in everyone's hearts. Golfer Aditi Ashok finished a remarkable fourth in the Tokyo Games. The Indian contingent won seven medals in total : 1 gold, 2 silvers, and 4 bronze and ranked 48th in the medals table, making this year the most successful edition of the Games for the country.

The historic performance of the Indian Team in the Tokyo Olympics is a stepping stone to many years of sporting success and the foundation builder to producing many more champions. Although there is no doubt that an Olympic medal inspires many young athletes to strive for the same and perform for their country, the Indian sports sector is also experiencing a complete revolution with all-round developments. Not only is the government introducing game-changing schemes such as 'Khelo India' to address issues regarding infrastructure, talent scouting and training facilitation but the private sectors and non-profit entities are also increasingly contributing to the sector by organizing leagues and tournaments by funding deserving sports persons and getting involved at the grassroots level for overall development.

India's culture in sports has improved a lot as compared to what it was a decade back, however it is still in the developing phase as compared to the sports business abroad. If you want to build a tall and enormous skyscraper, its foundation or base should be wide and strong. In India, the focus is mostly at the top of the skyscraper when it comes to the sports ecosystem. The top professional players who are established veterans already have support from the governing board of the respective sport, corporate sponsors, and also NGOs who want to support their journey. However, if you ask these very professionals, they would say that their most difficult phase was from the district to the national level when they faced a dearth of capital and resources. It is paramount for these players to lay a technically and physically sound foundation in their spring days to ensure an everlasting career. India's inefficacy in this aspect makes us a nation that is very far from promoting sports as a lifestyle and a viable career option.

To restore sporting society in India at grass-root level, Khelo India program was presented by the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs. Its goal is to assemble a solid structure for all games played in our nation. Every competitor chosen under the plan will get a yearly grant worth Rs. 5 lakh for eight sequential years. It covers around 200 million kids in the age group of 10-18 under a monstrous public actual wellness drive.

To make this drive effective, checking and exploring ought to be appropriately kept up with as it puts accentuation on a grass-root level. Khelo India will help in the general improvement of our country and will change India into a worldwide wearing force to be reckoned with in the forthcoming years. Moreover and more importantly advertising, social awareness and campaigns should be implemented to build a wholesome sports culture within the nation that inculcates physical literacy and technical knowledge of a game and encourages them to play and enjoy these as activities without worrying about the rewards in terms of medals or success.



## FORAY INTO THE EV SECTOR

With the incoming revolution in the automobile sector and encouragement shown towards the Electric Vehicles to promote green energy and tackle sky high petrol prices, it has become almost certain that Electric Vehicles are the next big thing in the automobile sector. Catering towards the same goal, OLA has announced the launch of Ola S1 aiming to contribute towards the faster adoption and manufacturing of electric vehicles by developing solutions to make electric mobility viable at scale and paving the way for scooter revolution in India at the same time. Ola's plan to introduce electric vehicles got a boost in the year 2020, when it bought Amsterdam-based smart scooter startup Etergo BV. The company's follow-up, Ola Electric, is entering a market saturated with names like Tesla Inc. and China's Nio Inc. Although starting small with a modest two-wheeler, Ola Electric which has been built from the ground up in Bengaluru, could be a player in a \$200 billion domestic EV market within a decade. CEO Bhavish Aggarwal has estimated that production capacity will be as large as 10 million vehicles per year, or 15% of the world's e-scooters, by the summer of 2022. Although Ola's visionary pathway in the EV sector after its groundbreaking entry is not going to be that easy. Ola's biggest test in the electric scooter market will be its battle with rivals Bajaj Auto and Hero MotoCorp, the largest e-two wheeler manufacturer as the



Apart from the fierce competition that the company has to face, there are various other roadblocks that Ola will have to overcome in order to establish a strong hold over the market. One of the major problems being the middle-class consumers who are the main target market of the company. Although middle-class Indians are concerned about air pollution, they are also hesitant to pay twice as much for an electric scooter at present prices.

Ola, being a first major entrant into the EV market of India has also garnered opinions from various industry experts and rival companies. For instance, Anup Jain, managing partner of the company Orios venture Partners, which has invested in a battery-as-a-service EV startup says, "India has never seen fuel prices at Rs. 100 until now. It has sounded the death-knell for fossil fuel driven personal vehicles where consumers are extremely price sensitive. Most two-wheeler brands have run marketing campaigns over the last 50 years based on fuel efficiency alone. Thus, Ola's entry and electric bikes will push consumers to replace and buy new two wheelers. The pre-booking rush is a clear indication." Vikas Gupta, founder-CEO, E-Ashwa Automotive, agrees that, "Ola is going to be their biggest competitor. However, as an industry player, they appreciate the

the momentum spurred by the company in the EV space.

Given India's two-wheeler industry, which is the world's largest for traditional petrol-powered bikes and scooters, accounting for four out of every five vehicles sold in the country, a successful debut by Ola into the electric two-wheeler segment is likely to be a real game changer for the country. The advent of Ola into the nascent Electronic Vehicle industry has paved the way for a revolution in the Indian EV sector with only a handful of players. It is the first step towards the massive objective of producing a full line of electric vehicles, which will help Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' and sustainable mobility goals. While the mobility start-up has been successful with the launch of its electric scooter, the company's plans of entering the electric 4-wheeler sector is beginning to set the stage for a pathbreaking upheaval in the technology industry. Although the manufacturing plans are not yet revealed, the cab giant is working indigenously to develop its global design center for the Electric car division in the Indian Silicon Valley. Thus, with these efforts in line, Ola is all set to make investments to leverage the ecosystem and turn India into an EV hub.

# KARAN ANSHUMAN

Interviewed by : The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview : Online

**1. Ever since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a tremendous surge regarding the viewership on OTT platforms. What is your opinion on the scope of growth of the OTT industry? How is the creation of streaming shows different from the conventional filmmaking process?**

As of now there isn't much difference between making a show compared to a film. The approach is the same in terms of pre, shoot, post. Instead of a 90-100 page script, you're working with 400-500 pages. So it's like making 3 films in one go. This is peculiar to the Indian industry. We have not yet been able to crack the efficiency of Hollywood in terms of shooting episodes sequentially and turning around top-notch projects from writing to delivery quickly season after season. But it's still early days and a WIP, we'll get there. In terms of other differences: writers are unshackled on many fronts as shows allow a lot more freedom that breaks away from the 3-act structure and characters' graphs and plot does not rely on formula. There is considerably less censorship. You don't even have to 'conclude' after 8-10 eps. There's always the possibility of another season to continue developing character arcs. The one big difference between films and shows is that the showrunner is the boss and 'captain of the ship' as opposed to the director who is the primary creative mind on a film. The showrunner usually has final calls on all aspects especially in the writers' room and in post. Success is no longer dependent on star power. So you have the flexibility of working with good, even great actors who're not necessarily household names. Now we've so many 'OTT stars' who're shining with their work. There are boundless opportunities in all filmmaking departments to shine. This is one massive change that OTT has brought about. I firmly believe that OTT is the future. The theater-going experience has to quickly reinvent itself or it will fade out given the changing viewing patterns of audiences and the sheer convenience of being able to tune in to your favorite show when you want and on whatever device you want.

**2. Although your father was a filmmaker, you were initially more inclined towards games and graphics. You even pursued a course in computer science in the US. What drew you back to this industry?**

Yes indeed, I had very little inclination to cinema, specifically Hindi cinema. Growing up, loitering on studio floors and shoots one took it all for granted. And then there was peer pressure of course; I went to a school of kids with 9-5 business dads and that conformist world looked and felt a lot different from mine: I always felt like an outsider with an off-kilter, iconoclastic family. Little did I know this experience would later turn into my strengths. And it all really changed only when I went to college in America. I was pursuing a double major in computer science and theater; when I realized CS was less about computers and more about math, for which I had no aptitude. Being a liberal arts school, in a bid to find a new major I started taking up assorted subjects from art history to astronomy; from photography to psychology and eventually chanced upon a filmmaking class - and almost instantly, instinctively knew that this is what I wanted to do. I'd almost say it came naturally - framing shots, directing actors, cutting physical film - but of course it was all those hours hanging about on my dad's sets subliminally imbibing everything.

**3. What according to you has more impact and acts as a catalyst for a filmmaker, having an adventurous mind or a creative mind?**

A solid dose of both and I'd throw in experience for good measure. Creativity is born from adventure. The more you travel, the more you interact with the world, the more you experience, the more you read (reading is also your imagination taking off on an internal adventure as you translate words into visuals and voices in your head) - the more creative you will become and a better filmmaker you will be.

**4. As a director how do you ensure to execute the writer's vision and provide justice to his/her writing? As you are a writer yourself, how do you manage both these roles seamlessly?**

I have always written everything I have directed. But of equal importance, I must point out, is that I have always collaborated with other writers on the material I have eventually directed. Being a part of the writing is personally important to me because it gives you the time to construct images and scenes in your head at a slow, deliberate pace - the more time you spend with the material, the more precise a visual you will be ready with. Reading a script by someone else is a poor substitute for participating in the writing of one. Think of a scenic route - you could drive from point A to B in an hour and take it all in while still being distracted by the act of driving - this is akin to directing someone else's script that you've come in cold. Or you could walk from point A to point B, take the air, the vista, and literally stop to smell the flowers. This is writing and directing your own material. I hasten to add, this is how I prefer it and by no means am I saying that directors who take others' scripts and make it their own don't do wonders with it. I myself have trusted other directors with my screenplays and in the future, am open to attempt a script that another writer has written as long as it speaks to me.

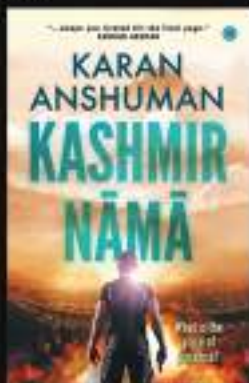


10. Critics say Mirzapur glorifies some common evils which exist in our society. What is your opinion of such criticism? Have you ever felt the need to address this criticism within your writing?

Showing a mirror to society is addressing the evils because that reflection cannot possibly be construed as endorsement. Even Scorsese came in for criticism for *The Wolf of Wall Street*; that it glorifies greed and the excesses of capitalism or that *Breaking Bad* glorifies using meth. This is nonsense. Every action of every character has consequences that cannot end well for them. At its core, *Mirzapur* is about the struggle of youth in small town India and the lack of opportunities - that is the only political point to be made here. I don't think anyone in their right minds will be "inspired" to take up violence because Gudu and Bablu do so. I mean, see what happened to Bablu? Would anyone want to end up like him?

11. What is your message for the students at St. Xavier's College, Kolkata?

Work on developing your creative skills. With AI and automation coming into every field - all the jobs of today - whether it's that of a doctor's or banker's or engineer's or even governance - a lot of this is going to be handled by machines and AI - and this future will be upon us quicker than if you'd expect. Artists, philosophers, designers, virtual reality experts, and those who endeavor creatively - these are some of the fields that will produce the leaders of tomorrow. So you've already got a head start if your ability to tell stories, ruminate on the human condition, and the ability to wield a paintbrush is above average. Work on your skills, dream big, enjoy your time here, and persist with your goals. And... along with personal achievement and advancement, always spare a chunk of of your time and ability to help contribute towards larger causes that transcend the concept of groups of people - whether it is gender, religion, or even the planet as a whole. Think of your neighbor, think of climate change. Discard trivial differences and as an individual, be the change you wish to see.



# FILM WRITER

5. Movies are no more just a source of entertainment, but they rule over the minds of the youth, the lifestyles, thinking patterns, ideas, and thoughts. With this change in dynamics in the cinema, how have you managed to ensure that your movies/web series align with this?

While it's true life takes from cinema - especially true in a country like India, where the films have an outsized influence on people's lives - cinema ultimately is inspired by real life. I'd say there is a burning rage to tell certain stories and everyday reality is the starting point. Take my own work for example and their starting points/core ideas: The sheer absurdities of extremism - *Bangistan*; My disillusionment with franchise club cricket - *Inside Edge*; Highlight small-town youth's angst at lack of opportunities - *Mirzapur*.

6. You have been a film critic. Did this help you in understanding what the audiences wanted? From being a film critic to becoming a filmmaker, has this transition changed or influenced your idea of film criticism or filmmaking in anyway?

These are two very different jobs and not at odds with each other. A film critic invests a couple of hours in watching a movie, and a couple of hours gathering thoughts and writing on it. Film criticism is a very personal reaction to a film. Filmmaking is anything but that. It is years of investing every fibre of your being in telling a story you believe in. It is about collaborating with hundreds of people - cast and crew - sharing a vision and embarking with them on an adventure that is charged with heightened emotions at every step and very likely a landmark event of your life. These are incompatible pursuits.



7. If you got the opportunity to go back in time and change something in any particular creation of yours, then which one would that be and what changes would you opt for? Can you share an experience in which your attention to detail and thoroughness had an impact on your show?

I'm pretty sure every filmmaker, when they rewatch their own work, only thinks about the decisions they made in that particular movie, scene, or even moment and how - if they'd made another choice - it could've been better. I am no different. We always want to improve. A good example of thoroughness having impact is the cricket in *Inside Edge*. We wanted to replicate the experience of broadcast cricket at an international scale. So everything from the players kits, attention to detail on the camera positions, letting the actors training for months on end precisely for the shots they had to play on camera, to the accuracy of the made-up scores, post sound design of the ball hitting bat, stumps clattering, the VFX crowd, the commentators... an endless list of creative decisions taken just to replicate what live cricket we see on TV looks like and one we take for granted. It was a gargantuan task that we pulled off because of attention to detail.

8. Penkaj Tripathi in an interview said that his favorite thing about "Mirzapur" is its writing and how in between the dark and gritty saga of guns and glory, there is an undertone layer of humor and satire that connects well with the audience. How important do you think humor is while crafting a series or show of such a kind?

Penkaj Tripathi has the ability to elicit humor from the drabest of situations so he's being too kind. Humor is important, often inadvertent - but it really depends on the kind of show it is. I'm working on a horror series right now - and while it'd be easy to throw in a joke here and there - we've restrained ourselves. It's so important to not break the tension and atmosphere in the horror genre that anything comic would just get in the way.

9. In an interview you said that you started shooting for *Mirzapur* on the day *Inside Edge* was released, since filmmaking is an art of storytelling, how difficult was it for you to make a complete shift in genres in such a short span of time?

While it's true the shoot started immediately after release, there was a lot of work that happened in the interim. Immersing yourself in scripting, rehearsals, reccees and other aspects of prep even while on post of another project is possible (though not always recommended) and contributes in setting the mood and stage. You have to find time to soak in the material; it's not possible to turn up on shoot blind and still do a good job.

stage. You have to find time to soak in the material; it's not possible to turn up on shoot blind and still do a good job.

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH

# THE SENIOR EDITOR OF THE WIRE ARFA KHANUM SHERWANI

Interviewed by : The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview : Online

**1. The youth of today feels that the freedom of journalism is somewhat curtailed. What advice would you like to give to budding journalists who want to advance in the field while standing by the truth?**

In India, this is one of the darkest times for journalism. At the same time, this is one of the most exciting periods of my career so far. When you are stopped and denied your right to inform people, you get a "zidd" or drive to do it all the more. This gives me and my work a whole new meaning to exist and do journalism because I do understand that there are very few of us who are trying to deliver truth in this time of darkness. So, my advice to budding journalists is that you should seek truth, go towards the path of truth and exercise your rights more and more. Journalism is all about truthful information that empowers citizens to make informed decisions.

**2. How do you feel journalism in India can free itself from the shackles of commercial and political pressures and encourage constructive criticism?**

Someone like me sitting in front of you, being interviewed by all of you today is an example that it is possible that one can free oneself as a journalist and as journalist organizations from the shackles of political and corporate pressures. The Wire, my organization is an example. While it may not be as exciting for the new journalists as it is for me, the salary I earned in 2010 is the same as I earn today, but at the same time, there is a lot more creative and professional freedom that I enjoy as a journalist. Earlier when there was a corporate boom in the audio-visual industry, the journalists were paid a lot more than they actually deserved. This crisis has proven to be a leveller. There will be small organizations that are financially strained, crises will always block your path, but there will also be enough resources for you to follow your passion and will. In India, the only way forward for independent journalism is 'not-for-profit journalism.' So in our case, since it is the people of the nation who are paying for our journalism, we are directly accountable to them, I am accountable to you all and I am also accountable to the girl who lives in the outskirts of a village who has no other resources and feels completely blacked out by other mainstream media. Therefore, my journalism is for the people of India.

**3. With the evolution of social media and its increased reach, how do you think it has changed the methods of journalism over the years? How do you utilize the power of social media to your advantage?**

I come from a background of TV journalism which was more of a monologue in my opinion. But when it comes to digital platforms and social media platforms its algorithm really helps me in getting real-time feedback and it also gives me an

audience with whom I am able to discuss real-time issues. A few days ago I shared an argument about the genocide and rape threats on Muslim women and mentioned how unsafe this country has become for Muslim women but people responded with some very strong opinions and thoughtful replies which certainly proved my argument wrong. The fact that I received such thoughtful feedback restored my faith in society and the law of the nation. I was so happy to be proven wrong because these sane voices inspired me and helped me change my opinion and provided me hope that there are so many responsible citizens out there who will not let this country turn into a majoritarian and fascist state.

**4. Being the Senior Editor of The Wire, there is no doubt that you have an eye for great detail. However, it is imperative that the pieces of news deliver a crisp and smart understanding of the story. How do you decide which detail is more important than others?**

It is an easy and difficult question both. Our audience includes a wide range of people. There are people who are news junkies, and there are people who are watching something for the first time and are not aware of the news cycle, so it's always a challenge to address and satisfy that range and variety of audience. As a team, we try to decide which news should be published or not based on the deficit of news items, the rule of law, rights, freedom and basic constitutional values. The news is often about electoral politics, and other government-related agendas, but what you do not really hear is about the people who live on the margins of Indian society. Young people like you all will find yourself hardly getting represented in the supposedly so-called 'mainstream media.' So what we try to do is fill in that gap that is left by the mainstream media. For me, I always pick up the stories that are related to religious minorities, Dalits, tribals, young people, students, unemployed people, people from North-East, people from Kashmir, etc. because they are hugely under-represented. We do try to cover everything, but if given the option to do a detailed analysis this is usually how I pick my stories and this is how I prioritize.

**5. The media is considered the 4th pillar of democracy. What are some important practices that media organizations and journalists should follow to ensure that they fulfill their responsibilities while being objective?**

According to me, the first rule is that a journalist's loyalty and duty should be only towards his/her own profession. Your loyalty should not be to your corporate or political masters, but to your profession, your readers and viewers. The only responsibility and accountability I feel is towards the people and I believe that when questioned by them, I will have to provide answers. We have seen various crises over the last two years. It was only about two weeks ago when my entire department fell sick and the majority of them contracted COVID, so for about a week, our department could not function properly. There were important news developments taking place during this time and I could not make this



public that my team members were not available to cover these news items, in such times of crisis, you feel ill-equipped to do what you want to do. So I firmly believe that a journalist's loyalty should be towards his/her profession. Secondly, the only book that I need to abide by is the Constitution of India. My answerability is towards my profession, the people I report on and the people I report for. If there is a crisis and questions are raised this is how I believe a journalist should prioritize.



**6. Do you think that professional education is important for being a good journalist?**

You have done your Diploma in journalism from Aligarh Muslim University, how did that help you in your 20+ year journey as a journalist? The funny thing is, the answer is yes and no.

No, because we have had more than a century of journalism practice in India. Many of our freedom fighters were journalists actually, from Mahatma Gandhi to Maulana Azad, they used to publish magazines and newspapers. So we have had a very old tradition of doing journalism in India. But at the same time, since we saw the privatization of news (which is very new to India), we started having more journalism schools and colleges. This is the reason why the tallest journalists in India do not have a degree themselves. Nevertheless, I believe that training is very crucial for a journalist to survive in this industry.

I consider myself fortunate to work for an organization like NDTV. While we were practising journalism, we were given an opportunity to learn from our seniors and international experts which helped us to learn about their experiences. Of course, there are media ownership issues but at the same time, there are problems of journalists not being trained properly. They have the power of the mic and camera but you know, it can be both constructive and destructive.

In my opinion, one should definitely earn a journalism degree and continue to learn new skills. I am from the "TV Generation" and very interestingly when digital became the voice of the voiceless, I shifted from TV to Digital. I saw both these mediums taking shape. For young people or mid-career professionals or old people who are losing touch with the new technology, I feel that it is important for everyone to be updated at all times to keep up with what is happening around them.

**7. Journalists are considered as the messengers of truth. It is as if the general public can rely on journalists for genuine, authentic and unbiased information. Do all these expectations create added pressure on journalists or act as a source of motivation?**

Well, it's a huge responsibility especially as I said that there are certain limitations as we are a small organization. For example, if I had more resources I would want to create a 24/7 Live Wire TV on Youtube. So if I have enough human resources, I would like to achieve this dream of mine in the next 5 years or so.

Hence, I feel that this sense of responsibility mostly inspires me but sometimes I do feel I am under pressure, especially while discussing topics that are very controversial or polarizing in nature and call for a variety of opinions. In my show, I present my views and opinions on the current developing issues in the country. You can find yourself in a minority position when 90 per cent of the people disagree with you but you still feel compelled by a thought process and believe that in spite of the majority being against you, you still follow your own opinion. There are different truths, your truth can be different from my truth. Mostly I feel inspired to expand myself and my organization, become more efficient and effective so that we can cover as many stories as possible.

**8. The new generation, popularly called the Gen-Z, presides in a highly dynamic and fast-paced environment. As a Journalist, what do you believe are some of the most pressing concerns that need to be addressed to our future leaders?**

I know saying this will upset a lot of people but let me say this - the Gen-Z are so difficult to handle and inform. The problem with this generation is that they are highly opinionated but at the same time not informed enough. When you have opinions without adequate information your opinions actually become biases. We strengthen the fault lines that we already have and India has fought for over the last several decades. The only thing I can say to the Gen-Z is to read more and be more informed before passing judgments or giving opinions. Your opinions should not be based on who you were born as what your parents have told you or your family background instead it should be based on the information you have and what you read. Please inform and empower yourself with information, try to get the source of information so that you get correct information. Another important thing is to develop critical thinking. We all come from somewhere and we are what our experiences are. When we try not to be like our parents or grandparents we are challenging the status quo, we are not letting our upbringing, our biases and privileges come in the way of how we think and perceive the world in general. This is how you create an illuminated, more knowledge-based, more scientific temperament based society. We need to be well informed and by reading I do not only mean newspapers but also read a variety of things like websites or watch programs. Journalism is a medium that deals with almost all spheres of life so if I read something from philosophy or social science or the knowledge I gain while travelling or reading fiction - all of this reflects in the work that I do, what I write or speak about. To the Gen-Z, I would like to say that you should make books your best friends to defeat the biases that usually every individual tends to carry with themselves. In modern society, I do not think or feel the same way as my parents did or as my grandparents did and neither should my future generations. My future generations should not feel obligated to feel like me. Social rigidity is caused when you carry the same ideology over generations. I do not mean that one should not carry forward their beliefs or traditions instead carry forward all of these with a new outlook and a new way of thinking.

**9. What is your message to the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?**

Try to develop scientific temperament and critical thinking. Think on your own. Be an empowered and powerful citizen drawing your power from the Constitution of India as to how we can become a better society and a better democracy. Be informed about your rights and freedom. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once said that he dreams of a society that is based on scientific evidence and not based on bias or prejudice and Dr. BR Ambedkar also said that we should try to build social democracy. Therefore, our constitution should be implemented in letter and spirit. We should think critically and be aware of our rights to establish a strong society and a strong democracy.

# GULSHAN DEVAIAH

## INDIAN ACTOR

Interviewed by: The Editorial Committee | Mode: Online

**1. You were working in Bangalore as a fashion teacher in Wigan & Leigh College when you decided to move to Mumbai and be an actor. We are all aware of the hardships that a person has to face if he or she wishes to fulfil this aspiration. What did you find so intriguing about acting that you were willing to choose this immensely struggling path?**

Since I was 6 years old, I was sure that I wanted to become an actor. Certainly, when I was introduced to acting, my idea and perception of a professional actor changed, and as a result, my ideas about acting and what sort of actor I wanted to be changed as well. But as the adage goes, "bachpan ka sapna hai", acting was my childhood dream. I always visualized myself in cinema, particularly Hindi cinema. I come from the South of the country, so a lot of people had questions as to why I did not join the local cinema which is a pretty good and prosperous industry. It never occurred to me as I fell in love with Hindi cinema at a very young age. When I was doing some amateur theatre work and was learning about acting, I was being eaten away by the fact that I was not pursuing my childhood dream. I did fairly well in fashion and that helped me gain confidence and a livelihood for myself but that was not enough. Then after some point, I did find the courage and the inclination to finally take the plunge. After understanding that I was an experienced actor, one with a strong work ethic, I felt ready. That took me a little while to figure out but then I eventually found my way.

**2. You are a NIFT graduate and have 10 years of experience in the fashion industry. How would you describe your fashion statement? We would love to hear about one trend you like and one that you do not.**

I like pearls (he showed a pearl necklace he was wearing), this is my fashion statement. That reminds me, the next time I am in Bangalore I am going to steal my mother's pearls. I am also into sneakers but there was a point of time when I could not afford them. However, since 2018 I have been collecting sneakers that I really like. Additionally, this keeps me in touch with my fashion past. There was a time when I was not very expressive - I was new to the industry so I used to wear a lot of neutral and dark colours and I never let my personality shine through. But as I gained more experience and confidence and became more aware of myself I started feeling more comfortable expressing myself through my clothes and my behaviour. To sum it up, I like pearls, sneakers and bright colours. I am not quite Ranveer Singh, but I did outdress him once at a Filmfare award function. I was wearing a blue suit with a plastic red bowtie and he was undressed compared to me!

**3. Anurag Kashyap gave you your first role in "That Girl in Yellow Boots" and your first movie itself was screened in the Toronto and Venice Film festivals. How did you receive your first role and what was it like for you to be standing alongside veterans like Naseeruddin Shah and Kalki Koechlin on an international stage representing your country and film?**

Unfortunately, I did not have any scenes with Mr. Shah although we were in the same film together. But ever since then, he has been very appreciative of my work and I am really glad that somebody as legendary as him considers me as one of the bright spots in the film industry. I had shot for two films before "That Girl in Yellow Boots" but they were never released, so my first official introduction credit came from Anurag, who is a very perceptive and instinctive person. He saw me dancing with Kalki one day at a house party at a friend's place, while I was performing on a rather raunchy Bollywood number named "White white face" from the movie Tashan. Anurag told me that he really loved the uninhibitedness and energy with which I danced which made him have an instinct about me, without seeing any of my work. He then spoke to me, gave me a few scenes, he liked what he saw and that is how I got this movie!

**4. We love your movie "Mard ko Dard Nahi Hota", your role had aspects of thrill and comedy included in it with a brilliant display of martial arts. How did you prepare yourself both mentally and physically for such a challenging role? How would you describe your experience?**

The challenge was created by life actually. Three months before I accepted this part I had a major reconstructive surgery of my right knee and then when Vasan came to me with this role, coincidentally it was about a one-legged karate guy. So it was already in the script and I laughed about it and said that it was funny that you have considered me for this part because I recently had a knee surgery myself and was not taking up any work, I had refused a lot of parts because I wanted to rest as I had a lot of muscle atrophy. I was giving myself the year off but a project like this became very difficult to say no to. This was an easy decision. But the challenge was I had to do four months of training and the three of us, Abhimanyu, Radhika and myself, trained together. Abhimanyu had some knowledge about martial arts training while Radhika came from a dance background. It was difficult because I was recovering and rehabilitating my knee which did not even have full flexion. I was weak, got tired and had severe cramping. So the training part could have been a lot easier if I did not have this condition. However sometimes in life, you have to go through things. If you do not do difficult things you will not have the satisfaction of doing something different. At the end of the day when people compliment my part, it is very satisfying because I went through the pain which I could have easily avoided. I feel that I am stronger and I put myself on the right path. I listened to my body and did not overdo it, instead of training daily I trained every alternate day for four to six hours. It was a mixture of fun and pain but when you see people's reactions to your work it all seems worth while. I love working with Vasan. This was our third collaboration, I believe in his storytelling so I had all of these reasons to do this film and I had a wonderful experience. It was tough but I enjoyed the process very much.

**5. You have played quite a few antagonists, your most acclaimed one being KC in Shaitaan. Many actors talk about how enjoyable it is to play such roles as it gives them a challenging endeavour. But, how difficult is it to play an on-screen character whose personality is a polar opposite to your real-life personality? How do actors prepare themselves to play such characters?**

Firstly, I would argue that anyone KC as an antagonist is mistaken, that film has no antagonist in fact it is one of those rare cases where each and every character of the film is flawed because that was the whole purpose of the film and that is why it was named "Shaitaan". There was no "villain" in the film. I find it very fun to tap into my imagination, create an illusion of the character and play someone I am not. This is something that intrigues me and makes me curious as well and that is precisely what acting is also all about for me and this is also the reason why I enjoyed playing KC. An actor must not create trappings or boundaries in their mind for the different roles that they play, this will help them in clearly exploring that character be it a cop, a doctor, a lawyer or anything for that matter. Having no boundaries at all helps them in being creative with that role and doing new things with it because eventually these are jobs and you have to play the person and not the job. This principle was taught to me by the directors whom I have worked with in the theatres and this is the principle I like to follow while playing any role. It helps me in creatively playing a character as per my observation and in my own way.





**6. Continuing from the last question - Ranveer Singh, after playing Alauddin Khilji in Padmavati, had to consult a psychiatrist to come out of his villainous persona. Did you ever face mental health issues because of playing such characters and if yes then what measures did you take to become mentally healthy again?**

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of all the wonderful people whom I have worked with in the amateur theatre for putting me in the right direction. As they say that there is a fine line between acting and madness. You cannot become the character, it is always an illusion. The real craft is how detailed and intact this illusion can be and my approach has always been to not become the person but to create an illusion of that person and this is something that improves with experience and practise. Although this happened with me once, perhaps due to my inexperience, when I was shooting Shaitaan it was not me but KC who used to come back home and I was made aware of it so I took corrective measures and changed my course. That was the only instance when any such thing ever happened to me other than that I do not think any character has adversely affected me. I am very against the notion where an actor romanticizes these ideas and blurs the line between acting and their real self just because actors like Dilip Kumar and many other Hollywood actors have been able to put themselves into such trauma and come out the other side and I would sincerely request them to stop doing so and take preventive measures.

**7. It is said that there is no better well-wisher than a critic. However, it is well acknowledged that the degree of this criticism towards an industry such as yours can be extremely harsh. To what extent do you rely on critical appraisals and/or audience reactions and imbibe those feedbacks in your performances?**

I know when I have done well and I know when I have not. What I do, is I aspire to be better and give it my best and sometimes I just do not, maybe I was being lazy or simply because I could not figure it out. As soon as a critic points out something, I know about it because it stays in the back of my mind where I feel I could have done better or I could have done it differently. Sometimes they do get it out of context, dramatizing small things such as accents and mocking them. To be honest, there is no particular accent one should abide by. It all differs from person to person. At the end of the day, there are people with whom you will agree and some with whom you will disagree and I am completely fine with both. Deep inside, I know how well I have performed and whether it is up to the mark. In most cases, the criticisms that I receive are absolutely correct and I feel that criticisms are good as they only motivate you to perform better moving ahead in life.

**8. You started your acting journey by doing English theatre in Bangalore, you have done more than 15 films and also two OTT shows in "Afsos" and "Smoke". Out of these three platforms, which one is your favourite, both as an audience and an actor? Also, which do you think is a more difficult situation to act in, the live performance in a theatre or the high-budget Bollywood productions?**

Cinema All-day! Cinema is paramount. There is no experience like going and watching a film on the big screen, no experience like laughing and crying at the same time with about 500 strangers. I hope that people value this experience and wish to relive it again. Although there is an OTT boom, the theatrical experience is uppermost. With OTT doing so well, a lot of job opportunities are being created as there is an unprecedented liberation when it comes to storytelling. I, unfortunately, do not enjoy live performances anymore. But I believe nothing is more difficult than the other. Some people are able to do both like my friends Kalki Koechlin and Jim Sarbh, both of them are fantastic actors and can effortlessly pull off both. It is more about how one adapts his craft. On stage, it is a free-flowing craft as you can do rehearsals and then perform it all together. However, cinema is a start-stop process that can sometimes be disruptive but once you get accustomed to the start-stop process, you will be more focused as you learn to work in a chaotic environment. It can get to people sometimes because some people like to be in a rhythm all the time and the process of cinema is not rhythmic, it is chaos. If you are not well suited to that chaos, which I am, then it can throw you off. Ultimately, it is about one's preference and not about the difficulty level.

**9. Over the past few years, the audience has seen a lot of variety in terms of content. They have access to great shows and series from all across the globe.**

**This has also led to the growth of cinema and industries which were not that popular a few years back. Does this motivate you as an actor to see that there are so many opportunities for you to expand your work or does it act as an added pressure that the work you do should live up to these increased expectations?**

No, I do not have any pressure personally and I do not think it is good or bad. It is another opportunity for me and I always try and look at it from the perspective of a filmmaker for I, as an actor, am completely dependent on filmmakers and storytellers. So, if storytellers are feeling liberated and if they have another platform and opportunity which is allowing them to present stories in long formats, then I am excited as it is another opportunity for me to play interesting characters. It is a creative process and I like long formats, I do not like short films or advertisements. So, definitely, OTT creates more opportunities, not only for myself but generally for every actor. Previously, we had theatres but you could not really make a living out of it, but people did it anyway for experience. Now we have streaming, which has long formats and are also very liberating. There was a need for this and this bracket of need is also growing as we are moving

**10. Ranbir Kapoor said his favourite film of his is "Wake Up Sid" because he related to his character a lot. We know it is very difficult for an artist to judge his/her own work but do you have a favourite role of yours?**

Not really. Each of them has been fun and have had their fair share of pain as well. I feel that I could have done better in almost all of my roles and I am okay with feeling this way. I am satisfied but I think there should always be a scope of improvement and I think this comes from experiences. If I had to choose my favourite film, not the role but the film would be "A Death in the Gunj" not only because my part was great but the viewing experience was something surreal. I still remember when I first saw the film on the big screen I almost forgot I was in it! I started enjoying that film as an audience member, so this has happened to me before. I do not have a favourite role, that is for my audience to decide and debate upon.

**11. You have stressed the importance of honing your craft while advancing your career. What are some challenges that you are facing in your journey currently? And what is your primary motivation to keep moving forward?**

Currently, I have to juggle schedules which is not something I believe in. Ideally, I believe in starting something, finishing it and then moving on to something else. But due to the pandemic, a lot of my projects are facing a time crunch and I have to divide my time between two projects which has almost never happened in my career except for a small overlap between Huntarr and Ram Leela. Mostly all my projects have been completed at a stretch regardless of the length of the role. This is what I am struggling with currently because when you start something you play a certain character it has a sensibility, you stay with that sensibility. This has huge advantages because your focus is on that role and it becomes a part of your life. And once you are done you leave that aside and move on to something new and start from scratch. You start building a new character, understanding a new sensibility and seeing how you fit into it. So when you juggle between two roles you work in completely different sets with different characters, different working styles of the directors. Many actors manage these things but personally, I am struggling with it and relying on my experience in the entertainment industry of more than ten years to help me through it.

**12. What is your message for the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?**

Try to be better. Be pioneers. I would say that never ever let your economic status be the driving force of your decisions. The environment that you grew up in and the upbringing that you have had might have been difficult and somewhere in the middle but your mindset which gets you out of bed every day should always be top-notch. Your mind should never reside with the small things that you have been surviving with. I am a part of Generation-X hence I am so open about topics such as this. Let your mind fly and discover things and create new things to inspire people. Sometimes we get too comfortable where we are and decide "yeh nah hoga humse" - your mind should not reside in this.

# RONO DUTTA

An Indian aviation executive. He is currently the CEO of InterGlobe Aviation Limited which operates IndiGo. He served as the President of the United Airlines from 1999 to 2002.

Interviewed by: The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview: Online



## 1. With more than two decades of corporate experience, what according to you are certain skills that a manager should possess to build a long-lasting and successful career?

Firstly, I think it is very important to find a career that you actually enjoy. I have been a part of three to four companies and did an 'okay' job in them but once I got into aviation, I felt like a spark lit up in me! Keep looking till you find something that excites you and that you enjoy. Let me tell you a story that exemplifies a breakthrough in my career. I was one of the directors at United Airlines and once I reached there I felt stuck. I felt that I could not break through till an experience happened where Lyod Barry was my Senior Vice-President and he called me to a meeting. At the meeting the head of Operations, Head of Marketing and other important dignitaries were present. They all got into a fight about whether or not Miami should be a domicile for crews and after a discussion, they all walked away with differences. Then Lyod called me aside and told me to write a paper recommending the right answer for the problem. I was confused as to when all the seniors were fighting about it how could I find a solution to it. He said, "Don't worry about what marketing or operations want, but do what is right for United Airlines and that should be your only objective." I realized then that I should no longer worry about what other people think in meetings, but to only think about what is best for our airline, and my competitors became friends as a result. So this was quite a revelation and I would recommend it to everyone that wherever you are, whatever you are doing just think about what is right for your organisation. The other learning that I would like to share is an incident that took place at Monsanto. We were looking at their herbicide product and we went in there to do a diagnostic. The operations and marketing department were working very well; but the only problem was that the communication between the two departments was almost non-existent. They were in different buildings and different cities, thus creating chaos. So, the opportunity of improvement always lies in the interface between departments. Now coming to moral learnings, you should always be determined to do good, to do things the right way. Always take the higher road. IndiGo, for example, competes with other airlines, but we at IndiGo just want to do what is right for India - whether it is about connecting small cities or using Bande Bharat. One should always take the high road.

## 2. The airline industry has taken quite a hit during the pandemic. What according to you would be the right step for the revival of the aviation industry?

There are some macro factors that work both for and against the Indian Aviation. Some of the factors that are against the Indian Aviation are that we have the lowest ticket prices all over the world because the income levels of the people are not that high. And it is difficult to convince them to take airlines instead of railways. Unfortunately at the same time our costs and purchases like fuel purchase, maintenance and repair or buying a new airplane all are in Dollars and the rupee keeps depreciating and on top of that the tax structure makes it difficult for the industry. It's like skating on ice where you have to maintain balance all the time.

Therefore it's a very demanding industry in this sense. However, there are good things also. Airline industry goes at twice the rate of the economy that too all across the world. For example the Indian economy grows at 7%, the airline industry can grow at 15%. Thus the growth potential of this industry is very attractive against the high cost pressures and low yields. Therefore IndiGo's strategy in this sector is to keep our costs down. We want to be a powerful brand. When I joined the company it was the 85th most Valuable brand however now it is the 35th most valuable brand and the brands that are ahead of us are mostly global brands like Google and American Express etc. They are a tough competition, but among Indian brands we are at number 7th. Therefore my key thrusts are to build a powerful brand, keep our costs low, ensure high service level and work with the governments smoothly. However brands are based on Customer and employee loyalty and we are constantly working on those. The pandemic we thought was an opportunity with a vision to come out of this crisis stronger than before. With fewer customers and fewer flights we worked on our process to increase efficiency and emerged stronger than before with more customer base, higher stock prices and higher market share.

## 3. As you have worked with US airlines in the past for about 20 years so, if given a chance, what would be that one thing you would like to change/improve in Indian aviation?

Having worked at five airlines I am proud to say that we at IndiGo run a world class airline. In India we are at the top in terms of reliability and in the world we are in number three with just British Carrier and Japan Airlines ahead of us. When it comes to baggage mishandling or customer complaints we are one tenth of most other airlines. I am most impressed by the employee culture here. In many airlines that I have worked in, I have seen cynicism and a jaded population. Here on the other hand we have young people working for us who are very enthusiastic about the job. We can teach a lot to the other airlines. I believe that we at IndiGo are currently one of the strongest airlines in the world in terms of customer service and our on time performance.

IndiGo



**4. A few months back Tata company took over Air India from Govt. and now Tata owns many other airlines giving a tough competition for other airlines. What impact will this acquisition have on the Indian aviation sector?**

I would say that I am delighted by this move. After watching Air India for over 30 years I feel it was just on auto pilot mode but now that the Tata's has taken over I believe things will get better for Air India moving forward. This acquisition is great from many standpoints and the government disinvesting PSU is certainly a very good sign. There are certainly a few factors which differentiate us and them, we are a single aisle airline and we generally fly within 7 hours range and within Indian cities but they have wider bodies and they can also fly to farther places like Sydney, New York, Tokyo within the same time frame which are not possible for us to reach. With Tata coming onboard it will also help the aviation industry to disrupt a market which is generally operated by foreign airlines in our country as it also presents a huge scope for foreign expansion of Indian Airlines. Aviation industry also plays a critical part in any country's infrastructural development. Whereas in the old days towns used to be near River banks and railway stations, nowadays they are all near airports, there is a huge surge in the infrastructural development near airports like hotels, parks etc. This will also help in the growth of the country's economy and with Tata and Indigo both working towards the same goal it will definitely be great for the country.

**5. Indigo is currently the largest airline in India, what advantages do you get because of your ubiquitous presence? How do you see Indigo's move from almost purely domestic to a substantial international operation and what is the company's vision for the next couple of years?**

Being able to access smaller towns and cities is definitely a huge advantage when we are taking connectivity into consideration. We have flights that connect Delhi, Madurai which increases our reach. Our footprint is broad which provides us with brand loyalty, customer presence, international is a great opportunity for us as 65% of the Indian traffic is foreign airlines. We have had very successful airline carriers grow around us like Singapore Airlines, Etihad etc. Cities like Manila, Milan, and Nairobi are distant from one another and they are all one stop flights. At Indigo, we don't have one stop aircrafts and Indigo's vision is to fly non stop to all these countries. We have what we call a four corner strategy and we are limited by the range of our aircrafts which allows us to fly only for 7 hours. But we are blessed geographically as we have Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Kolkata. Pre COVID, international traffic was 25% of our capacity and our aim is to reach a humongous 50%. International remains a big focus for us now and we are extremely optimistic.

**6. Given that air travel is still expensive for the bulk of the country's population, comprising roughly 40% of the upwardly mobile middle class, India's aviation business is mostly unexplored with potentially huge opportunities. How do you intend to reach out to more individuals and take advantage of previously undiscovered opportunities?**

Overall, only 5% of Indians travel by air, which is both a shame and a great opportunity, but to do so, a few things must happen. First, income levels must gradually rise, and airfares must remain low, although I'm not sure if they can get any lower, but they must remain low in order to compete with our main competitor, the railways, which have a tier 1 and tier 2 cap of around 12 billion per year whereas for airplanes it is only about 140 million. The vast geographical area of our country also presents a great opportunity for us and nowadays corporates are also helping us grow by providing a higher labor mobility and allowing their employees to travel by air and avoid long and time consuming train journeys. We as a company are already growing by 20%-25% a year so I feel now all we need to do is to keep our cost low which will help us in keeping our price low and maintain the stable growth rate.

**7. You are an Alumni of both IIT Kharagpur and Harvard Business School. Respectively, what are the greatest lessons and fondest memories that you carry with you till today from these two prestigious institutions?**

I am also an Alumni of the third prestigious institution called St. Xavier's College, Kolkata. What happened is after I did my senior Cambridge I was only 14 yrs old, IIT said we can't take you and asked me to come again next year. So I joined St. Xavier's College, Kolkata in the Physics Honours Course. My fondest memory here is my stay at the college

hostel where we had a night curfew at 10 o'clock and I used to go out and enjoy myself and then jump over the walls to return to the hostel at 11 o'clock and try not to be caught. Father always used to walk up and down the corridor to catch students. Most people, all of my friends say that IIT Kharagpur was the best time of our lives and we say that sincerely with passion and it never changes. Part of it of course is that you are that age, you are 15, and then suddenly you are like Wow! Look at this world and also part of it is that there were people from all the best schools in India. I learned much more outside the class than I did inside. Outside the class were all these animated discussions of what is the meaning of life, what is good and what is bad, and what are the value systems people should have. It was very enthralling. We had lots of fun and we learned a lot. Completely rich with memories of my time there. Harvard was tough. When I applied to Harvard people questioned me about how I am going to get in and even if I do, how will I pay for it and I had no clue. Fortunately, Harvard gave me a scholarship but that only covered my tuition fee. I still had to pay for my living expenses there and to cover that I used to work as a security guard from midnight to 5 AM in the morning. Therefore Harvard was all about working and paying bills. It was the polar opposite in terms of enjoyment, rigor, and hardship.

**8. According to you, what kind of an impact can digitalization have on the airline industry in the future? What are some growth prospects for Indigo in the future?**

Digitalization is a huge opportunity. Especially when I talk about Customer service, everything should be touchless, contactless from the booking, check-in to the disruptions on the flight without any hassle of calling someone, having to wait for someone's call etc. Therefore, customer contact has clearly had a huge impact from digitalization. Secondly, there are many impacts in Operating as well that have been benefited by this. Pilots do not have to carry big flight manuals, flight attendants do not have to run with bills and slips because everything is now digital and accessible in a thin, light-weight iPad. Going forward, the opportunities that digitalization provides will keep growing. In fact, the entire travel process from pick-up, drop, hotel booking, food etc should be made seamless for customers. Hence overall, Digitalization has hugely impacted the airline industry in operating, customer contact and poses many other opportunities in enhancing revenue streams.

**9. How long do you think it will take us to adopt renewable forms of energy to power airplanes?**

All the airlines come under an organization named IATA (International Air Transport Association), and we recently had a meeting with IATA where the organization committed that by 2050 we will be Carbon Neutral. So in order to achieve that part of it is reducing emissions. We have been buying the latest type of engines and I am pleased to say that in the last 5 years our carbon emission has gone down by 50%, which is quite credible but it requires a huge investment. We are trying our best to go green. The coaches that we buy analog or digital are all electrically operated and we are towing the airplanes from the gate to the runway with an electric vehicle rather than using the engines. We have also built around 22 biogas plants across India, started heavy afforestation in Arunachal Pradesh. These offsets are good but ultimately it is all about sustainable aviation fuel. This area requires a lot of help and effort, engine manufacturers and oil refineries need to change their technology, however, we are pushing for it and partnering with All India Petroleum Institute, Dehradun to come up with new types of fuel and doing test runs with 10% fuel blend. We are working hard towards Saving the Planet that is in a critical state.

**10. You have been a part of various aviation companies globally. What motivated you to join the aviation industry?**

I wish I could have said that I was smart and had this as my dream and wanted to pursue this as a career. But, I fell into this industry by accident. I used to work for a consultancy firm, dealt with all state insurance etc. The first company United Airlines which made me fall in love with the aviation industry and now I love it. Good fortune and accidental. Interesting because large corporations like GE or IBM have lots of different units where all of them, the pilots, flight attendants and the schedule planning have to work together in a tight theme to make it all work at the end of the day. We are global in reach which helps us to keep track as to what is happening where, even before it is printed in the newspaper or out on social media. Once you get into the aviation industry, there is no getting out of it. You are bound to fall in love with it. Just find your right career, something you can execute with passion and that will not only enable you to enjoy your work but also be successful in it.

# THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The pandemic has wreaked havoc on the economy. The global economy is so debilitated that analogies to the Great Depression of the 1930s are being made.

Depression is not a continuous period of economic downturn. Within it, there may be periods of brief progress that provide the appearance of recovery. Though data for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are few, the Great Depression was arguably the greatest and longest fall in economic activity in American history. The Great Depression of the 1930s began in October 1929 with the stock market crash and lasted until the early 1940s, when World War II provided the foundation for fresh growth. There were two significant economic downturns during that time period: the first from 1929 to 1933 and the second from May 1937 to 1938.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an ongoing pandemic of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2); the outbreak of which was first identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 and was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020, and was recognized as a pandemic on 11 March 2020 by the World Health Organisation. The pandemic has wreaked mayhem on the world, causing sports and other religious, political and cultural events to be postponed or canceled, as well as substantial supply shortages exacerbated by panic purchasing. It was a rare calamity that claimed the lives of roughly 54.8 lakh people over the world. The globe has been placed in a Great Lockdown as governments established essential quarantines and social distancing techniques to combat the epidemic. The extent and quickness of the subsequent collapse of activities are beyond anything one has ever seen before.

World Bank President David Malpass, termed the COVID-19 pandemic a "catastrophic event" for many developing and the poorest countries. "The recession has been deep, one of the deepest since the Great Depression. And for many developing countries, and for the people in the poorest countries, it is truly a depression, a catastrophic event. It is continuing to add to the ranks of those in extreme poverty," he said.

The Great Recession due to the pandemic is a truly global crisis as no country is spared. Countries that rely on tourism, travel, hospitality, and entertainment for their economic growth are particularly hard hit. With historic reversals in capital flows as global risk appetite wanes, currency pressures, and worse health systems, emerging markets and developing economies confront new problems. Furthermore, numerous economies came into the crisis in a vulnerable position, with slow growth and high debt levels.

The 2020 recession began with dramatic drops in economic activity, employment, and equity prices that matched or exceeded the Great Depression's initial declines in almost every way. However, the Great Depression persisted, and by the time it reached its abyss almost four years later, economic activity, employment, and consumer and equity prices had all plummeted well below their pre-crisis levels.

# VS. COVID -19

The 2020 contraction might turn out to be the sharpest, but also the shortest, in modern times and perhaps of all time.

In comparison to the Great Depression, the current economic crisis has had a far faster, more entrenched, and immediate impact on the real economy, as both the supply and demand sides have been paralyzed simultaneously, which has only been exacerbated by globalization. The unemployment rate increased sharply in the 2020 recession, from 3.5 percent in February to nearly 15 percent in April before falling back to 11.1 percent in June. In contrast with the abrupt surge at the start of the 2020 recession, the unemployment rate increased steadily throughout the early months of the Great Depression, rising from around 2% in late 1929 to just under 4% in June 1930. The unemployment rate, on the other hand, continued to climb, hitting 25% in 1933 and remaining over 10% throughout the 1930s. In addition to large declines in economic activity and employment, the price level also fell considerably during the Great Depression. The consumer price index (CPI) was 27 percent below its August 1929 level at the economic cycle trough in March 1933. Despite falling in the first two months of the 2020 recession, the CPI has since rebounded to reach pre-crisis levels and is expected to steadily climb.

This is a crisis unlike any other, and the consequences for people's lives and livelihoods are unknown. Furthermore, many nations are now dealing with simultaneous crises, including a health crisis, a financial crisis, and a slump in commodity prices, all of which are intertwined in nuanced ways. Policymakers are offering unparalleled support to individuals, businesses, and financial markets, and although this is critical for a healthy recovery, the economic environment when we escape from this lockdown remains uncertain.

Countries are succeeding in containing the virus using social-distancing practices, testing, contact tracing, and getting people vaccinated. The use of lockdowns to slow the spread of COVID-19 helps health services to manage the disease, allowing economic activity to resume. In this view, there is no trade-off between saving lives and protecting livelihoods. Only by working together can everyone overcome the pandemic's linked health, social, and economic effects and prevent it from escalating into a long-term humanitarian debacle, potentially wiping out already made development achievements.

## MBA (Master of Business Administration)

is a professional postgraduate degree programme that focuses on the principles of modern management, giving students a broad understanding of business while also developing leadership and soft skills to put that knowledge into practice. An MBA degree can be completed in a variety of time frames. Such as, a full-time MBA is a well-structured and thorough degree that lasts two years. A one-year Executive MBA programme is aimed for professionals with at least 4-5 years of work experience. A full-time MBA programme consists of a core curriculum as well as electives that allow students to specialise and enhance their knowledge in business administration. An executive MBA, on the other hand, is typically pursued by senior executives who seek to strengthen their management and leadership abilities. An MBA degree aids in many aspects of corporate life, including the development of management skills, premium placement and salary, networking opportunities, entrepreneurship, and a holistic understanding of how to manage a corporation. Apart from traditional MBA programmes, Distance learning and Online MBA programmes are widely available. Furthermore, while most students prefer to enroll in a traditional MBA programme, the demand for distance MBA and Online MBA programmes has risen significantly as a result of the increased availability of digital platforms and the availability of internet access.

The table below provides a comparative study between these three types of MBAs to enlist their pros, cons, future scope and hence to decide for oneself which is a more lucrative option.

|            | REGULAR MBA  | ONLINE MBA  | DISTANCE MBA   |
|------------|--|---|--|
| ABOUT      | <p>In the normal MBA programme, the curriculum involves both theoretical and practical training. If you want to get into a full-time MBA programme, you must pass the entrance exam (CAT/GMAT/NMAT/XAT) along with group discussions and personal interviews. Industrial tours, factory visits, and field visits are all part of a full-time MBA programme and are included in the curriculum.</p> | <p>An online MBA is an online masters degree program with the same curriculum as that of regular MBA, standards and courses. Just like its brick and mortar counter part, an online MBA offers a cross-disciplinary education that lays a solid foundation in the business basics. Such programs tend to be intensely collaborative, with learners working together in virtual environments to complete and deliver deadline-driven projects.</p> | <p>Distance MBA course is a flexible &amp; affordable MBA programme which does not require you to attend regular daily classes. The course content can be imparted without your physical presence in a class. Distance MBA in the form of hybrid MBA is gaining popularity. Hybrid MBA programs differ from an online MBA as it would have same on-campus element in addition to the online delivery of content used by online MBA programs.</p> |
| ADVANTAGES | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurship: Practical and hands-on training for dealing with real work business problems.</li> <li>• Competitive advantage over your peers.</li> <li>• A regular MBA programme can help you advance your profession by providing you with huge pay packages and reputable positions.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convenient mode of skill enhancement for working professionals without sacrificing their jobs and students can conveniently work at their own pace from the comfort of their own home.</li> <li>• Online MBAs are usually cheaper than on-campus ones and are subject to flexible scheduling.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distance MBA offers flexibility of time and pace over regular MBA. It allows you the convenience of completing the course requirements while you continue with your professional commitments.</li> <li>• One of the biggest advantages of the Distance MBA program is its low fee structure, especially when pursuing MBA from abroad.</li> </ul>   |

# VS DISTANCE MBA

## DISADVANTAGES



- Some professionals may benefit more from getting additional job experience over the course of a few years.
- In comparison to the time and money spent on an MBA. In certain circumstances, investing two or three years to prove yourself on the job may result in the same promotion or raise in income.
- MBA is all about professional networking but online MBA does not provide any productive way to build networks, due to lack of face to face interaction.
- There is a risk that one's online MBA degree will not be as highly valued by employers as one from a regular school might be.
- Recruiters may prefer an MBA graduate who has completed their course via regular mode of MBA over a distance MBA graduate.
- There is no industrial or field visit involved in Distance MBA so the learning is restricted in terms of exposure.

## SCOPE AND FUTURE



MBA is one of the few degrees that can help you advance in your job. According to experts, an MBA degree holder's typical income is twice that of someone with a standard degree. Unlike other degrees, a career from an MBA degree is a professional degree in the business sector, which has numerous job opportunities.

Online MBA as a program has a bright foreseeable future in the upcoming decades because it is faster due to its non contemporary delivery and accelerated options. In the fast moving world, multitasking is a skill imperatively needed by all and this program helps one to do just that, promising an opportunity for career growth in the public, private and IT sectors.

Distance MBA program helps in career advancement as it broadens your knowledge base and provides you with business concepts, problem solving skills and a better understanding of various business statements.

Regular, online, and distance MBA possess the same course structure, however, they vary in cost and viability. If one tends to learn better in a structured environment, benefits only from in-person interactions, and intends to build a robust professional network, then they must opt for a Regular MBA. Its cost ranges from Rs 12 to 23 lakhs for IIMs India and top B-Schools cost Rs.12 lakhs to Rs.23+ Lakhs while Rs65 lakhs to 1.7 crores for studying abroad. Cheaper than a Regular MBA is an Online MBA, the cost of which ranges between INR 40K to 15 lakhs. Some colleges also have a mandatory eligibility criterion of two-three years of work experience for an Online MBA. It caters to the needs of those people who are self-motivated, exercises a lot of self-discipline along with a requirement of flexible scheduling due to family, work, or other commitments. It allows one to balance their responsibilities while learning how to start or run a business, benefiting them to augment their careers at their own pace. Being a hybrid of its counterparts, the Distance MBA fee varies from Rs.50,000 to 1.5 Lakhs for top distance MBA colleges in India. In the case of an international MBA program, the cost of a distance MBA program would be way lesser compared to a full-time MBA. The tuition fees would be lower, one will also save on the cost of living in an international location and other associated costs. It provides no placements but it's best suited for people who require flexible study.

## BOSTON DYNAMICS

Spot is a mobile robot designed by Boston Dynamics that can handle terrain with unrivalled agility, allowing you to automate regular inspection chores and data collection in a safe, accurate, and timely manner. Inspection equipment weighing up to 14kg can be carried and powered. This can be done with a simple tablet application and built-in stereo cameras. The robot can be controlled from afar and it collects consistent data by programming recurring autonomous missions.



## REVOLVE CHAIR

The space saving wheelchair is innovated by the former Ferrari designer Andrea Mocerlin. The Revolve Air is a travel-friendly portable wheelchair which is hexagonally structured, has puncture proof wheels fold-up therefore allowing the wheelchair to take up 60% less space than a standard folding wheelchair, fitting even inside the airplane's overhead compartment. Space saving wheelchair will help people to not wait for checkout in airports as it can be used as a luggage and make a customer happy as it can be just kept above the customer's seat.

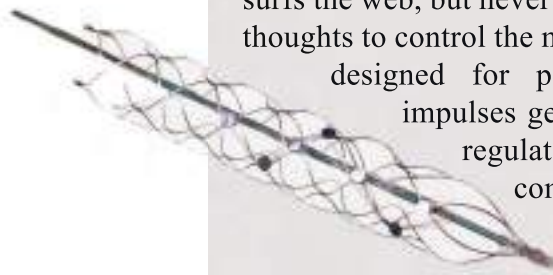
## PAPER SHOOT CAMERA

Paper Shoot is the world's first eco friendly camera, designed to encourage innovation and creativity. The battery-operated Paper Shoot, designed by Taiwanese entrepreneur George Lin, resembles a film camera but is actually digital, capable of storing up to 32 GB of photographs on a neatly disguised SD card. Interchangeable pop-art-inspired covers and a range of lenses allow users to personalise the electronic body. Photos created with the four separate filters—sepia, black and white, blue, and normal—have a film-like look without the expensive cost or environmental impact of film.



## THE STENTRODE DEVICE

What if a man sits at his computer, writes emails, texts, and surfs the web, but never presses a key? Instead, he uses only his thoughts to control the machine. The Stentrode device, which is designed for people who are paralysed, digitises impulses generated by the region of the brain that regulates movement and converts them into commands that a computer (with the appropriate software) can execute. The gadget, which is still in the experimental stage, has so far proven successful for two patients with ALS, and the FDA has approved a larger trial in the United States, bringing the technology one step closer to wider usage.



## BOOM XB-1 SUPERSONIC DEMONSTRATOR

The XB-1 supersonic demonstrator, a 71-foot-tall, fast-paced jet developed by the Denver-based Boom Supersonic, could bring back a spectacular ride (supersonic travel back). The jet deals with Concorde's shortcomings through the help of grass-fed technology and noise reduction technology, and can reach a speed of Mach 1.7, allowing it to fly from New York to London in 3.5 hours. In addition, it is able to make the trip using 100 percent stable jet fuel — a variant of fossil fuels that have been developed to be carbon-neutral. By 2029, the company hopes to fly full-size aircraft capable of carrying up to 88 passengers.



## RELATIVITY SPACE STARGATE

Relativity Space is altering the way rockets are made by employing a massive 3-D printer called Stargate. This is made possible because of the presence of a quicker manufacturing process which utilises autonomous robots and artificial intelligence, and enables the system to manufacture fully reusable rockets in just 60 days, compared to two years or longer for typical aerospace companies. The business plans to launch the Terran 1 rocket, which will be utilised for resupply flights and satellite launches, for the first time early next year.

## LENOVO THINKREALITY A3 SMART GLASSES

Instead of sitting down at the desk sometime and turning on a desktop or switching on our laptop we can simply put up a pair of Lenovo's ThinkReality A3 Smart Glasses . These glasses can be connected to a computer or a mobile phone and the built-in high definition lenses can display as many as five different virtual desktops. Along with displaying five desktops these glasses allow multitasking between excel spreadsheets and word documents in the same way as we would do with our standard keyboard or a mouse along with listening to spotify or other playlists through the head sets built-in speakers.



## ECOFLOW DELTA PRO

With harsh weather making power outages more prevalent, demand for personal power generators is on the rise to keep the lights on when the grid goes down. The EcoFlow DELTA Pro, a whisper-quiet battery-powered generator roughly the size of a mini refrigerator, isn't like other generators, which are noisy and run on gasoline. The DELTA Pro can be fully charged in three hours using a domestic outlet; it may also be charged using solar panels or electric car charging stations. It can power a complete house for days with its 3,600-watt-hour capacity, and many units may be networked together to power a whole house for days.



# MISSION ABORT

The dynamics of the business world have always engendered the collaboration of business organizations with the view of establishing a consolidated empire. However, history bears testimony to the fact that a merger done to boost the value of a company's stock and enhance profits, anticipated to be nothing short of a 'best deal' can turn out to be a debacle leaving behind a trail of losses and instability.

When the US Housing market collapsed, **Bank of America** found the perfect opportunity to dominate the industry through its collaboration with Countrywide. However, on the contrary, this spawned more regret into the company than any of its previous business decisions. Bank of America's attempt to associate itself with the troubled subprime mortgage lender, **Countrywide Financial Services** was viewed as a "pretty good deal" until the catastrophe revealed itself as an interminable legal and financial nightmare for the company, resulting in losses worth more than \$40 billion in real-estate, legal expenses and settlements with state and federal agencies. This was a perfect example of misvaluation leading to a deep financial crisis for the merging organizations.

Mergers which face major cultural differences are often assumed to be doomed from the start. The **Daimler Chrysler** famously called the "merger of equals" proved the above fact right when the companies failed to consolidate their merger due to a potential "clash of culture". Despite all efforts to harmonize the two corporate cultures and to lay the foundation for a shared organizational culture, DaimlerChrysler's management did not succeed. The two organizational cultures were too different to be integrated successfully. Thus, a merger of such a humongous magnitude of \$36 billion was dissolved for a mere \$7.4 billion.

Two of the biggest players in the chemical industry- **Clariant and Huntsman**, on October 27, 2017, jointly announced the termination of their 'Merger of Equals' unanimously approved by all the directors and shareholders of both the companies. The \$ 20.6 billion deal that was expected to work in the long-term interest of both the companies, fell through because of the risk due to the increased uncertainty of securing two-thirds majority by Clariant shareholders.

The mega-merger of two of America's largest health insurance companies- **Aetna and Humana** was called off when the Federal Court disapproved of the company's association citing adverse impact on the competition in the healthcare market. The \$39.3 billion worth deal was terminated on February 14, 2017, with the termination fee amounting to \$630 million. Thus, a merger of two dominant players proved to be futile, giving an unprecedented blow to the industry.

The business world has borne its share of disastrous mergers. Two of the most enormous companies of India involved in the biggest merger of all times, worth billions of dollars, fell apart giving a huge jolt to the industry.

## RELIANCE AND ARAMCO

One of the country's largest companies in terms of market capitalization, Reliance Industries Limited is an Indian multinational conglomerate headquartered in Mumbai whereas The Saudi Arabian Oil Company -Saudi Aramco, based in Dhahran, is one of the world's largest companies by revenue with the second largest crude oil reserves.

The Indian Petrochemical Industry received a major blow when a \$15 billion deal between Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) and Saudi Aramco was terminated due to changes in the corporate structure of Reliance's business portfolio. Both the business giants mutually decided that it would be beneficial for both parties to re-evaluate the proposed investment in oil to chemical unit(O2C)business in light of the changed environment. In August 2019, the two businesses signed a non-binding Letter of Intent for Saudi Aramco to buy a 20 percent share in RIL's O2C business. After the announcement of the demerger in November 2021, the stocks came under selling pressure after Reliance postponed the sale of the 20% stake in the O2C. The deal's cancellation was viewed as a setback at a time when crude oil was trading at \$80 per barrel and after Aramco's Chairman was inaugurated into Reliance's Board of Directors.

# FINANCIAL TIMELINE

## YEAR OF IPO'S

Entrepreneurs raised a total of \$36 billion from investors by the end of 2021. Zomato made its market debut with the stock opening at 116 rupees, a 52.63 percent premium to its initial public offering price of 76 rupees. The IPO of startup Paytm became the country's largest IPO, raising Rs 18,300 crore. The IPO was completely subscribed by the third day and was finally 1.89 times oversubscribed. FSN E-Commerce Ventures, which runs the online beauty e-commerce site Nykaa, led by Falguni Nayar, raised 5,352 crore through its first public offering, which was oversubscribed 81.78 times.



## CRYPTO SURGE

In November 2021, the total value of cryptocurrencies reached \$3 trillion. Bitcoin was the most valuable cryptocurrency, accounting for more than 40% of the total market capitalization. GALA, an Ethereum-based cryptocurrency, produced a return of more than 32,000% in 2021. Altcoins, meme-coins like Dogecoin and Shiba Inu, and tokens like Ripple's XRP, Binance Coin, among many others, surged to new highs.



## PROSPERITY OF INDIAN INVESTMENT BANKING INDUSTRY

A series of big-ticket IPOs and the maturation of India's software unicorns from startups to matured listed corporations, investment bankers pocketed Rs 2,200 crore. The fee of Rs 776.7 crore was collected by bankers from share sale revenues which was more than three times compared to 2020 making it India's finest year in the investment banking industry.



## CHESS NFTS

World Chess developed an algorithm for creating a unique chess piece linked to a related chess position. The position will be transformed into a completely unique chess piece. The asset will then be delivered to the user in a custom Algorand wallet—the quickest, easiest, safest, and most official way to conduct transactions on the Algorand Blockchain. This first drop contains only 10,000 NFTs, which will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. 3000 will be set aside for World Chess projects like awards, while the remaining 7000 will be disbursed.



## SKYROCKETING PRICES OF NATURAL GAS

Natural gas surpassed crude oil as the world's most important commodity in October, 2021. As a result of a global energy shortage, natural gas prices soared in the United Kingdom, Europe, and Asia. In Asia, spot liquefied natural gas prices briefly surpassed the equivalent of more than \$320 per barrel of oil in October. Europe became increasingly reliant on imports. United States being the world's largest natural gas producer, its inventory levels are not as low as they are in Europe.



## WORLD'S LARGEST WOMEN ONLY PLANET

As the Indian ride-hailing company, Ola launches a fresh push with electric vehicles and has planned to establish the 'world's largest scooter manufacturing facility' in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu. With an investment of \$327 million, Ola's 1-million-unit-per-year electric two-wheeler manufacturing plant will be run entirely by over 10,000 women.



**1. You went to military school. How do you think it shaped your personality and more importantly how it has helped you as an actor?**

All that I am today as an actor, is because of military school. The curriculum included not only studies but also gave equal importance to sports and theatre. Each year we had to take part in a minimum of 2 plays, perform skits in the school assembly, and narrate poetry. All of this gave me a chance to perform more on stage and wherever I am today, all the credit goes to the military school and the teachers' constant support and guidance.

**2. What are some of the stark ways in which TV and film production has changed as compared to your 'Swabhimaan' days on Doordarshan?**

Compared to those days, we have come across changes that have been both positive and negative. As a person, if you change with time, you will feel better, and if you do not, you will always have this thought at the back of your mind that you could have done better. So it is completely up to one's perspective of looking at things. The new generation helps to bring in new changes along with it. We got new languages, technological advancements, and that helps us every day to become a better version of ourselves. The young generation is more inclined towards showcasing their own life story. At the time when I used to do my theatre in Bhopal, the regional films were released during the time of festivals, to mark their significance. The actors of the south part of India have made a name for themselves in Bollywood, whether it is Dhanush, Rajnikant, Kamal Hassan Mamooty, they are all well known in the Bollywood sector.



## KUMUD MISHRA

AN INDIAN STAGE AND FILM ACTOR WHO PRIMARILY WORKS IN BOLLYWOOD.

Interviewed by: The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview: Online

**3. As an actor who transitioned from theatre to mainstream cinema, what are the differences that you had to face during the change?**

I would not say that I have shifted to cinema as I still do theatre performances but the amount of performances I now do in theatres has comparatively decreased due to the ongoing Covid situation. I have not shifted to the cinema completely but have discovered it recently. I do not want to differentiate between theatre and cinema. I equally enjoy both. But yes, both have their own characteristics. For example, in theatre, we need to perform in front of a live audience. It can be 200 or 500 people and because of this, we need to keep a track of everything. In theatre, we need to perform in just one place but in cinema, the shoot location keeps on changing. Also, the joy we do in cinema, people can see and enjoy it afterwards too but this is not possible in theatre.

**4. Your versatility as an actor can be seen through the various roles you have played throughout your career. Is there anything in particular that you look forward to achieving or doing further?**

There is not a particular role that I wish to achieve. The role which I get, I consider that my dream role and give my 100% to it. The credit I get is more than enough for me and that complements the effort I put in for each of my roles. For me, it is challenging to play a role with utmost sincerity and to do justice to the role is more important. Normally, every actor wants to play a dream role but there is no such thing for me. I believe that if I do my work diligently, the producers will want to give me more challenging and better roles in the future. Of the roles, I am getting now, if I do not deliver them with all my hard work and

sincerity the producers will not have faith in me that I will be able to do justice to other roles in the future.

**5. Today, as the audience's preferences are changing, do you believe that for an actor, choosing the right content is more important than showcasing their best performance?**

Both are two different things. First of all, it is important that you choose the script which, according to you, is right. Sometimes you might be wrong too, it is possible that your understanding leads you in the wrong direction because nobody is perfect. If we think from a practical point of view, then of course choosing a good script and the right content is the first condition. After that, you work on how to perform that role in the best possible way. Today's audience pays attention to every minute detail. If an actor delivers a dull or sluggish performance, after two or three renditions the audience will get bored of him because the audience of today is highly opinionated. They are exposed to global cinema, be it Pakistani sitcoms or Iranian cinema, Hollywood or European cinema. In such a situation, if we lag behind, the audience will not accept us. That is the reason why this is a very challenging period for actors. As actors, all we can do is make sure we deliver our best performance, and try to bring something new to the role that we get.

**6. In cinema, technology comes between your performance and your audience. Your final performance is produced out of several takes. Can you delve into a character as deeply in a film as you can in a play?**

Both the platforms have their own pros and cons. In theatre, you have a time of 2-3 months to practice for the play.



During that time you closely judge the play and the character that you are playing and a lot of rehearsals take place for a play before actually presenting it in theatre. In the case of cinema, on the other hand, you just get one chance. Technology is used to support your performance as an actor. The changes that have occurred over the years in cinema do nothing but benefit an actor. An actor can efficiently utilize the technology available to better perform their role and yield a finer act. In theatre, an actor can efficiently utilize the technology available to better perform their role and yield a finer act.



**7. A large part of the population in India believes that the Bollywood industry is nepotistic. What are your views on this and what are some major challenges you faced in this industry?**

I did not really have to confront any hurdles in the industry; I was able to get work quickly when I first started and I believe it was because of my skill and people's trust in me. Everything went so smoothly and seamlessly for me, I never had to encounter any obstacles. When it comes to nepotism, I feel when a group of actors came to pursue acting as a career, they went through their own set of struggles in the industry to make a name for themselves. In contrast, their children grew up in the same industry and environment, so they have an advantage over others in the setup, which I believe is entirely justified. That is not anything that establishes an actor, thus there is nothing wrong with that. What identifies and distinguishes an actor is the type of work they do and the amount of effort they put into it. There are hundreds and lakhs of people working in this field, and not everyone is a result of nepotism. The person who performs and provides their best is kept, while the person who does not is eliminated. I am very grateful to the industry for everything it has given me. Because of this industry, I am getting work, people are recognising my talent, and people are coming to know me. I do not have anyone's backing in this industry, yet it has accepted me based on my performance, demonstrating the industry's impartiality. However, in any case, if someone supports an actor regardless of their performance and gives them a job, that is something they have earned, which is okay with me and I have no objections to that.

**8. What is the one positive and one negative thing that differentiates the new generation actors? What would be your advice to a comparatively new and upcoming actor with dreams to star and secure a place in Bollywood?**

When we talk about the new generation of performers, I do not believe there is anything negative to say. I believe that anytime a new generation actor comes, they bring something fresh and distinctive to the table as was the case when the old generation actors first came in. Accepting bad along with the good is what makes everything more beautiful, considering that we are not flawless enough to dismiss anything as imperfect. Actors of the younger generation are more versatile, have a broader vision, are intelligent and sharp, and even we, as actors, can learn a lot from them. The newcomers should also look around them in the industry and try to pick the brains of the senior actors. This will undoubtedly assist them in their professional development. Despite the fact that recent times have been difficult as a result of the pandemic, we will stay optimistic and hope that this, too, will pass, bringing better times for artists and our community as a whole.

**9. Prior to the digital era, theatre used to be one of the most popular forms of entertainment. Being a theatre professional yourself, do you think the concept of theatre is slowly becoming obsolete with the advent of web shows and because of the overwhelming amount of content available?**

I am convinced that the importance of theatrical plays will only increase with time and that it will never be outdated. As much as digitisation has made content more available to the general public, it will only help theatres expand. We must realise that, while digitalisation has aided in connecting people in various ways, it also has drawbacks. People are so absorbed in their devices that they do not interact or meet with others in person. Theatre, on the other hand, provides a space where art comes to life, where art lovers join together to celebrate the centuries-old history and tradition of storytelling and acting, demonstrating that the notion of theatre will never cease.

**10. With the OTT platform popularising, which of the two do you think provides a better niche for fresh talent- web series or movies?**

For an upcoming actor, the best thing to do is act no matter what the medium is provided that you as an actor like the work that you have been given. The kind of roles you are offered should be the deciding factor and not the choice between OTT platforms and movies. I have learnt a lot from television and have seen the difference first hand. Television requires much more effort in terms of longer working hours sometimes ranging from twelve to sixteen hours a day. OTT platforms, on the other hand, provide you with much more space and here the roles are not the same stereotypical ones, here you get the opportunity to try out new roles and portray exciting characters on screen. I personally prefer films and OTT simply because their schedules are not as hectic as compared to television. If you have enough options you can choose the roles you wish to bring to life no matter what the medium is. On the other hand, if you do not have options then you have to portray the role that you are offered. Currently, I am working in both web series and movies and personally, I find them equally exciting. Today's audience also I believe enjoys the content provided on both platforms. So you cannot choose between the two without comparing the kind of work you are offered and for many people, money is also a deciding factor. According to me, the focus should be on the good direction and a good story to get a great result which is loved by the masses because, in the end, both are means of entertainment.

**11. Who was your inspiration growing up and while pursuing acting? What are some traits of them which inspire you the most?**

My biggest inspiration has been my father. He was a theatre actor too. Professionally, my role model has been Mr. Nasseruddin Shah. While studying in Military School, every Saturday or on alternate weekends, all students were shown films in the school's assembly hall. During that time, I had seen some of his films like Bazaar and a lot of his work inspired me to become an actor. While I was growing up, I got the opportunity to see him perform live before me. His performances and work have been the biggest driving force behind my acting career.

**12. Among the various characters you have played, is there any particular one that was close to your heart or which resonated with you?**

This is a very difficult question to answer. I have played various characters and each has its own unique significance in my life. My character in films like Rockstar, Airlift, Balda, Article 15, Mulk and my work with Mr. Abhinav Sinha has been very important to me. A film I did with Mr. Nitin Kakkar namely 'Ram Singh Charlie' is extremely close to my heart. Recently, a web series in which I worked with Mr. Imtiaz Ali is very dear to me. So the list is too long and I believe every character gives you something or the other both as a person and as an actor. Hence, I cannot say that I love one particular character because every piece of work teaches you something new and innovative.

**13. What is your message for the students of St. Xavier's College(Autonomous), Kolkata?**

One piece of advice from my end to the students would be to chase and fulfil their dreams. It is important to know yourself, what you wish to do in life and why you want to achieve it. We wish to do a lot of things in life but it is imperative for one to recognize his true potential and interest. It is possible that one wishes to be an actor but has a passion for writing which he cannot recognize. You can be anything, an actor, doctor, lawyer, engineer, dancer, singer etc. I believe that working towards achieving your dream without any fear or hesitation will lead you to success. I wish the students of St. Xavier's College, Kolkata all the very best in their endeavours.

# CHITRA BANERJEE DIVYAKARUNI

AN AWARD-WINNING AND BESTSELLING AUTHOR,  
POET, ACTIVIST AND A PROFESSOR OF WRITING.

Interviewed by : The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview : Online



1. You were born in Kolkata and then you shifted to the US for your further studies. Did this transition have an impact on you as a writer? Has your experience as an immigrant have had any impact on your approach towards any story or character?

Yes, immigration to the US forced me to examine my life, and question and appreciate my culture as well as the new culture in which I was living. This inspired immigrant stories such as those in my collection *Arranged Marriage* (which won an American Book Award) as well as later novels such as *Sister of My Heart*, *Queen of Dreams*, *Oleander Girl* and *Before We Visit the Goddess*, which move between India and USA.

2. How were you introduced to Indian mythology and what made you rewrite it?

I was introduced to the *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat* by my grandfather when I was a child. This ignited a lifelong interest in our mythology. Later, I read the epics and puranas on my own. I was always particularly interested in the women characters but dissatisfied by how they seemed to be pushed to the corners of the story and, in popular retellings, seen through a patriarchal lens. I wanted to examine their thoughts and emotions and explore their values, particularly because several of these women (such as Sita) are so important as role models in our culture.

3. You have said that your literary agenda is to write women protagonists. What is your approach while writing to keep your work as relatable and realistic to the real-world situations faced by women?

First, many of my books are contemporary and therefore deal with current-time problems in any case. A historical novel like my latest, *The Last Queen*, about Maharani Jindan Kaur, the last queen of Punjab, shows her struggling to survive in a man's world of court politics. But even my mythological heroines face timeless issues, such as having to fight for agency, or being victimized and shamed because of something that happened to them. My goal, always, is to show these women as real-life characters with flaws and realistic emotions as well as heroic courage.

4. Your writing involves well known stories of Indian mythology and a very unique perspective. For example, the life stories of Sita and Panchali are well known by everybody. So, what was your processing ideating the characters in your unique style of writing? Did you face any roadblocks in the process?

It is always important for me to visualize the characters in their dramatic moments. I have to be able to hear their voice. The two biggest roadblocks for me are when I get stuck (because I need to understand the character and her world better) and lack of time (since I also teach Creative Writing at the University of Houston).

5. The women in your books are strong, they fight for what they want, but their weapons of choice are somewhat traditional. Like cooking in your last book, and spices in *The Mistress of*

*Spices*. You use something that is considered feminine and maybe not so important in the grander scheme of things and make that powerful. Is there any specific reason for it?

I want to use "weapons" that are available to most women. I want to show that there's always something in our lives which, if we use it well, can help us overcome a problem. This, I feel, is far more useful to readers whom I want to inspire than mythical weapons or spells.

6. If a budding writer asks you what is the trick behind retelling an epic in an honest manner, what advice would you give to him/her?

First, figure out which characters really resonate with you. Second, read all the versions of the epic that you can get so that you know the original story really well before you decide on your version. Third, treat the project with respect—these ancient tales are a very important part of our culture. There should be a real and deep reason as to why you want to re-tell these stories.

7. In the past, you have used strong women from mythology as characters in your writings, giving them authorial agency. Do you think people in our country still hesitate to give women the much required social freedom? If so, how can your books change this mindset?

People in many countries still hesitate to give women agency and freedom. I hope reading and relating to the stories of strong women will change the minds of some of them as they begin to understand the joys, pains and hopes or women like Sita, Draupadi and Jindan. I strongly encourage my women readers to share these books with male friends and relatives and discuss them together. Such open discourse goes a long way toward changing old worldviews.

8. The real reason for Sita's banishment, though sanitised or obscured in popular versions, is the mere thought that she has been defiled by her time spent in another man's palace. Do you think stories like that shape how people think about abduction, sexual violence, and "purity"?

Abduction and sexual violence (or the suspicion of it) are major themes in Sita's story as well as in many of our classic stories. In my novel *Forest of Enchantments*, Sita questions this very strongly—and I agree with her. It is my hope that if people relate to her, they will also begin to question age-old beliefs about women's "purity."

9. In an interview you mentioned you want to break the social barrier which holds back women in our society and that's why women are the main protagonists in your Stories. Do

you ever consider writing from a perspective of LGBTQ community since they also face backlash?

I have written about the LGBTQ community in books such as *The Lives of Strangers* (the story titled "The Blooming Season for Cacti") and *Before We Visit the Goddess* (the character of Ken). I hope that readers will relate to these characters and their lives and the prejudice they face.

10. What has been the most learning experience for you personally; something that has left a lasting impression on you and allowed you to witness a completely different dynamism of portrayals?

The activist work I do in the field of domestic violence has had a huge effect on my life. It has made me so much more sensitive to the silent torture that many women face inside their homes and thus has influenced my desire to depict women who overcome challenges in their lives.

11. There are a lot of young author aspirants who curb their dreams just because their families do not support them or entrust them enough. What is that one advice with regard to career choices that you would like you to give to all the parents out there with regard to the stereotypical perceptions in the child's career decisions?

I would like to encourage parents to listen to what the children want to do without jumping to conclusions, and to have some serious, open conversations about these issues. Often, a happy compromise can be reached when parents and children can discuss openly and value each other's opinions. The world is changing and more successful careers, some very untraditional, are opening up every day.

12. What is your message to the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?

I know St. Xavier's well since I did several years of schooling, including college, in Kolkata. It is a great institution. I wish the students of St. Xavier's all the best in their lives and careers. Follow your dreams and read as much as you can. Books are magical because they open up our minds in amazing ways.

**Recently, your book ‘ My Experiments with Silence’ got published. How did you feel pouring your heart out through your diary entries which were not meant for the public? Is it an allusion to Mahatma Gandhi’s autobiography, ‘The story of my experiments with truth’?**

The book’s title is just a coincidence. The diary entries that I have used I wrote about what I have actually faced in my life while I was actually experimenting with silence which meant keeping social interaction to the bare minimum. So when we were looking for a title for the book, I and the editor went back and forth and I had an alternative title as ‘A Walk in the Mist’ which is the last piece of the book but when I was thinking what is the book really about I thought about my experiment with silence wherein I was trying to figure out how I feel about shutting down any kind of social interaction or keep it to bare minimum and I was journaling that. I have read Mahatma Gandhi’s book and everybody seemed to like the title so we went ahead with it.

**Your acting career spans more than 25 years. Tell us about a character you have played whom you relate to the most.**

My criteria for choosing a character is simply whether I am going to have fun doing it or not, rather than relatability. Sometimes you land up playing a character that is completely the opposite of the kind of person that you are, but that’s fun too. You’re going to be playing the character you choose for a period no matter good or bad, so it all comes back to the fact that you’re having fun playing it or not. We feel a lot of emotions that we can express through a particular character because at the end of the day we all have a happy person, an angry person, a devil, and an angel inside of us. As actors, we are blessed to live different lives because when you are playing a role, you are not responsible for the things you do. You can get away with everything you do while you’re acting. So, if you think you’re going to have fun playing a character you choose it.

**You were a successful banker on Wall Street before you realized your calling for acting. Was the transition from your corporate life to an artist difficult?**

My first and foremost love was acting. I did my first play when I was eight years old, so I have had a long relationship with theatre, and I always knew in my heart of hearts that I wanted to be an actor one day, and I was very clear about it. By the fourth or fifth grade, I knew I wanted to be an actor, but coming from a difficult middle-class family where you have to finish your education and then do whatever you want, I finished my education to keep my parents happy and, by luck, I also got a great job on Wall Street. I was not particularly interested, but because I was decent in academics and had a specialisation in finance, this opportunity arose, and it was my brother who was actually interested in working on Wall Street but never got the chance, so he encouraged me to take it. You can act whenever you want, there is no time limit for that, so I got into that job and to be honest, it wasn’t fun; but finance or working on Wall Street involved a lot of number crunching and working long hours and if you are a creative person, it limits your creativity because you are kind of restricted to your laptop, so I spent over two years there before realising it was now or never, the worst thing you could do is not do something because you are afraid, fear is your worst enemy. You

cannot say, "I want to do this but.." and make excuses, and whenever that "but" appears, you must question yourself. I am not a person who regrets, but I would rather try and fail than not try at all and wonder, "What if I had done this and done that?". It was not easy, the decision was not easy, and my family was not supportive of that, and even I didn’t know because my family isn’t from this industry and I am a Delhi boy, not even a Mumbai boy, so yes, the decision was difficult, but when you pursue your dream and passion, the difficulty becomes a challenge, so yes, it was fun.

**You have worked in all 3 of the primary sources of digital entertainment - web series, television shows and movies. Moving forward, where do you see the Indian entertainment space in 10 years?**

Each platform will have its own audience and content made for a specific group.. Blockbusters like avengers iron man, has their own charm being watched on the big screen. You will never get the same feeling watching it on an iPad. Theatre is more like a community thing, you go with your friends, have a fun time, hence movies will be made which are more suitable for that kind of genre. On the other hand, the smaller films, the more intimate films will opt for a digital platform. It will become a platform for experimenting a lot as you cannot experiment in films released in theatres since the stakes are very high. Just to promote a film, you need to spend 10-12 lakhs. All that money is saved when one promotes it on Netflix or any other ott service. Tv for the better or worse has become a family platform.

Hence, I see OTT going a long way, mainly because it has the best of all the worlds, one can watch it at his convenience, not that expensive and you have the privacy to watch whatever you want. Another platform that is on the rise is Instagram, where content is made only for 30-45 seconds. Many people are celebs in that platform also known as influencers, having over 10-20 million followers.

There exists 4 platforms now - Films, OTT, Television and Instagram each platform requiring its own expertise.

**Now that you have worked in multiple movies, acted for OTT platforms and even been a part of a reality show, what is the next goal you’re looking at in your career? Is there anything, in particular, you look forward to doing in the future?**

To be honest, I am not the kind of guy who actually aims for a goal. My job is almost to be the best that I can be. If there is a project that is coming up, then I have got to prepare for that project regardless of what medium it is. I

am an actor, so whether I am acting in front of a small camera, a big camera, a mobile or a laptop - it really does not matter. Acting is what I do for a living. It really all depends on the kind of stuff offered to me, whether it is going to be fun. If it



**IN CONVERSATION WITH**

**SAMIR SONI**  
SAMIR SONI

**AN INDIAN FILM AND TELEVISION ACTOR,  
DIRECTOR AND FORMER FASHION MODEL.**

*Interviewed by : The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview : Online*

is not going to be fun, then it really does not matter whether it is a film - films are actually one of my least favourite mediums. It really depends on what comes my way, so there is no goal per se because, in the end, all of our goals should be to be happy. You aim to be successful so that you can be happy. I love what I do - even if it is a play. I have been doing a play for 15 years, during theatre, I am also working on my next play right now. I have written another script which I might direct in the future - if an opportunity comes by. In the end, it's like John Lennon said, "I'm a creative guy, you give me a piece of wood - I'll make music out of it."

**You have been known to have forayed into the television industry, besides playing memorable characters in various Bollywood films. Do you believe that there exists a prominent comparison and difference of treatment between the 2 domains?**

Of course, each platform comes with its challenges, good and bad. For example, television is time-bound, so if you are playing a part in a daily soap, you need to make sure that the work is done within the streaming time of the next episode. So, the focus here is efficiency, which is how much you can do in one day without compromising with the content. You are required to memorise your lines in the time you have between the few scenes and think on your toes while doing it. To conclude, there is a lot of time pressure, you do not have the luxury of time. Films on the other hand are a little laid back. If you fail to finish your part within a set time you can reschedule and push the film back by one or two months thereby making films a little easy paced. Even though it is becoming faster because time is money now. The frustration of films on the other hand is that you may have to sit for around six hours, waiting for your scene that is only four words long. The challenge is that you must stay in the mindset and framework of the character while you wait for the sets to get ready. When a film comes out, the work done in a day comprises no more than five or six minutes of the total duration. While in films you are required to keep your calm as you wait, on television sets you don't even have time to breathe, so I personally prefer television.

**Social anxiety and Mental Health are in the talks nowadays in the industry. The youngsters of our generation also go through tough times due to their fast-paced lives which leads to distress and disappointment. What according to you should be some necessary actions one should practice to keep their mental health in check? How do you practice overcoming unprecedented situations in your career and life?**

You have to understand that for better or for worse, students these days are growing up in a generation where there are a lot of opportunities which come with their own pressures. Time has value. When I was growing up, this pressure was not that much. You did your undergrad and moved on to 3-4 professions. Now you have got a lot of pressure dealing with this. We are living in a developing country, where the majority of people are trying to make ends meet. Their criteria is to make enough money to send their children to good schools, good colleges. The concept of mental health is often not understood as your needs are so basic. For your generation, your basic needs are met. You do not have to worry about not having enough food on your plate. You have become creatures of your mind. I personally feel that my own fears but there is something that you have to do sooner or later because you cannot run away, because it will catch up with you. Whatever you are trying to avoid, the same situation is going to come back to you if not now then 5 years later. If you have an issue with your parents or friends, sooner or later it will come back to you unless you confront it with them and deal with it. More often once you have faced your fears it just kind of goes away, just like when you are having a stage fright during a performance, once you do you it you say it was not that bad. Another big fear is what will people say, and that is the worst thing to think of. You have to stand up for yourself. It is not easy but that is probably the worst thing probably to me. For example, whenever when I am not doing something because I am scared, I think about it 10 times: is it just because it is out of my conform zone or is it something really big like going in front of a lion. What you actually have to see is that is the fear really valid. The only way in which you can know this is by facing it. I will give you my example, when I was a kid, I came from a middle-class family, I could not speak English in front of people. For you guys it is pretty hard to imagine but I grew up in a school where normally we spoke in Hindi and suddenly my teacher would come and ask me to address the class in English, I would start sweating. But then I took a vow that I would

only act in English plays. I forced myself to do so. From a person who was hesitant to speak in English and stand in front of a class of 40 people, I started performing for 1000 people by doing English plays and it was such that it was difficult for me to do a Hindi play after that.

Therefore, make whatever is your weakness to your strength and work on it. Everyone is a work in progress you have to overcome your shortcomings and the stumbling block is going to be your fear but you have to go past that.

**Do you think that someone could be a good writer if they do not feel emotions strongly?**

To begin with, what is a good writer? It is really tough to decide. There are a bunch of intellectuals who regard one piece as good writing and something else as not so good. For eg, before Harry Potter, who knew J.K Rowling? Look at her now. So it is all about your struggle and hard work which moulds you into a winner. I am not a trained writer, so I write what I feel, what I think and the basic idea according to me is your ability to communicate and connect and what I've realised, after having written my 1 book is that people connect a lot with honesty. So whatever you're writing, if you are enjoying it is bound to work. But if you're writing, keeping in mind people are going to like it, it is never going to happen. You will never know what is going on in someone's mind and hence writing to suit someone's taste and preference is a sham. You should always do what you know, and in the process, you will find even a small group of people who can connect with your story and trust me when I say this, it will go a long way.

**You are an avid reader. In this day and age where the youth seems to have lost touch with reading, what are some of the books you feel are essentials for a student to read?**

To begin with, it is not a matter of habit, though that is a good thing, as time passes, the emphasis that we place on reading will shift simply due to the concept of educating yourself and gathering information. Even though you could get the same information by watching a 15-minute video as opposed to reading books for several days, I believe you should read. It's just that reading can help you build patience, but it also has other benefits. It's like sports; there's no inherent benefit, but if you play sports, you're healthier and fitter because you're doing things, and when you read, you're learning to spend time alone with yourself. Apart from that, I am not one to tell you that you should read, but rather that you should spend time on yourself, that it is important, that you should be able to reflect if you want, that you should not panic if your phone, iPad, or television goes out of service, and that knowledge, information, why not? Technology provides you with that; of course, there are drawbacks, but there is also an upside: you can get an idea of what speech Joe Biden is giving in the United States by sitting at home, but you can't wait for a book to arrive and for someone to write that in the book. However, reading is a good habit because it teaches you to spend time with yourself and builds character, but if you do not feel like reading in today's world where time is of the essence, that's fine.

**What is your message for the students of St. Xavier's College, Kolkata?**

I am myself from St. Xavier's School, New Delhi. I am Xavierite I guess. My only message is to keep things simple. You have X amount of time left in your life, hopefully, you all will live to be 70-80 years old and by that time things might not be that great. You have got a limited amount of time and a limited number of resources. You could be born in a village or a city, your father could be a billionaire or he could be an employee but the rest is up to you. Your life is your life and the sooner you know who you are and what you want to be in life, the sooner you will actually achieve it. If you are not aiming for something you are going to miss it anyway because you do not know what you are aiming for. There is nobody telling you to do this or that in your life it is up to you what you make of it. Never listen to people because they will always be cynical and tell you what they could not be and where they failed simply because if you did it they would look like fools. The biggest lie that goes around is you have to be practical. The most impractical thing is trying to be practical because it might mean do not take or do not follow your dreams. Therefore know what is best for you. I tell my daughter that if you want to jump around do so but do not cry if you fall. Once you decide there is nothing that you cannot achieve. Take ownership of who you are, discover yourself and make your own life and the sky is the limit.

**1. You have established a name for yourself in the domains of branding and marketing. What advice would you give to businesses who want to alleviate their reach in this pandemic world?**

The pandemic has made the world spin faster. The changes in the consumer landscape which were happening at a slower pace have accelerated. Consumers have started placing a premium on core propositions such as safety, quality, science, and service excellence. In order to build with conviction, a consumer brand has to over-deliver and delight in the attributes that matter. "Trust and safety" moved up the needs ladder and hence it was imperative to deliver and magnify our commitment to our team and clients. Brands are built by and for people and have to stand for them. Our core values to keep consumers and their needs first helped us navigate the pandemic. The pandemic has shifted our perspectives and made us realign our brand objectives and vision. The entire salon industry is built on human interaction and touch, so in the new normal, we at Lakmé Salon were agile and able to quickly shift our focus to ensuring the safety and hygiene of our customers and teams. We implemented 55+ safety measures in collaboration with medical professionals across every touchpoint in the salon, including temperature checks, single-use PPE kits, masks and gloves, among others, to ensure the utmost safety of our customers and staff, and the teams were trained to ensure complete adherence to these protocols. Thanks to these measures, 96.7% of our customers voted Lakmé Salon SAFER THAN HOME. So my advice would be to remain agile, take care of your own people and always take a customer-first approach.

**2. You are one of the most successful people in the Indian salon industry. What would be your advice to an Indian start-up that wants to make it big in the Indian salon spectrum?**

With the number of brands growing every other day, staying in business and relevant can be a challenge. Every business out there is vying for the attention of the audience, which has resulted in a plethora of options for the audience to pick from. When you are a start-up and up against established businesses, the battle becomes even more difficult. The salon business has a low barrier to entry but once in you will face operational challenges continuously. It is a people and process-centric business and hence you need to balance dynamism with discipline. As a result, it is critical to identify and carve out your niche and the problem you are solving. Have a robust strategy in place that allows you to capitalise on your unique selling proposition to set yourself apart from the competition, and a risk management plan so you know what to do if things go south.

**3. After working in the real estate industry for so long, what led you to build a career in the hair and beauty sector?**

My training as an architect has helped me understand and enjoy three things – spotting consumer trends and needs, working with experts to design solutions that delight and are economically feasible, and building teams and cultures that execute. Across my experience in real estate, healthcare, FMCG and now beauty services, these themes are constant and inspiring.

**4. We are a part of a society that chooses to reflect on the beauty that lies within. How do you think beauty brands should adapt themselves to cater to this 'no-filter' ideology?**

At Lakmé Salon, one of our key values is "Beauty Rules". We believe in the power of beauty to change, to uplift and to heal. Our aim is not just to beautify our customers' appearances, but to beautify their lives, to beautify the lives of our teams, and to beautify the future of the planet. Staying true to our core, with Lakmé Salon's annual campaign, #HappyNewYou, we have invited customers to experience 'beauty inside-out' wherein our team of highly-trained experts help assist customers to push themselves to become the best version of themselves and inspire self-confidence. It is all about fostering a more holistic sense of beauty by assisting clients in achieving happy hair and happy skin.

**5. Do you feel that Salon-at-Home services would gradually phase out traditional salons in the coming years seeing the recent bloom they encountered during the pandemic?**

As human beings, we thrive on social interaction and the human touch. While the pandemic and the exponential growth of technology has helped build home services, thanks to the convenience they offer, we still believe that the safety of our customers and teams comes first. Home services result in the expert moving through various external touchpoints before reaching the customer's home, thus putting themselves as well as the customers at risk, whereas, Lakmé Salon has been voted SAFER THAN HOME thanks to the hygienic environment we have scientifically. Visiting a salon is not just about getting a service; it is a holistic experience and often a client's sacred me-time, where the focus is solely on them. So no, we do not believe the traditional salon format will phase out any time soon.

# PUSHKARAJ SHENAI

CEO AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
LAKMÉ LEVER

Member of the Board of Directors (AUM of Lakmé) - India



**6. Hyper-personalisation is the focus of today's beauty brands. How crucial do you believe it is to provide personalised services to customers?**

In today's world, personalisation and customisation is the name of the game. We recognise that every customer is unique and has unique needs and desires, so our constant aim at Lakmé Salon is to personalise consultations and services to meet these needs. Technology has acted as a catalyst for the widespread customisation of products and services. Artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics have aided us in ensuring consumer satisfaction and value, bringing us one step closer to our goal to BEAUTIFY THE FUTURE.

We leveraged technology to introduce virtual skin, hair, and bridal consultations as soon as the pandemic hit. Face Mapping, a unique AI-powered tool with cutting-edge technology from Dermalogica was introduced to provide a detailed skin analysis to help customers understand their skin type and provide expert-led customised solutions for the same. We've also launched our new hair and makeup collections at the Lakmé Fashion Week virtually in the last two years, using a high-tech digital platform curated specially for the show.

**7. What are some of your experiences with unlearning and self-learning? What were the processes/experiences by which you identified and started to develop your own potentials, abilities, skills, creativities, questions, common sense, and voice of conscience?**

The world is changing at a fast pace and it's critical to keep up to remain relevant, both at an individual as well as at a business level. I think the pandemic has also changed our perspectives towards life and how we conduct our businesses, and in this adversity, we were given the opportunity to learn, upskill and grow. My personal belief is to constantly keep learning, developing and upskill our teams, and to hire people who are better than you to cover your own gaps. I have always kept a learning track running. Now with MOOCs like Coursera and Edx, it is extremely accessible. To monitor your growth, every Sunday night plan the new things you want to learn or do in the coming week, remind yourself daily and take stock of what you actually did on Saturday night or the week before. Learning is a part of everyday life; if you keep your eyes and ears open, you can learn from everyone, everywhere and every time.

**8. With the recent growth in influencer marketing, there is a huge surge in companies getting their brand promoted and gaining huge traction. How do you plan on keeping up with the trends and sustaining in the industry with so many competitors?**

For us at Lakmé Salon, it is not just about engaging with influencers to spread the word – we are a legacy, trusted brand with a loyal customer base. For us, it's more important to engage with the right set of influencers or key opinion leaders who align with our brand values and can add further credibility to our cause. We are happy to report that we have been able to leverage influencers and social trends effectively to reach out to not just more customers, but to more potential employees and franchise partners as well.

**9. What changes do you see upcoming in the beauty sector with the emergence of the normal? How do you bring about innovation and uniqueness in your products and what is your thought process?**

Safety and personalisation will definitely be the key themes going forward, not just in the beauty sector, but across the board, really. Remaining agile, providing customers, partners and colleagues a safe space to be their best selves and personalising services and even growth paths will be the way to go. Leveraging technology and innovating the beauty & wellness experience will also be key result areas as we move forward. At Lakmé Salon, innovation is woven into every process and is at the heart of what we do. Dermalogica's Face Mapping and its digital equivalents were introduced to assist clients in identifying their skin needs and finding the right products and services. With the men's segment gaining traction over the years, we partnered with Bombay Shaving Company to create experience stations for men in over 200 of our salons, thus expanding our men's portfolio and appealing to a bigger demographic.

**10. What is your message to the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?**

Be dispassionately passionate – strive to be your best version but do not get caught up in results alone. Never stop learning. Take mindful risks, make new mistakes, it is part of learning, and most importantly, enjoy the everyday journey and struggle – not just the destination.



# MENTAL HEALTH

## In an Unequal World

'Mental illness can be appropriately identified and successfully treated, just like physical illness.' said US President Bill Clinton in 1999. Our emotional, psychological, and social well-being are all part of our mental soundness. Every year on October 10th, World Mental Health Day is commemorated with the goal of increasing global awareness of mental health concerns and organizing initiatives in support of mental health. In India, mental illness was often followed by denial and hesitation to seek help. Neither did the media talk much about it nor were the people given a platform to share their experiences. It was viewed intensely when people found out a person was seeing a doctor for their sanity. One with mental health problems was considered 'irrational' and was sent off to asylums. Public visibility of mental health problems increased in this taboo ridden society. As estimated by WHO, 7.5% Indians suffer from some mental disorder, 56 million Indians suffer from depression and another 38 million Indians suffer from anxiety. However, people's perspectives began to change in the late 2000s.

On 19th August 2013, India passed a Mental Health Care Bill which stated that every person shall have the right to access mental health care and treatment from services run or funded by the government. Apart from the National and District Mental Health Programs, the National Rural Health Mission is on its way to becoming the vehicle for delivering mental health as a part of integrated primary care at the cutting edge of the public healthcare system. In 2015, actress Deepika Padukone came out and shared her experience of depression, together with content-rich narrations and documentaries that gave strength to a great number of people to come out with their mental problems.

Cinema is omnipresent and so is its influence. A recent portrayal of mental illness-Depression, in the movie Dear Zindagi even showed that the Indian film industry is evolving, albeit slowly. Mental health which was always considered a taboo is now being discussed freely. The coming generations have become more receptive to it and

seek help when in need. This has compelled society to look at mental health from a different perspective. The road to improving the notion of mental health is long but it is not impossible and Indian society is gradually coming to terms with the concept of it. Few helplines when required are:

KIRAN-1800-599-0019, to assist those who are experiencing anxiety, stress, depression, or suicide thoughts.

The iCall helpline-022-25521111 and Lifeline -033-40447437 offer people in emotional or psychological distress an empathetic hand through professional and free counseling.

The Voice That Cares-8448-8448-45 is a helpline that offers online therapy. The availability of these resources gives people the hope and courage to fight their intrinsic fiend.

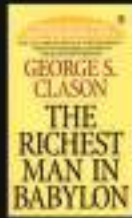


Learning about finance can be awfully boring sometimes, especially for someone who is not that into infotainment or non-fiction books. One generally does not even know where to begin, such is the plethora of jargon involved. With a range of interesting topics covering various areas of the subject, Read. Know. Invest. is one's personal Bible into the world of finance. The financial problems mentioned in the books are experienced by everyone. The simplicity with which the issues and solutions have been given, makes it very easy for people from any background to grasp what the writer is trying to say. This article serves as a prelude for your success in the financial world and suggests some of the most essential books on investing, personal finance, the stock market and other money related matters. So go ahead, and take that first step towards financial freedom.

## THE RICHEST MAN IN BABYLON

Written by George S. Clason, *The Richest Man in Babylon* is a book that dispenses financial advice through a collection of parables set 4,000 years ago in ancient Babylon, the city which was considered the wealthiest in the world. The book is associated with a fictional Babylonian character called Arkad who was a poor scribe but went on to become the richest man in Babylon. Arkad's advice includes the 'Seven Cures' - how to generate money and wealth and the 'Five Laws of Gold' - how to protect and invest wealth. The focus of Arkad's advice is around "paying yourself first", "living within your means", "investing in what you know", the importance of "long-term saving", and "home ownership".

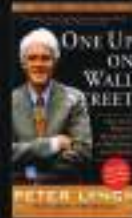
*The Richest Man in Babylon* is a must for all those people who are looking for an easy to understand and enjoyable guide for their financial journey. By adding elements of fiction to a non-fiction book, George S. Clason brilliantly made the book interesting.



## ONE UP ON THE WALL STREET

In this book Peter Lynch teaches how a common investor can get great returns from their investment in the stock market if they follow few general investing principles. He has divided the book into three distinctive sections, each section dealing with a separate aspect of investing--preparing to invest, picking winners and the long-term view.

*One Up On The Wall Street* by Peter Lynch is a must-read book, especially for all the stock market beginners. Peter Lynch's strategies in the book are quite simple, logical, pragmatic, and easily replicable. If one is just getting started with his stock market journey and wishes to understand the basics of investing or how the market works in a not so complicated manner, then *One up on Wall Street* by Peter Lynch is unmissable.



## PSYCHOLOGY OF MONEY

In this book, Morgan Housel shares 19 stories exploring the strange ways people think about money. It covers observations on our relationship with money and tells us how our thinking towards finances drives the critical decisions of our life. The premise of this book is that - doing well with money has a little to do with how smart you are and a lot to do with how you behave. It inspires one to live a wealthy life by making smart decisions.

Written by award-winning author Morgan Housel, 'The Psychology of Money - Timeless Lessons on Wealth, Greed, and Happiness' is one of the best books on investing, business decisions and personal finance. It is an essential read for anyone interested in being better with money. Fast-paced and engaging, it will help one refine their thoughts towards money.



## YOUR MONEY LIFE : YOUR 20s

As we step into our twenties we are considered young adults who are expected to take care of their own problems in life with conviction. This includes problems like social, personal and most importantly financial problems. 'Your Money Life: Your 20s' by personal finance expert Peter Dunn is a comprehensive guide for all the financial issues any individual faces in their early to mid-twenties like student loans, establishing credit, etc. It consists of no-nonsense and concise advice dealing with debit/credit management, savings, investment, retirement building options, among other topics.

This book can be the perfect guide and the perfect foundation for someone who is just getting started with his or her personal finance journey. In this debt-bracketed decade, it's crucial to develop solid money-management skills that will shape one's 30s in sound financial shape.

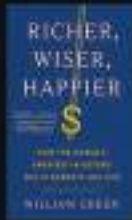


READ. KNOW.

## RICHER, WISIER, HAPPIER

In this book renowned financial journalist William Green draws on interviews that he's conducted over twenty-five years with many of the world's greatest investors. Richer, Wiser, Happier gives us a glimpse of the thought process of the greatest investment minds like Sir John Templeton, Charlie Munger, Jack Bogle, Ed Thorp, Will Danoff, Mohnish Pabrai, Bill Miller and many more. As Green explains, the best investors can teach us not only how to become rich, but also how to improve the way we think, reach decisions, assess risk, avoid costly errors, build resilience, and turn uncertainty to our advantage. In explaining how they think and why they win, this landmark book provides gems of insight that will enrich you not only financially but also professionally and personally.

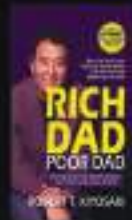
If one wants to achieve total financial freedom while also leading an abundant life that's truly rich in purpose, fulfilment, and joy, then one should surely read Richer, Wiser, Happier and take its invaluable lessons to heart.



## RICH DAD, POOR DAD

Education is nothing without experience. "Rich Dad, Poor Dad" by Robert Kiyosaki is a story of two fathers, one with a collection of degrees and diplomas and the other being a high school dropout. The book is an allegory about how we can make money work for ourselves and not work on the whims of it. The rich father in this book teaches two small boys some invaluable lessons about money through their own experiences. The most important one is undoubtedly to understand how to best use your mind and your time to create your own wealth through business and investments.

With a read of this book, the reader will get a detailed understanding on how to seize opportunities, find solutions, take care of their business and most importantly, learn how to make money work for them rather than being its slave. It explodes the myth that one needs to earn a high income to be rich. It is a must read for people aiming to achieve financial freedom in its truest sense.



## FINANCIAL AFFAIRS OF THE COMMON MAN

Personal financial management is one of the most sought after skills in today's world. "Financial Affairs of the Common Man" by Anil Lamba offers an insight into the various concepts and tools required to effectively plan your finances. He dwells on the importance of compounding and the effects of inflation on investments. The power of compounding helps grow an asset's value exponentially through the years. It has been compared with inflation - the decline of purchasing power of a given currency over time.

A beginner's guide to financial intelligence, this book defines all of the various instruments required to start one's journey in finance. Mutual funds, SIPs, taxes and balance sheets are terms we are all familiar with. It helps us gain a deeper insight into the business jargon needed to be successful. Being fairly concise and simple to understand, making it a must read for budding investors in the country.



## ROMANCING THE BALANCE SHEET

Romancing the Balance Sheet by Anil Lamba talks about the relationship between every action an organization takes and its impact on the bottom line. It shines like a laser beam for anyone who owns, runs or manages a business. It is presented in the form of a storyline, and covers the various fundamentals and principles of a business, with lucid examples given so one can derive the financial health of a company by simply looking at a financial statement.

The book aims to instill a sense of financial awareness in its readers. It also helps one to acquire the knowledge of managing assets and liabilities in a way that will maximise profits. Concepts like break-even are explained in detail, empowering businesses to have a better understanding of their stock and trading activities. It will help one uncover the simple secrets of marginal costing, leverage and funds flow. Written in a simple and easy-to-read style, one will find himself relaxing and enjoying this book as one becomes smarter at managing finance.



# INVEST

# MONEY MANAGEMENT

as

# COLLEGE STUDENT



*"Those who save, those who don't think they can save, and those who don't think they need to save. This is for the latter two".*

*- Morgan Housel*

Staying in disguise of managing money efficiently when one is not, could turn out to be a nightmare for a college student. College students are the type of people who constantly have an income-expense mismatch. Their expenses are frequently greater than their incomes, requiring them to borrow money from friends and family at the end of the month making money management critical.

With that in mind, here are some money management tips which would help students to save money and manage their finances

## DO'S



### SET A BUDGET AND TRACK YOUR EXPENSES

A budget is a very powerful tool in personal finance. By creating one, he/she has an insight into where the monthly income is going and where one needs to cut back. Tracking expenses on paper by date is the key to effective money management. However, you can also try out apps like Mint, Acorn or Wally to help you track where your money is going in order to stick to the budget.

### START A SIDE HUSTLE

Earning your own money and managing it, is the first step towards financial freedom. There are many advantages to working while you are in college. Not only does it add to one's work experience and skill set but can also help one to get recommendation letters.

### SAVINGS

'Do not save what is left after spending, but spend what is left after saving.' It is absolutely necessary to first set a minimum ratio of money towards savings and keep aside the possible pool for expenses. Savings increases one's potential to earn from investments and highly adds to the future.

### START INVESTING

Do not be a blind sheep in the market but invest as small as Rs. 20. While most people think that saving is the end of a process, it is actually not until that money is planted somewhere to grow. Growing is equally important as saving as it balances out the inflation rates and gives additional returns on the money. To move quantitatively, one can create a pyramid on a priority basis like gold, securities, shares, mutual funds, bonds, etc., and invest accordingly.

## DONT'S



### DON'T FORGET THE LINE BETWEEN WANTS AND NEEDS

Learn to separate wants from needs. The necessity expenses must be incurred, but the luxury expenses can be deferred depending upon one's cash position. Make sure to put aside a limit for unbudgeted spending.

### DON'T MAKE IMPULSE PURCHASES

Plan and spend. Most of the time impulse shopping results in buying items that are not really of our use or are costlier than the benefits received. By planning in advance one can make smart choices and learn to use money smartly and responsibly.

### DON'T KEEP UP WITH THE JONESES

A lot of spending is happening nowadays on things and accessories that are trending like phone covers, fashion trends, etc. One should not buy something just because all the friends have it. Keep a check on the amount spent on partying or going out with peers. It is extremely crucial to learn self-control and to resist peer pressure. This way one will end up saving a lot of cash.

### DON'T BUY BOOKS UNNECESSARILY

Save money by renting books and browsing in the college library. One can even subscribe to an online library which will provide a wider range of options. One can also try out reading eBooks or buying gently used books from online websites. This will cost half the price of the book bought from the campus seller. Many of such websites also offer a buy back facility once you are finished reading.

**1** Adidas launched its Munchen Oktoberfest sneakers in 2017, to commemorate the German festival of Oktoberfest. These shoes have a DPBR (durable puke and beer repellent) coating which helps the owners keep their shoes clean while enjoying themselves. They also have 'prost' (the German word for 'cheers') written on them and their black base is accented with golden-coloured fabric.

**2** The reason why October is considered to be a jinxed month is that two of the worst stock market crashes had occurred in this month in the years 1929 and 1987. On black Tuesday in October 1929, Dow Jones fell around 25%. Similarly, on black Monday in October 1987, Dow Jones fell 22%.



**3** Tying with Silicon Valley's longstanding tradition of pulling April Fool's Day pranks, Google unveiled Gmail on April 1, 2004, in a wackily-worded announcement that was widely misconstrued as a hoax. It was not Google Gulp. It was a brilliant double fake and the precursor to a Google staple that now serves millions of users across the world every day.

**4** A report from 2019 shows that Netflix had a 12.9% share of downstream traffic for the first half of the year. During this period, Netflix garnered more traffic than Google by 0.6%.

**5** The time displayed on the iPhone and iPad screens in all official advertisements by Apple is always 9:41 AM. This is because the launch event always starts at 9:00 AM and the big product launch occurs almost exactly 40 minutes after.

**6** All employees at Amazon spend two days every two years working at the company's customer service desk. This includes CEO Jeff Bezos. It is done to help employees understand the importance of the customer service process.

**7** KFC's Twitter account only follows 11 people- the 5 Spice Girls and 6 men named herb. This is because KFC's secret recipe for fried chicken contains 11 secret herbs and spices.

# DID YOU NOT KNOW?

**1. (a) Being an alumnus of IIM Calcutta, what is your most memorable college experience and in what aspects did it help in your career development?**

One of the things which I learned in IIM Calcutta was that getting in is difficult but once you get in you realise that you always thought that you are better than others in certain things but you find people much better than yourself, whether in their extra-curricular activities, academic excellence or whether in their ability to take up new subjects. It was a humbling experience there. You realise that you are one of them and you have a lot to improve. Secondly, the courses on the initial part of the program were extremely compressed. For example, the topic of finance students studying for a B.COM degree for 2 years is to be completed in one term and that is also just one of the six subjects you study here. Then there were also surprise tests, quizzes without any preparation leave which made the course challenging. After following a given structure of the college curriculum the experience in IIM was completely different. It was a rollercoaster ride. But this helped me in my ability to embrace uncertainties and challenges which

**b. It is a dream of every MBA Aspirant to join the top B-Schools. Can you point out some of the qualities that a student must include in his/her C.V. which may act as a differentiating factor?**

Firstly, I would like to convey that the world does not come to an end if you do not get into Top IIMs. I have had a chance to interact with people who did not get into top B-schools yet are excelling in their career and some who despite getting into the IIM's and the IIT's are not doing well. So I believe getting into these top schools is just an opening of a door or a stepping stone in one's career. Ultimately what you make of your career choices will define you. You should never give up even if you do not get into top B-schools. You should try your best because corporate life is like a marathon race, a great start does not always mean that you have won the race, it definitely helps you move forward in the race. Now, the attributes according to me these institutes look for, one is the Indian MBA's still have a lot of focus on numerical ability logic wherein engineers have a higher chance to get but that is gradually changing and these institutes are trying their best to shift their focus on students with a non-engineering background and who are not very numerically aligned. What these institutes look for in interviews, a trend driven by US and UK universities is they look for well-rounded personalities. Just academic brilliance is not enough, you must have one or two extra-curricular activities may be a sport, debate, quiz or a secretary in a club because any extra-curricular activity you do in school or college helps you to build your personality as you get a chance to interact with people, manage people, how to work in a team, how to become a leader or how to become a follower. They look for people with diverse portfolios, not people who are very linear in dimension. This change in trend is not only happening in Management institutions but also in the case of job opportunities. People try to look for personalities who are positive, are able to absorb and assimilate new things, are able to take up new challenges, do not give up easily and stand again after failures and are good at teamwork. Therefore these are certain attributes that are becoming more and more critical in admissions as well as job opportunities.

**2. #BeANissanBlindSpotter campaign was recently launched aiming to turn accident blindspots into safe spots. Tell us about how this campaign works to generate road safety awareness.**

One of the problems in India is that we do not have safety inculcated. Today rear seat belts are compulsory in the second row but only three per cent of Indians wear rear seat belts whereas in the first row only thirty per cent of Indians wear seat belts. One of our challenges is that we do not have safety inculcated. Blind spots are very advanced because when you drive there are certain spots that you cannot see so it can cause problems. The idea was to use technology to provide a 360-degree view of the area where you are driving. This was to show the advancement of technology. I personally feel that the bigger challenge is how to get safety inculcated as a culture. Technology can take you to safety but there is no substitute for good habits. Airbags have been made compulsory in vehicles but if you do not have seat belts on the airbags will have no impact. The concept was to use safety as a tool of technology, comfort and education. We do not have the value of a 'safety culture'. In Japan, people value the safety culture. Japan witnessed its last train accident in 1946. Safety is something that is inbuilt. Technology can help you only to a certain level, habits are what help you beyond that.

**3. Can you enlighten us with some of your greatest life lessons? What motivated you to join the automobile industry?**

For me it was not like I always wanted to join the automobile industry or I was driven to develop the auto sector, I had a couple of choices and I had to choose one, so I picked the automobile industry since I was very interested in automobiles. The learnings which I have had throughout my career is that there are a few things which will either help or harm you:

- The first one is moving out of your comfort zone, it is one of the major problems that students face, especially the students who are in good colleges, the reason being that they come from a very socio-economic background so when they move to a new job or industry, they find it very difficult to interact with others. Whether it is their boss, subordinates, customers, dealers or vendors because people are very unlike them and they come from very diverse backgrounds. The students in their college days must try to interact with people who are very different from you or people who come from different geographical/socio-economic backgrounds because embracing diversity is very important, and this is something which I would also like to do if I get the opportunity to go back to college, your ability to interact and to relate diverse people is very crucial and for that, you need to move out of your comfort zone.

- The second thing which I learned is that if you have some areas of improvement try to work on that because what generally happens is that people always try to choose something they are good at and often try to avoid the things which they have not mastered successfully. So, identify the areas which have room for improvement, it could be in your social terms or academic terms, try to identify those gaps or opportunities in your personal profile. In my experience, learning new skills and improving oneself at a young age is far easier than doing so at an older age.

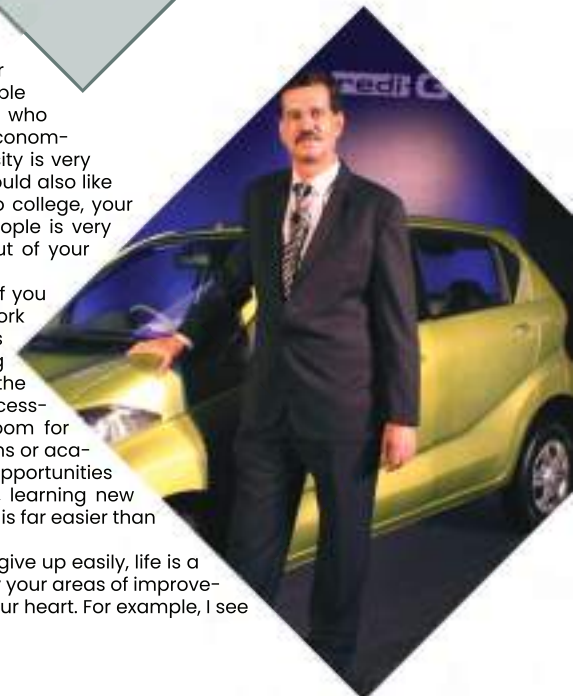
- The third thing which I learned is to never give up easily, life is a marathon race if you lose, try again. Identify your areas of improvement but also do things that are close to your heart. For example, I see



**Arun Malhotra**

Managing Director, Nissan Motor India Private Limited.

Interviewed by : The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview : Online



a lot of people trying hard to get jobs in big corporations like McKinsey, BCG all to find out that they do not like their jobs. Everyone has their own interest and passion and to become brilliant in everything is not possible, so work on your brilliance and the area which you feel you can improve on, how quickly you come in touch with reality is also very important. In comparison to our days I feel it is possible nowadays to take up any profession, so do something which is close to your heart, something you are ready to put the effort in without feeling any burden.

**4. With over 30 years of experience in the automotive industry, you have worked in different functions of sales, service, network expansion and development, brand building and customer-centric initiatives in organizations including Bajaj Auto, and Maruti Suzuki. How has such a long experience helped you in expanding your career?**

I always ponder upon, from the beginning of my career till now, the biggest and the worst things I did in my career. One of the best things that I did in the early part of my career was that I had a territory of Jammu and Kashmir and travel was not allowed to Sri Lanka. I realised that the dealer there faced a challenge with regard to spare parts. So I got them packed, sent them there and won his heart. The only weakness was I

**5. You are an industry titan, having spent almost 30 years in this field. How do you think the Indian Automobile space has evolved in this time, and what lies in the road ahead?**

Firstly, I do not think I deserve the tag of a "titan", I have done well but many people have done better than me. I continue to learn about this industry even today through certain consultancies about Supply Chain and R&D, that I realised I had not focused on earlier. In the Auto Industry, I feel everyone desires mobility because everyone wants to go from A to B and hence most of the mobility is need-based. Also, there is huge penetration of automobiles from the big cities to the smaller cities. This change is driven by awareness and application. Today's generation is also influenced by aspirations, affordability, availability and their want to own a vehicle and be independent. This industry has had a few hiccups because of the pandemic but overall it is interwoven into the economy of the country and it will continue to grow!

**6. With around 3 decades of corporate experience, what according to you are certain skills that a manager should possess to build a long-lasting and successful career?**

The first has to be the ability to get along with people. The second is to be positive. You will experience success and losses but do not sulk back if you experience failures. The third, do not be egotistical - learn from everybody, regardless of their position. The fourth would be to go beyond the column. Do something that your boss does not expect you to do, doing this will help you raise your credibility. Fifth is curiosity - "What can be done differently?". These are 5 attributes I feel a manager should possess. Do something which you enjoy, do not do the work under anyone's pressure. I remember once Sachin Tendulkar said that his coach told him that "you might be the greatest batsman but 70% of the time on the field you will be fielding you will not be batting and you miss two catches you will be giving runs to the other batsmen". Sachin said that he had to work triple hard to be a good fielder. Even to keep his cricket life alive, he had to work. Similarly, you might also have certain areas which might not be in your comfort zone but have to put your best.

**7. What do you think lies ahead for the automobile industry of India?**

Is there anything lacking in the industry? Has it been difficult to enter the automotive industry in India, especially with competitors like Hyundai and Maruti Suzuki? According to me, one can enter a market even when someone else is already well established. There is, and never will be any restrictions to do so. After having entered, it is then the person's work that keeps him among the competitors. The trick to do so is to offer something completely new, something different to the customer base which they would find relevant. When KIA entered the Indian market, they were the first company to provide air purifiers in their vehicles, considering the fact that India's air is full of toxic pollutants. There is a saying that you-

can fight the best competitor in life but not the changing world. One who does, emerge victorious in life irrespective of anything. Look at Elon Musk, with no automobile background, he is the richest man in the world known for his company Tesla, as he took the risk of doing something no one ever thought of and is now a world wide sensation. One needs to understand his/her competitors' strong points and avoid direct confrontation.



**8. The pandemic witnessed massive layoffs and manufacturing shutdowns in the automotive industry, inducing a further change in consumer behaviour. A lot of companies are still endeavouring to recover from the setback. How do you believe one should manage operations to come out at the top of it?**

Pandemic had a different impact on different industries. In the hotel industry, the city hotels did poorly because business travel had reduced. However, the resorts in hill stations did fairly well. Secondly, I believe the pandemic helped us eliminate a lot of things that were redundant. So this concept of 'hybrid model' came into being. The new environment gave us challenges outside of our comfort zone and we had to embrace them. You as a company have to think about how you can make your products or services more relevant to it. That is something a lot of innovative companies are working on. This is the only solution for recovering from the setbacks. There is an old saying that even the best of trees bend down to let the storm pass. The stiff trees always fall. We have to keep changing with the changing times. In such a situation one should stay calm, rethink and replan their strategy and things will soon fall into place. You can keep on crying about what went wrong but you will have to find opportunities where you can perform better and prosper.

**9. One of the main problems that the industry is witnessing is the rising fuel prices which has made people shift towards EVs. Do you think such a rapid change in the Indian automobile industry will be adopted by the citizens? What are your opinions on this EV Revolution?**

First and foremost, I believe there is more hype surrounding electric vehicles than there is in reality. However, I believe that people will switch to electric vehicles because they are a better product and are better for the environment. However, people want range, assurance, reliability, a reasonable price, and peace of mind. The transition is taking place, but the technology must be relevant because there is greater demand for two or three-wheelers in the electric vehicle industry than for four wheelers, so no broad conclusions can be drawn. With electric vehicles (EVs), each segment has its own set of advantages like the pricing will be easily utilised in the commercial sector, and the payback time will be extremely short. The shift is happening, but it will take time, and the transition will be dependent on a number of factors, including how much help the government will continue to provide, how quickly the EVs are able to make up things in comparison to a normal commercial vehicle, and so on. There is no simple solution, but the transformation is certainly there, albeit the rate of change may vary depending on individual sectors and external circumstances.

**10. What is your message to the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?**

You are very lucky to be in such a great college. St. Xavier's College, Kolkata. It is a mega brand. I have known this college for the last 50 years. The thought is, are you able to take out the best of your college? It has such nice clubs and extracurricular activities. It was there in those times as well and I am sure they are even better now. Secondly, just because you are in St. Xavier's do not believe you are in the world because it has given you a good start and an opportunity but how well you utilise the start and opportunities will pave your future. So be proud that you are in a great college but do not be arrogant about that and do not fritter away your energies. You have time to instil new things by the medium of new clubs, new activities and good faculty, therefore, utilise the best. Sometimes when I look back at my journey in IIM Calcutta I realise that I did not utilise the full potential of it therefore tap the full potential of it and enjoy the place where you are and you will succeed.

# IN CONVERSATION WITH

## NIRAJ BAJAJ

# CHAIRMAN, BAJAJ AUTO

*Interviewed by : The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview : Online*

**1. Being a passionate sports person and successful businessman, how important do you think it is to nurture a hobby to destress from the main field of work? What advice would you give to the youth today, who believe that building a successful career demands no room for personal time?**

Success does not come easy. It takes a lot of hard work, discipline and sacrifice. Focus is essential, but also, one should take out enough time for any hobby. Otherwise, you are in danger of getting burnt out at a young age. It is important to lead a balanced life. I've worked long hours my entire adult life, but have always made time for the important things like health and family. Even today, I walk daily and play table tennis weekly with my son.

**2. You were a part of the Indian Table Tennis team for 7 years and have also received the prestigious Arjun Award for the same. What made you shift from the sports field to the business sector? What lessons did you draw from sports that helped you run a multibillion-dollar company? Are we going to see the company contributing to the field of sports?**

I started playing table tennis for fun. By God's grace, I became all-India champion, which is of course, rare, coming from an industrialist family. I was lucky to be born into the Bajaj Family legacy. Left table tennis as India number 1 at the age of 22, took training in Bajaj Auto, and then did my MBA at Harvard Business School. This was a natural progression for me, because I had always wanted to join the family business, even as a child.

Sports taught me a lot. How to be a good human being. Never give up. Lose gracefully, stay calm under pressure and get back up to start playing again. Persevere. Mix freely with people from all walks of life, regardless of financial status, caste or creed. Treat them all like equal fellow sportspersons. Personally, we are promoting sports through UTT, for table tennis, and OGQ (Olympic Gold Quest). In the last paralympics and olympics, out of the 26 medals won by our country, 14 medals were won by athletes supported by OGQ.

**3. Being in a family-owned business it must be hard to do succession planning, so what according to you is the key to keep the family morale and values together along with timely succession planning?**

Succession planning is never easy. We had great forefathers, like my grandfather, Shri Jammalal Bajaj, my uncle Shri Karnalnayan Bajaj and my father Shri Ramkrishna Bajaj. Since 1994, we had Late Shri Rahul Bajaj as the head of our joint family. He was a giant of a man, who led by example and kept the family together. Family values and principles is easier for everyone to follow, because he himself, like his forefathers, led by example.

**4. While keeping a foot in the modern world, approaching innovation, what did you learn from your predecessors? What are some principles that have descended over generations in your business that you value the most?**

We have inherited a rich legacy of ethics, good governance and transparency. Gandhiji considered Shri Jammalal Bajaj as his 5th son, which has influenced the future generations of the family. The elders believed in simple living and high thinking. We, in this generation, try our best to live up to their standards.



**5. Being both a business magnate and a former sportsman, what is your take on the age-old mindset that children with a family-business background should engage in their business and not follow their true passion?** Children must follow their passion. Just because they come from a business family, does not mean that they need to do the same. But if they do, they must go through the grind and earn their position. They may excel in something totally different. Being forced into doing something, when their heart is not in it, can only lead to failure and unhappiness for the family.

**6. Bajaj Group is one of the biggest conglomerates in the country, with a myriad of companies in different industries. What is the secret behind such dominance in both the enterprise and consumer sectors?**

Blessings of our elders, and God's grace on the family. The Bajaj Group is now over 100 years old. So much hard work and sacrifice by all employees and stakeholders. The joint family has just tried to do their duty sincerely. The primary focus has never been greed for profit. The focus has always been on excellence and what we think is good for our country and nation building.

**7. With new players entering the market, do you believe that the revolution of EV could only be brought about by new brands, and new players would surface in the market. Do you think that the established brands would still receive the first mover advantage?**

The EV revolution has created a tremendous potential for India to be world leaders. There's place for both new and old manufacturers. Bajaj Auto exports its vehicles to 79 countries. Thus, the world has enough opportunity for all, as long as we do our job with sincerity and vision, which is not easy.

**8. The business world was badly impacted in last year's lockdown, so how did you manage to cope with the effects of the pandemic on your business? Also, how did the impact affect the management structure of the company?**

The entire country suffered tremendously during the pandemic in the last 2 years. Many businesses suffered greatly, and sadly, many people lost their lives. Bajaj Group was very fortunate, that during this period, our market capitalisation tripled. In all our Companies, full salaries were given to all, even during the periods of full lockdown. We tried to do our best for our employees, and our customers.

**9. Bajaj Group, being one of the largest conglomerates in India, has been associated with aiding various notable social needs. Amidst the pandemic, when the percentage of unemployment in our country has observed a hike, how do you think you can contribute towards adding value to this resource?**

The Bajaj family has been in philanthropy for decades. Much before CSR became a buzz word. Our focus is to support the poorest of the poor and rural development. During the last 2 years, we committed 300 crores for Covid relief, in various ways. Unemployment is possibly our country's biggest problem, and more and more, our focus in the future is going to be on education, skilling and employability.

**10. What is your message for the students at St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?**

Follow your passion. Do whatever you want, but be the best at what you do. There is no substitute for hard work. Avoid shortcuts. Try to follow values and principles, even in adversity. Finally be happy and do not take yourself too seriously.



**BAJAJ**

# PARTHO CHAKRABARTI

Managing Director, Faber-Castell India

Interviewed by: The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview: Online

**1. You are one of the most successful alumni of our prestigious college. Looking back at your career, how did being a Xaverian help make you the man that you are today?**

This institution has had so many successful alumni, in the past and even today, who have reached really far and achieved a lot. Any achievement a corporate executive can make would pale in comparison. So let me focus on the second part of the question, which is how did being a Xaverian help in making me. I did my schooling also from the same institution, so nearly 13 years there. So the values imbibed in all those initial years have guided my behaviour. There was a clear culture of understating, not bragging about own virtues, cheering for the success of others, responsibilities more important than rights, playing for the team, these are important values and this institution has always championed these values. Also, Xavier's in those days clearly not only did not train for political savviness, but it also discouraged an environment where such skills were valued. However, this is a critical life skill in today's world, and I do not mean it in a negative sense. As I stepped into the corporate world, there was always the temptation to abandon the values I had imbibed for not just short term, but sometimes even apparently long term gains. And that is something all of you are going to face. I personally felt the values imbibed helped provide a very critical balance in my life.

**2. Having held various positions in renowned companies across the globe, which position did you enjoy the most, and what lessons from each role prepared you for a better self?**

In each of the last 5 roles, I learned something new. When I went to Vietnam as CFO for PepsiCo for the region, I lived as an expatriate for the very first time in my life. I had to work closely with people from various cultures, who spoke different languages and get effective business results. Empathy and respect for the diverse cultures I interacted with made me much of what I am today. I stayed 4 years there. In the Philippines, it was an independent listed company where I was seconded by PepsiCo by virtue of its shareholding, the experience was equally wonderful as for the first time I was working outside PepsiCo with people who are not employees of the mother ship. To gain acceptability despite being an "outsider" brought about learnings that I hold dear even to date. It was also where I transitioned from being a CFO to CEO, that was in 2009 and since then I have pretty much been out of the finance career. Being a CEO and having overall accountability brought in a new level of learning, and challenged me as a leader like never before I opted to return to India in 2014 as I realised that I had never been a business head in India. Also, I had largely worked in the beverage side of PepsiCo in India, there was an opportunity to lead the Frito Lays business. I had never worked in the snacks business before and I found the learning challenge motivating. As you can see, it has largely been about seeking out new and diverse experiences and learnings, and that is very much a large part of who I am. I moved to different countries, different jobs and quite often away from comfort zones. The job I enjoyed the most is the one I am currently doing. Nearly 5 years ago Faber Castell Germany approached me with an offer to lead their much-troubled subsidiary based in India. I loved this company for its products, values, as well as its commitment to the environment and sustainability, its consumers. Suddenly my customers were school

students and artists, and my focus moved from chips and soft drinks to education and creativity. And in the field of stationery and Artist supplies, globally no other brand has even half the recognition and reputation Faber-Castell has. The company had products globally that I adored, and I was given an opportunity to make their business in India as great as it is in Europe and other parts of the world. I have been here for 5 years and am still very much delighted to be here.

**3. Being a company involving the interest of many, how do you ensure the wellness and empowerment of working staff, stakeholders, consumers as well as other parties concerned?**

We all need to address the all-important question of 'what's in it for me' (WIIFM)—without this nothing works. This question is a major empathy builder. And yes the question is better answered if you know your stakeholders/consumers well. So having a good connection with them helps this process. Also being approachable helps the cause in a big way.

**4. What are your values as a company leader? What features according to you make a good leader?**

Empathy to me is the single most important value. Simply put, it is about standing in the other person's shoes and judging the issue at hand, and there are ways one can develop it: it could be talking to strangers like a flight attendant or reading fiction. Empowerment (not delegation) to those who are worthy of it - best results come from this. I personally have been a major beneficiary of this during my career. Identify people who are likely to use empowerment well and empower. Leaders have a responsibility to create an environment of trust and also create hunger. Toxic environments which are generating good results sooner than later tend to collapse. And no amount of trust in an environment will create value if there is no hunger. The combination of trust and hunger can often create magic. Personally, I hate leaders who consciously tick boxes, if you are a good leader the boxes will automatically get ticked. To prove a point, you will find that the biggest Greenwashers are the ones first to tick the boxes. I also dislike leaders who spend time building their personal brand rather than their organization's brand, quite often using the organization's resources. Extremely suspicious of rock star CEOs, statistics have confirmed many times over that it is the low-profile CEO who generates better business results.



**5. There are so many stationery brands in the country, offering products at nearly the same price. How does Faber-Castell differentiate itself from the other ones and create such a huge demand for itself?**

For us, quality and product experience are the 2 clear differentiators. That justifies our premium. And we target consumers who think it is worth paying slightly more for better quality and performance. So I do not like to use the term that we are premium, we are simply worth paying more for. Since children are core users of our products, we invest heavily in child safety aspects of our inks and products, and these are non-negotiable where we come from. We focus on making our product experience special which makes them more object of desire rather than a purely functional product. Innovation is at the core of our DNA, we have more than 120 shades of colour and I cannot think of too many other companies that can offer as many varied shades of colour that we provide. We have been doing this for more than 260 years. Our polychrome pencils provide lightfastness which is so important for an artist or a hobbyist. Vincent Van Gogh endorsed our pencils personally more than 130 years ago. Our investment in sustainability – globally we own forests, where we replenish trees at a higher rate than we use. I do not know of too many companies that make this kind of investment for sustainability. We are the only ones who can actually describe ourselves as Your Creative Companion for life because a child starts using Faber-Castell products from the age of 2 (ball crayons) and an elderly uses fountain pens and other accessories which is also available with us.

**6. Having held multiple designations at PepsiCo, how has your time at Faber-Castell panned out with the transition from the beverage space to the stationery space?**

Food and Beverage in India itself are different, they appear deceptively similar but the drivers are somewhat different. But both are fast-moving, in contrast, the stationery and art supplies business is much slower moving. The consumer experience of the same money is much higher than food. In snacks and beverages, the impulsive product is worth Rs.10 and is consumed in less than 3 minutes, package thrown and moved on. A Rs. 10 pencil or pen will remain in your pocket for maybe a month or more and even at the end of the month, you expect it to function as well as it did in the first 3 minutes. So the consumer interface with the brand is much higher so consumer experience is everything and therefore quality has to last for a much longer time in the product cycle. But what has been common between my experience in Frito Lays India and my current role is both the companies are very product-centric. Product drives everything and to that extent, the transition was into something familiar. The stationery industry also has faced very little disruption from private equity or otherwise, one of the few industries in the world to be in that space. No one company nor any private equity has ever tried to disrupt with consolidation or innovation.

**7. Can you tell us about your thoughts or opinions on the company's vision "Unleash Creativity"?**

Skills required to succeed in the future world. Some 30 years ago, it was very clearly tech, consumer centrality etc. A recent study by Stanford, and also confirmed by other similar studies, have confirmed very clearly that creativity ranks No. 2 in the list of skills required to succeed in the future world. Also, there is a uniform acceptance that getting the mind to think creatively is something that can start early. Initiation into creativity more often than not begin with paper and ink/ colour and that is the space we want to occupy. And of course, Thinking is a lot better with ink. Faber-Castell tries to innovatively provide tools that drive creativity, as well as initiate students early into it. Creativity is the skill for the future.

**8. With the new normal, people are often using smart devices as a substitute for the traditional pen and paper experience. Have you ever thought of buying into this digital market?**

It is an opportunity as more people get hooked on digital, they also crave appropriate digital detox. Our products provide among the best digital detox experience. In a survey taken on December'21, the data revealed 78% of the population sample chosen go to buy a stationery or art item at least once a month. This is nearly 2 years into the pandemic and this trend is seen worldwide. So the health of the industry from all studies appear to be intact. On the sales side, the digitisation trend has impacted us favourably and created more opportunities. Online shopping trends have brought our brand closer to the consumer. Lastly, we have connected with major Ed-Tech players. Online education in art and creativity is something we are choosing to actively drive and that is something you will see a lot of. In Brazil, Faber-Castell started classes in Creativity and here in India, we have played a role as Creative Partner to some leading Ed-Tech companies for the creative component of their curriculum.

**9. Is your marketing strategy changing because of this new normal, what are the main challenges and opportunities of this new normal?**

Wherever there is a trend, more often than not, there is a counter-trend. While the world leapt at digitising purchases and payments, another trend appeared worldwide-being confined indoors people became desperate for some non-digital creativity options. Almost everyone discovered an artist in themselves. Sales of art material, colours increased substantially over the period. Of course a large part of our communication is now digital, and our share of online business has increased substantially.

**10. There are many new brands entering the stationery sector. What area is the company primarily focusing on for future growth and are you planning on introducing a new product?**

The demographics of India for education and creativity are stunning, some 1.5 MM schools and growing and the sheer number of children coming into the education.

**11. There are many new brands entering the stationery sector. What area is the company primarily focusing on for future growth and are you planning on introducing a new product?**

The demographics of India for education and creativity are stunning, some 1.5 MM schools and growing and the sheer number of children coming into the education field, leading to industry growth in high single-digit pre-pandemic. No matter how digitised the world becomes, I am yet to find a parent who prefers that their children do not know how to draw or write before they embrace technology. Education and Creativity will remain the focus in the coming years and all our innovation will be in this direction.

**12. What is your message for the students at St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?**

Some messages I would love to share, something I learned the hard way:

Please do not be risk-averse. There is no greater risk in life than not taking risks. Do your numbers, weigh the pros and cons, but do not be risk-averse. There is no such thing as a risk-free rate of return.

As far as possible try to work in an environment you like and enjoy the work that you sign up for. I am not at all suggesting that you only chase your passion, but there is a large space in between the two extremes. In today's context, it is difficult to be good at something unless you enjoy doing it and that would be the cutting edge. Staying in toxic places or spending time with toxic people believing you do not have a choice is simply not true in today's world. You have a lot of choices, use them wisely.

I believe in 'fail fast'. Sometimes we just drag it on and on, and life is really too short and the world today provides plenty of alternatives and options. Do all your numbers, be convinced that it is worth walking off. But do not hesitate once it is done.

# SHANTANU MAHESHWARI

## Indian Dancer and Actor

Interviewed by : The Editorial Committee | Mode of Interview : Online

We first saw you essaying the main role in one of the best television series' centered around college life - Dil Dosti Dance. Today, we see you on the biggest screen alongside one of the biggest names in the industry. What is usually your mindset while approaching these versatile projects and what has the journey been like over the past decade?

The thing that I have learned by now is that- story is the king. While approaching these projects firstly I go for the story then the character I will be playing, and whether these characters are different from the ones I have played in the past.

My journey so far has been a roller coaster ride. I am glad that my journey had a lot of ups and downs because it taught me a lot. The downs that I faced kept me grounded by making me realize that ups are temporary. The journey has been tough. It was a big challenge for me to balance both dancing and acting in terms of projects but luckily I was able to manage both because I am equally passionate about them and tried to give equal priority to them.

**Gangubai Kathiawadi has been a blockbuster success, did you expect this kind of appreciation for your role?**

No, not at all. Till the time the song got released, I did not have any idea about the magnitude of the film. Personally, yes, it was a big achievement, I knew I was a part of a very big film, I am playing a very important character but the outcome was not something that I had imagined. The eyeballs that this movie and the songs have got are not something I had imagined, so obviously, it was not something I was prepared for. I still feel I am absorbing the whole exposure I have received and the appreciation that I am getting.

**Do you think this film will open up more doors for you in the industry?**

I hope so! Obviously, it is a big plus point to be a part of an SLB film opposite Alia Bhatt. People have been appreciating my role, so I am assuming that this will help me get things going, I will say. You cannot really predict anything, but yeah, I will keep working hard and keep struggling and keep hustling and let's see what happens.

**Before making your debut in Gangubai Kathiawadi, you have been known for essaying characters that befittingly established you as an artist, best known for playing personable and stately roles. This must have led to audience believing that it was your forte. What was it like to break out into a new description and how much pressure was it?**

When I was a part of the TV industry, luckily I was not under that thing where people thought that I am repeating my roles because I was clear about not repeating any of them. I have always been part of youth oriented shows, where you get to play a rockstar or a casanova kind of a guy. I know if I repeat myself in a character, you are bound to get into a stereotypical phase, where you get only the same genre roles. For a long time, I used to get roles which were completely dance based as I had done 'Dil,Dosti,Dance'. Luckily, I had people in the industry who thought I was capable enough and gave me a chance to do something apart from dance oriented roles.

had people in the industry who thought I was capable enough and gave me a chance to do something apart from dance oriented roles.

**Moving forward, where do you see the Indian entertainment industry in 10 years? And more importantly, what type of projects would you like to explore in the coming years?**

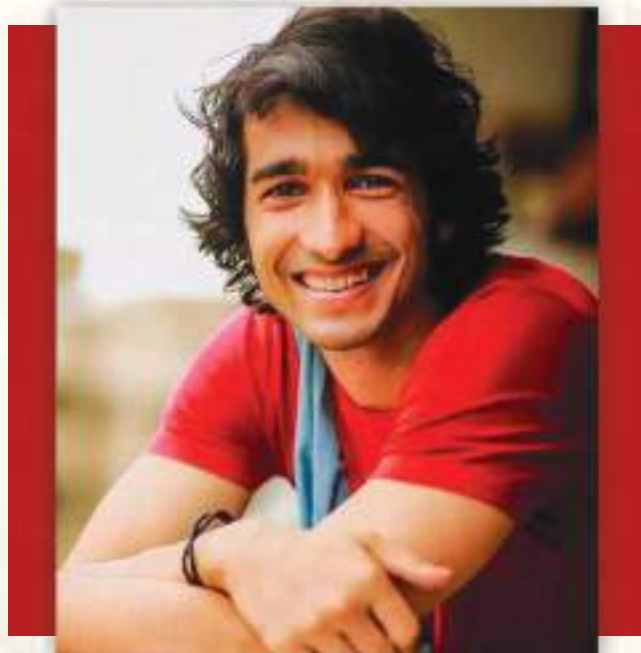
10 years is a long time, let us keep it 5 years. A lot of money is being pumped into the OTT platforms. Actors have a lot of mediums in terms of digital space like OTT, Youtube and obviously the films. I believe that films have an upper hand because you have a group of people coming together and being the audience, especially because box office plays a major role in determining the success of the actor/actress. It is a boon for artists to work on different platforms. TV actors will get a lot of chances in the near future as well. Post-pandemic, we need to rise and I feel as an industry we are doing great.

Coming to the next part of the question, I would like to play as many characters as I can to explore my own potential and not stick to any particular genre. I have just started and this is my first role that I have played in Gangubai Kathiawadi so I want to enjoy what I love doing and not restrict myself.

Dance is a medium to invigorate endless creativity.

**Dance is a medium to invigorate endless creativity. How did you make your foray into dancing and realised that you could make it big in the industry?**

For me, acting happened by chance, getting into the industry happened by chance. I was just dancing, representing my college because I was through Cultural Quota. I didn't get admission in Xavier's, Kolkata so I had to shift here to Bombay for studies. I got into this industry by chance



but I never really thought that dancing is the way to get into this industry and get into acting and become famous, that was never my motto. I was always trying to learn in terms of dancing also, and when I got an opportunity to perform as an actor I was exploring that as well and then I realised that this is my passion and I want to give my time and energy equally as much as I give for dancing, to explore it further and enhance the skills. So for me acting happened by chance, I didn't have any plan in place of how to go about it. Infact, I keep telling many youngsters who are making dancing as a path to get into the industry to explore the acting side of it, I mean each for its own but that shouldn't be the goal ultimately. I think you should explore and be true to your art. I always keep saying so, and art will give it back to you and to be honest you should not do it for fame and money but just do it for the art and art will help you and guide you.

**Your mother identified your talent in dancing. In what other ways do you think your parents in general and your mother, in particular, have impacted you to become the person that you have become now?**

So basically I come from a joint family and I was the youngest in the house. I think that has impacted me a lot in my upbringing. I have seen a lot of struggles growing up. We were going through a very tough phase. Though my mother tried to hide things, it was hard after a point. Seeing my parents struggle and always keeping a smile on their faces is what gave me strength and what really helped me become the person I am now. When you face tough times it by default makes you humble and grounded. My mom and dad always supported me in spite of whatever we were going through and pushed me for my talents. There was a time I wanted to get away from dancing but my parents believed in me and they made sure that I kept on dancing. I can keep on talking about my parents' contribution but yeah this is how they primarily impacted me.

**You have been a part of the Desi Hoppers dance crew and emerged as the winner in the World Of Dance 2015 championship in Los Angeles. What did it feel like to represent your country at an international level?**

It is a very different feeling. A feeling that you cannot describe. It is pretty much the same that you see the athletes do it. Not many dancers get the opportunity to be able to represent their country. It's a proud feeling to see your country's flag there. You are not just dancing for yourself but for your nation and nobody's going to tell you about that pressure but you feel it by default. We trained really hard for this. That one year of my life between 2014 and 2015 I only have bits and pieces of my memory but majorly I remember my training and my transformation in my zone. So finally travelling internationally for a 3-4 minutes performance and making your country proud is beyond description. Their struggle, every memory that we created together was worth it and unforgettable when our names as the winner was announced. I started respecting more to all the people who represent our country like athletes or any other person that represents the country in international matters. You should appreciate their work and struggle as they have represented your nation several times.

**In one of your interviews, you had mentioned that you had a major fear of public speaking. Dancing and acting are two forms of art that require a lot of confidence and spontaneity. What makes you feel confident? What do you do on days when you don't feel confident?**

You did point it out correctly, I was really scared of public speaking. During my school days, I had to say a morning prayer, like I was from a Jesuit school (St.-Joseph's School) and if you started the prayer, it would normally take you around 1 minute or so to complete it. I finished it in 20 seconds. Before everyone could join their hands and bow their heads, my prayer was done. So I was that scared when it came to public speaking. But when it came to dancing, I completely transformed. I have had a lot of people say this when I was growing up, that when I was up there on stage during dancing, I was completely different. When you meet me outside, I am a shy and an introverted person, but music used to transform me, ooze out all the frustrations, all the nonsense that was going on in my head, but in terms of acting, when I started it, I knew I had to work on this aspect of it otherwise it would have been difficult for me to survive here. So I did my homework and here I am. On the days when I do not feel confident, I just accept it. I accept those days when I am feeling low in terms of confidence. I listen to a lot of music. If I know why I am feeling the way I am feeling, I distract myself. Maybe play sports, do activities that I enjoy and it gets me back to my normal self. You will have those days when you could do nothing about it and it's absolutely fine.

**You had mentioned that you hail from a middle-class Marwari family where one pursues CA for stability. But you were always inclined towards dance. Was acting also a part of your ambition?**

As I have said, acting happened to me by chance. That was never something I thought I would pursue ever in my life though my mom had this confidence that I will do well in front of the camera but I was always inclined in doing something behind the camera. This was not my ambition at all to become an actor.

**What is your message to the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata?**

You guys are at the best institute, I always wanted to be a part of this institute, but unfortunately I could not get in and that is why I shifted to Mumbai.

Follow your passion, follow your path, give your best. As I said, know what you are doing - whatever career path you are choosing, be sure about it and make sure you enjoy it. Unless and until you enjoy what you are doing, you will not succeed. Even if you succeed, you will not be happy. You need to define three things to yourself - what is success for yourself - to be happy, to just earn money or just be famous? You need to understand which aspect plays major role in making you at peace with yourself and go about things! Enjoy, explore, live the moment and that's about it - have fun!



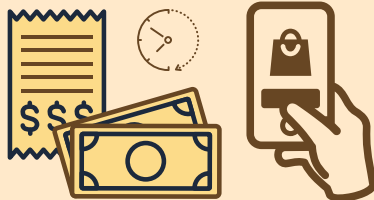


# EMERGING TRENDS IN DIGITAL PAYMENTS

The global epidemic prompted a tremendous shift to digital channels, which altered practically every element of our lives. This shift affected the way we conducted business, entertained ourselves, connected with one another, and traded. Both, businesses and customers have sped up the pace to keep up with the changing market conditions which has led to the rise of the following digital payment methods:

## CRYPTOCURRENCY

In the new era of technology-driven payments, cryptocurrency has become one of the most powerful and crucial movements in the payments ecosystem. It has the potential to disrupt old market techniques, long-standing company practises, and established regulatory procedures, all to the benefit of consumers and macroeconomic efficiency. Consumers could gain unprecedented access to a global payment system that can be utilised anywhere, at any time, and where participation is restricted only by one's capability to use technology, rather than having a credit history or a bank account.



## BUY NOW AND PAY LATER

As e-commerce and cash digitalization have advanced rapidly in recent years, many retailers adopted BNPL as a payment option that may be utilised for any transaction, no matter how little. BNPL allows a buyer to purchase something now and pay for it in instalments later. One of the main reasons for BNPL emerging as a payment method is due to its availability as an online payment option. It is anticipated to be one of the fastest-growing and most significant payment trends of 2022.

## B2B PAYMENTS

As a result of the move to a more remote workforce during the pandemic, global B2B Payments were 121.5 billion in 2020. Businesses discovered that their workers need to handle their accounts receivable and payment duties outside of a physical office. B2B payments, such as accounts payable, accounts receivable, cost reimbursement, and employee-initiated expenditure, were digitised. According to Capgemini's projections, global B2B non-cash transactions would reach above 200 billion by 2025.



## CONTACTLESS PAYMENTS

Contactless Payments allows customers to pay with their smartphones by waving or tapping them. As a result, tap and go QR codes and contactless cards have become more popular than before and an increase in the use of NFC (near-field communication) & EMV (Europay, MasterCard, and Visa) have been anticipated. According to Visa, contactless payments account for 75% of in-store transactions in Europe. Furthermore, according to Mastercard, it increased by 100% in March 2020 compared to the previous year in the UAE.

As per the World Payments Report by Capgemini, 41% tried contactless cards, 35% added a card to a digital wallet and 27% experimented with QR code payments globally. Thanks to developing trends such as BNPL, B2B Payments, Cryptocurrency, and Contactless Payments, which became a crucial part with the advent of pandemic and made it easy in keeping people connected and businesses running. It is needless to say that the future will evolve only when various organisations come together to create a holistic digital payment and banking experience for all. Therefore, it is important to build an inclusive ecosystem where banks work in collaboration with fintechs and non-banking institutions as well as bring more stakeholders, and firms, and so on under its ambit.

# DERIVATIVES:

## The Dark Horse of the Finance World



As we become cognizant of the virtues of the financial market by investing and trading in stocks, we should halt and try to disambiguate some of the other instruments used by people to earn profit or even reduce risk. While all of us are aware of stocks and bonds, what we often overlook are derivatives, which are financial contracts that have no intrinsic value, but derive their value from an underlying asset or benchmark. Futures and options are some of the most ubiquitous financial instruments, but their definitions elude us. They are some of the most salient financial instruments apart from equity that people use to grow their wealth. Forwards and swaps also fall under the pantheon of derivatives, but are often overlooked.

Let us understand the four different kinds of derivatives as stated above:

**Futures:** Futures are contracts in which two parties are obligated to trade an asset at a predetermined price, on a specific date. They are highly liquid and hence, are used for hedging as well as speculating. Since the futures are often for very high quantities of an asset (1 lot =100 shares) and people do not want to invest such high amounts for a long period of time, the way futures contracts are settled is by the owner of the contract either paying or receiving the difference between the strike-price of the future and the current market value of the asset, this is known as squaring off. The strike-price is a predetermined price at which the holder of an underlying security can buy or sell it when the derivative contract is exercised. If the owner retains the contract till expiry, he will either have to pay for the shares or give shares in exchange of payment as per his position.

Futures can be purchased for various assets such as a single stock, an index, oil, gold, etc. For example, Mr. X purchases a futures contract to buy 10,000 shares(100 lots) of Reliance at 2500 rupees on 1st April. If on that day the share price is Rs. 2600, X gets Rs. 10,00,000 in his account, but if the price falls to Rs. 2450, he pays Rs. 5,00,000. Futures are very useful if one is certain of a particular asset increasing in value since one can make huge profits with very little investment.

**Forwards:** Forwards are contracts between two parties to trade an asset at a specified price at a specified point of time. They are generally used to hedge and not to speculate since they lack liquidity. They are not traded on the exchange but are drawn up according to the specifications of both parties; thus, they are called over-the-counter (OTC) contracts and carry a greater counterparty risk since they are not regulated by the market. It is an instrument used by most businesses on a daily basis to have a standardised acknowledgement towards a future deal.

An example of a forward contract is; X, a farmer agrees to sell 1000kg of wheat to Y, a baker at Rs. 20 per kg on 01.04.22, X has a guaranteed price for 1000kg of wheat and Y is guaranteed his supply at a specific price. Largely, the FMCG businesses are very well versed with this type of derivative. As illustrated through the example, it is evident that forwards mostly help to endorse agreements involving bulk requirements and huge costs, underlining a future date for the trade.

**Options:** Options are instruments that, unlike futures, provide the holder the 'option' to buy (call) or sell (put) assets at a specific price, either on a specific date (European options) or at any point of time (American options), as long as the contract exists, indicating no actual ownership, they are mere offers to investors until an agreement is signed. As a result, they involve high risks but also support opportunities to profit while trading.

Let's take an example, Mr. X buys a call option for SBI shares at a strike price of Rs. 550, expiring on 31st March, 2022. If, on that date, the share price of SBI is above Rs. 550, X might decide to exercise his option and complete his purchase, else, his option will expire. Options have gotten a bad rap for being extremely volatile and risky but interestingly, large investment houses often purchase put options to ensure that they can sell their assets at a decent price if the price of the asset falls drastically.

**Swaps:** Swaps are contracts in which two parties exchange the liabilities or cash flows of different agreements. More often than not, a variable cash flow/interest payment is exchanged for a fixed payment. There are various types of swaps such as currency swaps, commodity swaps, interest rate swaps, etc. An important part of a swap agreement is the 'notional principal amount', based on which the interest payments are made. Neither of the parties remit this amount, instead, the interest is paid by each according to the contract. Swaps require a premium payment as protection against possible default and, like forwards, are used to hedge risk as OTC instruments. Besides serving as a route to new financial markets, they also help exercise borrowing at lower costs and generate additional income.

For example, in an interest rate swap; X, a businessman with a variable interest loan from a bank, currently at 7% approaches Y Ltd., a financial institution and 'swaps' his variable interest rate for a fixed rate of 8%. He will pay the company 8% and the company will pay his interest to the bank; if the bank raises the rate by more than 1%, X benefits, else Y Ltd. benefits.

To recapitulate, derivatives are of various kinds, each possessing unique and advantageous qualities; forwards and swaps are generally used to hedge whereas futures and options serve the purpose of speculative investments as well. Imbibing this information will surely give all of us opportunities to contrive profitable situations for us. As we delve headfirst into the business world, we are bound to experience a paradigm shift from the physical to the digital realm; in such a scenario, having the knowledge of what derivatives are can greatly help one 'leverage' their skills in a hyper-competitive world.



## THE EVIL TWINS?

We have all experienced our moments of low productivity and high productivity. Procrastination has to do with the former when we experience a dearth of self-control and motivation. It is when we are doing something even though we know we are supposed to do something else which is more productive and goal-oriented. It can be defined as the avoidance of performing a task whilst knowing its negative consequences due to a temporary lapse of self-motivation.

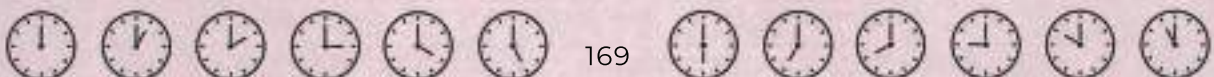
Procrastination is a challenge faced by everyone at some point in their life irrespective of their age or profession. Humans struggle a lot with delays and avoidance! Many students and working professionals avoid doing their tasks, to do something more enjoyable as a result of which delays occur. Why do we do this, why do humans procrastinate? Let us understand the psychology of procrastination!

Let's look at a phenomenon of behavioral psychology called "Time Inconsistency". It is a theory that refers to the affinity of the human brain towards immediate rewards as compared to future rewards. Further in this study, researchers say that if we imagine ourselves as two selves - Future Self and Present Self, the former can set goals and make plans envisioning what life one wants to lead in the future, however only the latter, that is, the Present Self has the onus of implementation or performing the required actions. Whilst doing those actions, the Present Self gets distracted by the needs and wants of itself and tends to value instant gratification and instant pay off more than any future goal.

There are some people in this world who seem to strive for perfection at all times. A perfectionist is someone who has exceptionally high standards and feels that no mistakes are acceptable and that everything must be immaculate. As a result, anything less than perfect is completely unacceptable to them. Perfectionism is fueled by a fear of making mistakes. One of the motivations for perfectionism is a fear of rejection. It indicates that if you let others see your shortcomings, you are afraid of being rejected, therefore you want to hide from criticism, rejection, and disapproval.

Perfectionists believe that if their projects are not completed flawlessly, they are worthless. If a student receives a B instead of an A, they may believe they have failed completely. They live by a set of norms and regulations that they must follow in order to have a happy existence. They lose sight of what they desire because they focus too much on what they need to do. When perfectionists watch others succeed, they believe they can do so with minimal work and worry and keep viewing their own efforts as unending and insubstantial.

You probably shrugged it off if you have ever been dubbed a perfectionist. It is like a compliment in a way. Perfectionism, however, has a negative side. It is one that is frequently missed. There is a strong link between anxiety and perfectionism and procrastination is a common manifestation of anxiety. Procrastination can prevent us from finishing projects on time, or worse, cause us to skip the activity completely. Setting high standards is admirable, but perfectionism can make the tasks at hand appear impossibly difficult. When your objective is perfection, it is easy to become immobilized by the enormity of the task at hand. This is when we begin to work on other chores, perhaps more fun ones that are less taxing. The issue is that perfectionism is a preconceived notion. The definition of perfection may differ from person to person. Perfectionism is problematic because it ignores contextual considerations such as what else is going on in your life. In the real world, "perfect" may be impossible to achieve. Faced with these facts, we may decide to ignore a project altogether or delay it until the last minute, causing greater stress when we have to pull an "all-nighter" to finish it. Perfectionists are masters of procrastination without even realizing it. They may be given a task and then daydream about how flawlessly they would accomplish it. They have therefore set such a high bar for themselves that attempting to complete this activity becomes so daunting that they prefer to complete other, less important, banal things instead. The deadline approaches, and the time constraint provides the ideal excuse to avoid achieving that unachievable perfection. Unfortunately, the entire cycle can result in a great deal of anxiety and tension.



# WARREN VIEGAS & SILVERIO SOUZA

## CEO and COO, LVC Comedy

Interviewed by: Editorial Committee | Mode: Online

### 1. In a short span of time, LVC has become one of the most reputed agencies in the comedy business today. How would you elaborate upon the key to your success?

Warren: The key would be to erase any mental blocks that one would have & dare to explore various opportunities & never giving up whenever you come across a setback. Find what you love to do, work hard at it, perfect it to a position wherein you can dominate that field. It takes a lot of effort & time, having that goal in mind helps achieve the impossible. We pride ourselves on cultivating relationships across the business spectrum; leveraging premium brands, subscription platforms, and efficient producers all over the globe. Growing from 2-3 employees to a network of over 120 producers worldwide, relationships across multiple business verticals, and a turnover of 10 crores yearly. We have won numerous awards & received critical acclaim from our peers, including features in Business Insider and Forbes.

### 2. Having leveraged a background in IT to facilitate numerous innovative growth and marketing strategies, how did you (Mr. Souza) manage to be an integral player in the influencer marketing space in India as well?

Silverio: As LVC's popularity grew, Warren decided to foray into marketing, as well. LVC Advertising is a revolutionary new age marketing company dedicated to fulfilling all a brand's every marketing need. "The social media following of our artists is in the hundreds of millions. So, we've actually had some pretty big brands piggyback off some of our events. These include Cadbury Five Star, Tinder, TATA Nexon, among others. Basically, any brand who is trying to reach the same audience as ours, that is, the demographic of ages between 18 to 30." LVC offers tailored and innovative advertising packages to help brands grow their business, partnering with the best social media influencers in the country to make sure that a business gets the eyeballs and footfalls that they've been craving. The brand space works across multiple platforms. With many new brands coming up, the list of brands is endless. Every brand wants to reach out to their target audience which helps them grow & develop a market niche for themselves. Identifying the various marketing platforms, strategies, understanding customer pain points, helped me develop a deeper understanding of the influencer marketing segment. We help develop the best scripts in conjunction with the ideas of the influencer & the brand, find the best value proposition & be able to deliver. Our artists have worked on multiple collaborations in the past that have provided great ROI for brands. They've enjoyed the conversion rates so much that we've had brands partner with us on multiple occasions. Branding as a space is not only selective to online platforms, they can also be leveraged in terms of live shows where in they partner with us & we help them reach a wider audience with the right demographic. One of the key things in the influencer marketing space is the high engagement rate, ticket sales & reliable content that keeps audiences glued which helps promote brands.

### 3. The comic scene in India really started picking up pace after AIB launched in 2012. 10 years on, how do you think the entire demographic around comedy has evolved?

Warren: The vast majority of stand-up comedians' career grew due to AIB, due to how popular it was & how things were based around it. To the best of my knowledge, it has been seen well over a 100 million times. Since then, many comedians performed at the Carvas Laugh Club & started selling tickets really well. More people started watching their work on YouTube. Post which, a lot of great stand-up went viral after that, once people had a better idea of what Comedy is all about. People like Abhishek Upmanyu going super viral, then Anubhav Singh Bassi. I think 10 years on, the biggest thing, is that comedy just got faster, denser, the standard of good comedy was raised. The bar was raised higher. The tastes of comedy were refined. It's a lot more competitive now. It takes a lot to get to a comedy show especially after people work their time off a lot at offices & stuff. To be worth their time & money, the stand-up material has to be of top standard & to be viral as well.

### 4. LVC offers content creators a platform to showcase their immense talents. When did the idea of creating a talent agency first strike your mind?

Warren: In an alternate universe, I would probably be an accountant buried in paperwork and executing audits, but in this universe, I am a stand-up comedian running a successful comedy production outfit that has over the past one year organised shows with the best in the funny business. Born in Mumbai, I moved with his family to Goa in 2004. Growing up, I would watch any comedy that I could lay my hands on. I never planned to do it as a job. Comedy was always something I enjoyed. I used to be obsessed with Chandler's character in the sitcom Friends. I remember I would memorize his lines and repeat them, much to the chagrin of my mother. She would say, 'Life's not a joke, Warren. It's not going to pay you.' Well, proved her wrong, didn't it? Inspired by many great comedians, from Charlie Chaplin to Sacha Baron Cohen, Louis C.K., and John Oliver, Russell Peters was my main inspiration and first introduction to stand-up comedy. I was about 15-16 when I first watched Russel Peters' special Outsourced. It was crazy - I was like, wow, you can insult people, and they will pay you? Of course, stand-up comedy is so much more than just that. There's a reason the growth of 'stand up' comedy in the entertainment landscape of the world has been exponential. Stand-up is an art form. It's a platform for free speech and expression. Comedy is one of the most effective forms of expression that pushes the envelope of what is socially acceptable. Moving back to India, I realized that the comedy-circuit was gradually picking up, however it wasn't as evolved as it was in the west. When I left India to go to college in 2010 there was no live comedy industry in India. In America, I performed stand-up at many places, did a lot of open mics & also was involved in a couple of comedy writing projects. The thought of doing stand-up as a career was laughable. Today, India is still a very small scene compared to America. There are more comedians who lived in my building alone than there are in India. But it's definitely picking up. With the Indian comedy scene rapidly advancing in the metros, I decided it was high time to introduce comedy content that was intelligent, quirky, and culturally relevant to Goa as well. That's when I came up with the idea of starting a comedy club here. On a whim, I decided to call it Las Vegas Comedy Club, an albeit stupid pun on my last name. LVC came into being early 2016, as a comedy production outfit dedicated to promoting stand-up comedy in the state. LVC had its first show on February 10, 2017, featuring the ever popular Kenny Sebastian as their it's first artist. There was some apprehension over whether the show was going to be a success or no. We had no idea how to gauge how receptive Goans would be to stand-up. My mom was worried nobody would come, and ended up inviting a number of her friends just in case, haha. The tickets for the event sold out in two days. In fact, we ended up turning away 400 people. I felt that I was more suited towards the business side of comedy rather than the show biz side of performing comedy, hence when the opportunity presented itself, it felt like a no brainer & decided to jump right into it of starting a comedy company. We had the privilege to work with multiple different comedians & Abhishek Upmanyu was our first signed exclusive client.

### 5. People in India have started adopting abstract careers more and more with each passing generation. What do you think lies ahead in the entertainment space of the country?

Warren: In my personal case, I had gone to the United States to study medicine. I was pre-med for a couple of weeks until I realized that I faint at the sight of blood. Having an Indian Dad, made me feel that I should take up medicine as a career. That's the common thing that most Indians pursue, law, engineering, doctors. Now with the internet picking up pace, there are more lucrative careers than what used to exist ten years ago. If I had to share how much money the stand-up comedian makes, then every doctor would feel like quitting their line of work in the day & pursue the other line of medicine which is laughter. Jokes aside, there are more career avenues now than in the past. People make more revenues starting off their own business rather than following the main stream careers.

In the entertainment space alone, there's a lot more opportunity now than what used to exist 20 years ago. The scene is constantly evolving. The growth curve for comedy is on the rise. In fact, considering that major part of the population can name at least a couple of stand-up comedians, there's still a huge scope for the comedy space to grow, not just in the stand-up



**5. People in India have started adopting abstract careers more and more with each passing generation. What do you think lies ahead in the entertainment space of the country?**

Warren: In my personal case, I had gone to the United States to study medicine. I was pre-med for a couple of weeks until I realized that I faint at the sight of blood. Having an Indian Dad, made me feel that I should take up medicine as a career. That's the common thing that most Indians pursue, law, engineering, doctors. Now with the internet picking up pace, there are more lucrative careers than what used to exist ten years ago. If I had to share how much money the stand-up comedian makes, then every doctor would feel like quitting their line of work in the day & pursue the other line of medicine which is laughter. Jokes aside, there are more career avenues now than in the past. People make more revenues starting off their own business rather than following the main stream careers. In the entertainment space alone, there's a lot more opportunity now than what used to exist 20 years ago. The scene is constantly evolving. The growth curve for comedy is on the rise. In fact, considering that major part of the population can name at least a couple of stand-up comedians, there's still a huge scope for the comedy space to grow, not just in the stand-up performances scene, but also in terms of Specials, Writing projects, ad space & so on. There's a lot of room for growth.

**6. There is always a healthy relationship between all the comedians irrespective of the strong competition among them. What do you think keeps the whole squad together with happy faces?**

Warren: Hahaha if only you knew how fierce the competition is. Just kidding. Comedy is a very close knit circle. It's the fun element that keeps us together always. It's a very healthy competition that the artists have. While there is an unsavory side to the business which is also present in all businesses, there is definitely a lot of camaraderie because a lot of these artists started together, went to open mics together, started collectives together. I wouldn't say it's the case with everybody but many of them are super close friends & still collaborate with each other on multiple capacities. There may be people who hate each other hahaha, but not that I am aware of. The whole scene of comedy is still relatively new & is actually more like a WhatsApp group considering how close everyone is. Many comedians work together on multiple projects which enhance the final product. AIB being a prime example. Another example is Comicstaan, Comedy Premier League & so on. Having to collaborate & work on ideas together, helps build stronger human connections. They are constantly inspired by each other. The competition may not be obvious but it always helps them push to connect with their fans & build their audience numbers. When they are together, they always end up learning new things, discussing new projects & so on. It is a very healthy relationship that everyone maintains in this industry with mutual respect & their love for the comedy genre.

**7. A career in stand-up comedy is considered as one of the most uncertain and unconventional careers out there. What do you think it takes for a comedian to be on the path of consistent success in this career path? The two of you joined comedy giving up on your pursued lines of education, what made you take this big step?**

Warren: That's totally true. Stand-up is a relatively new industry. I come from the philosophy of Peter Thiel. There's an amazing book which I would suggest everyone who is starting off their careers to read, called "Zero to One". Everyone today is like, we should go do that 'coz everyone is successful in that field. You have to understand that that could be a very saturated path. With everyone going in that same direction, there could be a 100 smart people trying out the same thing which increases the competition factor. The road less taken could have a ton of opportunities that await us. We do not know much about those as not many have treaded that path. That developed the entrepreneurial mindset. I want to go do the next cool thing rather than doing something that's already done & copy that. Also, I happen to be a huge comedy fan. I've loved watching it since I was a ten year old, like watching sitcoms (Chandler being my favorite from "Friends"). If you love something, you try doing it, work hard at it, it's a lot easier to excel at that to doing it for work. In terms of the conventional work path thing, I use everything that my original education got me. Like, I've studied Finance, which is very useful when you are running a business. Then other business topics such as how marketing works, how taxes work, has been extremely helpful in my current line of work. So all of that comes into play. I don't think that there's anything that my educational background didn't help in any specific manner. Everything was important & played a crucial role at some point.

**8. What do you think has been the motive of LVC while building a brand in the industry in such a short time? What are the factors or actions you think made LVC successful?**

Warren: Being in an industry that's selling laughter and good times or some form of connection with people - it's amazing. In terms of a philosophy, this may not work for everybody - but I think, the key is to find something that you really love, and make it your career. You can do a lot of things just for money, but if you are doing something that you would still really enjoy doing for free, you are likely to really invest your time and effort into it, and it wouldn't feel like work. Getting paid is just an added bonus. Looking ahead, our plans for LVC include stepping away from the production aspect and leaving the gamut of operations to his team of energetic young professionals. We have twenty team members in each city, so I think it's time for me to let the ship sail on its own now. With my sights firmly on further advancing the comedy revolution in the country, I definitely have some exciting plans for the future. Hard work, dedication, motivation & a never-give-up attitude have definitely helped us push ourselves to where we are today. That coupled with a huge element of risk, having to make the right decisions with the right people at the right time have played a huge influence on our success.

**9. What does the working atmosphere feel like when working with some of the funniest people in the country?**

Warren: Rule number one, don't try to pitch jokes to comedians 'coz they'll remind you of how bad you are at cracking jokes. Hahaha. Jokes aside, we're around funny & creative people all the time. It's really cool & exciting. It's more fun than of course if you are working at an accountancy firm. I'm not saying accountants are not funny, but having a funny person around can lighten up everything. We try to be funny at all times (haha). Working around a talented bunch of people

always requires us to be interesting. We work around the clock to deliver to brands, audiences & of course our comedians. There's a lot of ideas constantly floating around. We work around every aspect of an idea & see how best we can implement those. Overall, the work environment is fun & in an industry that is constantly evolving, it's great to see content being written out, edited, performed & released. There's a certain sense of accomplishment once every project is delivered. On all projects, it's not just about delivering the best, it is also about maintaining relationships that go a long way in culminating various ideas.

**10. You provide a platform to various content creators to showcase and nurture their talent. However, do you feel that our country needs more institutions like comedy schools in order to help people train and educate themselves better in this form of art?**

Warren: Yes absolutely. As I mentioned previously, the comedy space is relatively new. Despite the fact that there are some stars who play big arenas & stuff, it is still new in the country. Realizing how to do it as a career from going to open mics to one day playing at arenas, there's not a defined system or guidance that makes it easier for the newer people. Whereas in the US, there are groups like the UCB theatre that are comedy improv schools that help develop talent. I definitely think there's a huge opportunity for comedy schools to help train & educate people. India should have that sometime soon.



**11. In order to gain customer attention, content is key, but with today's rapidly changing customer tastes, how do you all cope with this change? Is it difficult for you to keep your customers engaged?**

Warren: Of course, we are working with some of the most creative & talented people across the country. They are always ahead of the curve & to keep up with culture they are trying to create it. That's really cool to be a part of & it's awesome to see stuff materialize.

**12. What is your message for the students of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata**

Warren: Find something that excites you, keeps you motivated. Give in your 100% at what you love doing. You'll never work a day in your life if you do what you love doing. Do some homework to see what pays you the best at what you love doing. Look out for if it has a market, then go for it. You're far more likely to be more successful when you are doing the things you enjoy doing rather than doing a job you don't like even though someone else likes doing that as you'll end up competing with them. Find the balance in what there a market is for & what you like doing & my advice would be to take risk 'coz the reward will be worth it. Erase any mental blocks that come your way & always look at each hurdle as a step closer to success.

# BATCH OF 2022



# BATCH OF 2022



# To The Batch of 2022

A backpack on my shoulders and a head full of dreams,  
I entered the building painted yellow and green,  
A room full of strangers with awkward ice on bend,  
I sat in class, already waiting for it to end.

Little did I know a simple 'hi' would spark a friendship,  
From strangers to friends it indeed was a quick flip,  
Birdwatching crushes from the lobby,  
Turned into our favorite breaktime hobby.

A toast in hand and a dost beside,  
Was the mantra of our survival guide,  
Though they brewed coffee in cafeteria,  
Green benches remained much more steamy,  
Oh dear, having a plain jane day was so dreamy.

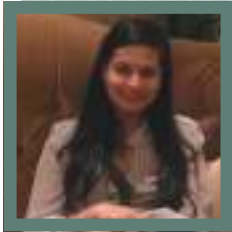
Society's rush and events on the board,  
Xavier's always had a lot stored,  
From Agarwal's ki Maggi to ATS ki chai,  
The reason why I bid my diet goodbye.

"I'll be productive" was a lie from the start,  
But let's be honest,  
It was probably our friend who was acting too smart,  
I am a Xavierian bro, don't talk about struggle,  
Bunking classes weren't a thing too subtle.

We hated the dress code, not gonna lie,  
Or those boring lectures that would make us sigh,  
But good company and poor jokes are what got me high,  
Wish we could go back, to bring back those days for which  
we're willing to die.

The rush of pandemic, rested our college life in doom  
Notes turned to pdf, and classes to Zoom;  
Nevertheless, the last semester opened the doors again,  
A hug so big, I felt from the campus again,  
From the walls that hold,  
All the stories, All the losses, and all our glories.

# BATCH OF 2022



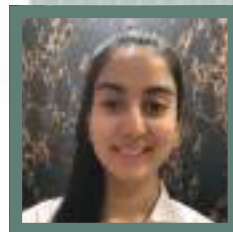
**DIVYA SHAH**

Taking away growth, good friends and memories of a lifetime.



**HARSHPREET KAUR**

I don't have anything valuable to offer. Can I interest you in a sarcastic comment?



**PRACHI SHARMA**

Trees are red, skies are blue  
Three years passed by and I have  
no clue.



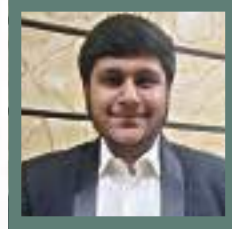
**CHITRA KEJRIWAL**

Thanks to Covid, I am still wondering what my college life would be like.



**RISHABH JHANWAR**

Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind.



**YASH BAJAJ**

Sent this quote just a minute before the deadline, just like my assignments.



**NISHTHA PURI**

Why Xavier's from Delhi?, a great bunch of friends, an IITC family, a startup, and acquaintance with the mafia sense of business later, it was all worth it!



**VANSHIKA AGARWAL**

It's the possibility of having a dream come true that makes life interesting.



**ARYAN RONNY**

Sometimes You Must Hurt In Order To Know, Fall In Order To Grow, Lose In Order To Gain, Because Life's Greatest Lessons Are.



**VAIBHAV KARIWALA**

All I know is that I knew nothing.



**ROHIT DHAR**

When you're low in confidence, do silly things which cheer you up.



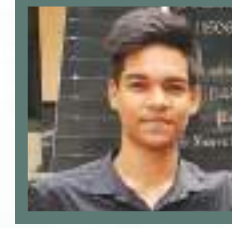
**VANSH RATHOD**

There is no difference between Online education and offline education.



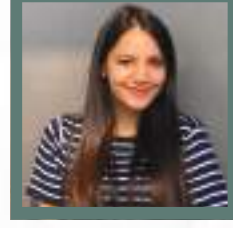
**RAGHAV NANGIA**

Wasted 3 seconds of your life like I wasted 3 years of mine.



**ADITYA DAS SARKAR**

I used to be a fool, now I'm an educated fool with money on my mind.



**AVISHI GOENKA**

Enjoy the little things for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.



**ANSHUL MAHAJAN**

Don't know what's worse, shanking it golf on the first hole or attending college online and I've had my fair share of both.

# BATCH OF 2022



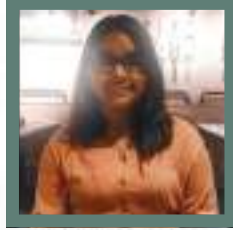
**MAHEK KHEMKA**

I can safely say that my notes helped half the class of '22 become the class of '23, haha!



**VIDHI SRIMAL**

And now the ACTUAL hard work starts.



**RADHEY SUREKA**

I graduated already! That was quick.



**ASHWINI BOTHRA**

The best is yet to come.



**MAHEK AGARWAL**

Thank you, next.



**ARNAB PATI**

When the last bell rings, I might actually miss this place.



**KRISH MUKIM**

I always wondered what my college life would be like..... thanks to covid I am still wondering that.



**DEVIKA AGARWAL**

I Don't Know, You Can't Just Put Some Quote in For Me.



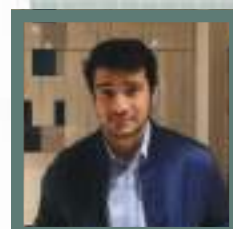
**SHISHIR MUNDHRA**

I recd more requests from people than a DJ at a party. Just plaining to decline my number as enquiry helpline.



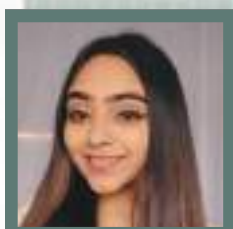
**SUMAN SAHU**

The past is always better, the future perfect.



**MANAN AGARWAL**

I want to believe in the multiverse theory, atleast then somewhere in an alternate timeline I'd have a normal college life and normal breathing capabilities.



**MANYA AHALANI**

I am wearing a Manyo Ahalani!



**HRIDAY NAHATA**

Bestie - Which College are you from?  
Me - Online College!



**SHRADHA KUCHERIA**

Not so introvert, it's just that you aren't my type.



**BONEY BERA**

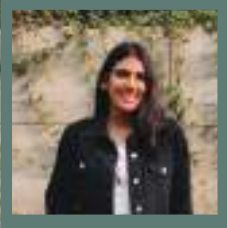
Lockdown taught me more than college! :)



**NIRANJANA DUTTA**

I am confident to say that our college is a source of inspiration.

# BATCH OF 2022



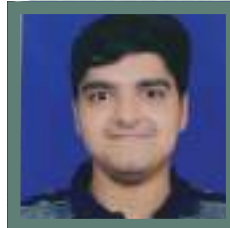
**KHUSHI KABRA**

Producing was easier than finding a quote for yearbook.



**ISHIKA BAID**

We all have the ability, the difference is how we use it.



**DEVESH SONI**

Stop being so fighting and letting things slide, people know what they are doing when to get shity.



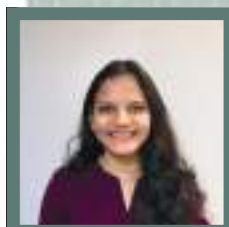
**ADITI JHUNJHUNWALA**

I have successfully (read Raghav's caption).



**SIMRAN JUNEJA**

And I knew exactly what to do, but in a much more real sense, I had no idea what to do.



**APOORVA KASHLIWAL**

Say hi and move on!



**RIYA GHOSH**

Nothing is difficult, I'm just not in a mood to do it now.



**NISHTHA AGARWAL**

How lazy I am to have something, that makes saying goodbye so hard.



**AMAAN AHMED**

These 3 years, I always wondered what my classmates look like.



**NILASHA BASU**

Hi that idiot, thanks for nothing!



**AMRIT SWARN**

If there is no struggle, there is no progress.



**ARITRO KUNDU**

When in doubt, ask a Kaverian.



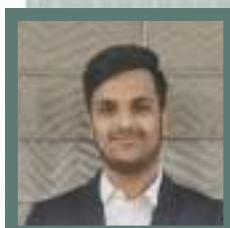
**HARSH BANKA**

We wish we could come back to these days.



**ISHA SANGHVI**

Life goes on and on and on and on!



**PRITHVI KHEMKA**

Can I stay another year :|



**RITWIKA DE**

"My feelings regenerate at twice the speed of a normal man's"  
- Dwight & Schultz

# BATCH OF 2022



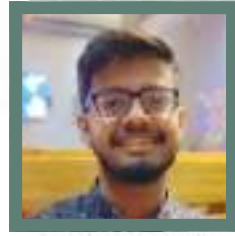
**YASH PARMAR**

"You make your own luck if you stay at it long enough." - Lionel Messi.



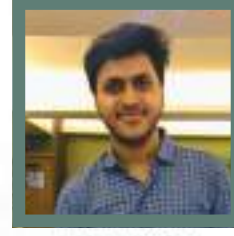
**ATASHI DASGUPTA**

For all the people who doubted me, you were right!



**MD AHAD SALMI**

Best place, worst timing.



**AMAN KEDIA**

"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising everytime we hit." - Nelson Mandela.



**MAHAK MITTAL**

Searching for quotes seemed like yet another assignment.



**YASHRAJ SINGH**

If I ever offended you in college, I meant it.



**SOURYA ROY**

Trying to do better!



**VIDUSHI KEJRIWAL**

College life = CORONA!



**MEGHA TANTIYA**

Forget Insta followers, I got drama following me everywhere.



**SANSHREET JAISWAL**

With great power comes great responsibility.



**SONALI JAIN**

Turn nerves into excitement!



**NIKUNJ PASARI**

3 years as promised, but thanks to Covid 6 months it was, but the long handful of friends promised for life.



**KRISHNENDU CHATTERJEE**

Our attitude towards life determines life's attitude towards us.



**VANSHIKA AGRAWAL**

It's time to say goodbye. But I think goodbyes are sad and I'd much rather say Hello, Hello to New adventures ahead.



**ANIRUDDHA DAS ROY**

Breakthrough moments are results of many previous actions, which create the potential to unleash a major change.



**AKASH KUMAR**

When no promises, they see. They see.

# BATCH OF 2022



**NAMAN SHARMA**

Whatever happens, happenist



**KARAN CHHABRIA**

Here's to always staying positive and testing negative.



**ABHIMANYU PATHAK**

As I graduate, I'd like to thank my strong internet connection for helping me get here. So, is anyone hiring...?



**PRIYANKA SHARMA**

"I don't need a piece of paper saying I succeeded, I just need hard" - Shane Dawson.



**ARYA KUMAR SHAW**

Just take a chill pill or even a gar-goppo will brock you.



**NIKET KUMAR**

Priyanka if you are reading this then please return my 500 rupees.



**CHAYANK AGARWAL**

We have our memories, now let's go make the future.



**LEENA ARORA**

Maybe the rest of our lives will be the best of our lives.



**AKSHAT SINGHANIA**

First try shouldn't be your last try.



**SIDDHARTH PRAKASH**

We all really want from YOLO to GOLO in 2022 Gen laugh aimlessly while showing this quote to my classmate granddits someday.



**NAMISH S. ABRAHIM**

I'm graduating with so many people and I don't remember even half of them



**HARSHIT BHALOTIA**

If u follow your dreams, You are capable of Anything.



**SONAL AGARWAL**

3 years just to add a line to my CV.



**SHREYANS DUGAR**

The only thing that should make leaving college bearable is the hope against hope that you are taking the best part of it with you.



**NAMAN GUPTA**

Time will tell its worth.



**SAMARTHAK KANUNGO**

You can't move forward without saying goodbye to the past.

# BATCH OF 2022



**VIDUSHI NAHATA**  
Every moment led to this one.



**HUZAIFAH BIN JAMIL AHMED**  
"Can I please stay another year?"  
- said no one ever.



**RITTIK SAMANTA**  
Don't be afraid to give up the good to go for the great.



**TURJA BISWAS**  
"It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so." - Mark Twain.



**KEWAL DOSHI**  
Guilty as charged.



**PRERNA KHAITAN**  
What consumes your mind, controls your life.



**STUTI PATNI**  
"I wish there was a way to know you're in the good old days before you've actually left them."  
- The Office.



**YUKTA MODI**  
You can't move forward without saying goodbye to the past.



**VISHAKHA KEJRIWAL**  
Zindagi hi yehi nest hai, peeth peechhe Magarba...saamne sab gwall hai !!



**AASHIKA PODDAR**  
Getting through college almost cost me my liver.



**KANISHK AGARWAL**  
While building a great body, a significant portfolio, and an exceptional society, I learnt how to hide Victoria's secrets and how to live by them!



**ESHANI SINGHANIA**  
The only time someone took a mugshot after serving their sentence.



**SUVEKSHA TAMANG**  
Purpose is what creates true happiness.



**NILESH PATAWARI**  
Wouldn't be in this year's yearbook if it wasn't for the online exams.



**MUSKAN AGARWAL**  
Don't stop thinking about tomorrow, it'll soon be here.



**RISHIROOP SAHA**  
TRUST THE PROCESS.

# BATCH OF 2022



**PULKIT SUREKA**

The chief value in going to college is that it's the only way to learn it really doesn't matter.



**ISHIKA SANGAI**

I don't know where I'm going, but I'm on my way.



**AAKRITI CHIRIMAR**

I left the meeting.



**ISHA AGARWAL**

They say the best things take time, that's why I'm always late!



**NAVYA BAHETY**

Shruti, is our quota ready?



**SHRUTI GOEL**

Isn't Tanvee doing that?



**TANVEE SINGHANIA**

I thought Navya already sent it!



**YASH SINGH**

Call me on XCSO because I will always go the extra mile.



**NAVNEET JAIN**

Chilled as much as I could for these 3 years.



**GAGAN KARNANI**

I wish I could say 'It's been an amazing ride.'



**RAHILA SAYEDA**

Try being a little silly and happy. Life is not a race. Slow down. You'll be fine.



**PARIDHI MIHARIA**

I can't express my thoughts in just twenty words, but I'd like to start with- We made it through.



**PIYUSH TAPARIA**

Count your blessings more often than you count your hardships.



**TUSHAR VARMA**

Stay hungry stay foolish.



**ISHIKA CHOPRA**

The only time you should look back, is to see how far you've come.



**MANSI KUMARI**

Arrived as a rookie, leaving as Health Ledger's Jester.

# BATCH OF 2022



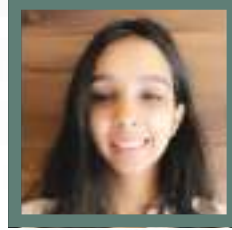
**RISHAV AGARWAL**

You can have it all, it's all about your reason.



**AKHIL ALEX MATHEW**

Just here to socialise...



**NANDINI JAIN**

"Ooo I please stay another year?" - said no one



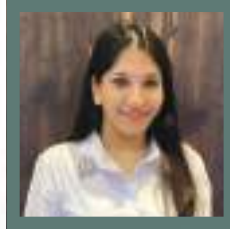
**ABHINANDAN SURANA**

All the gods, of the heavens, of the hells, are with you.



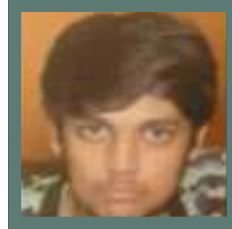
**AADITYA GIRIA**

Everything that should have been but was never ft. Covid & Online Classes!



**YUKTI LUNAWAT**

Sailed through three years of college in seven months.



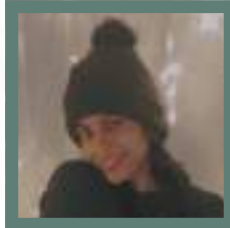
**SOURAJIT GHOSH**

Thanks for the memories!!



**ABANTIKA BANERJEE**

Arrived as a redhead, leaving as Heath Ledger's Joker.



**NANDINI SARAF**

Whenever life throws unimportant things at you to worry about just say "beh eye main naahu?" And move on - stay unbothered.



**HARSHIT ROY**

I'll never forget where I'm from. It's essential to remain humble and evolving.



**SIDDHARTH NARSARIA**

"Too interactive", says everyone except this yearbook!



**SHREYA RAIZADA**

Sent back on the first day of college for dress code violation. It's only up from there, I guess.



**SHREYA KERKETTA**

I checked on all my exams.



**MOHIT KUMAR**

Don't worry too much, just be yourself, it's gonna be all good in the end.



**SONAL KUMARI AGARWAL**

Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced.



**MD KASHIF**

I'm no Jay but I witnessed a mental holocaust here for 3 years.

# BATCH OF 2022



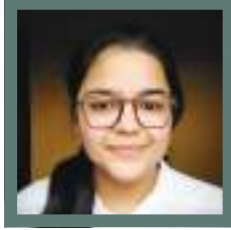
**ANIKET KHAITAN**

College was like slowry with extra steps.



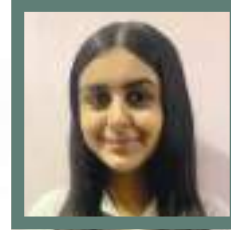
**KHAGESH JAIN**

Ww, Can't use online classes as an excuse anymore. SDC, You will be missed :)



**ADITI VERMA**

Here's to always staying positive and leaving negative :)



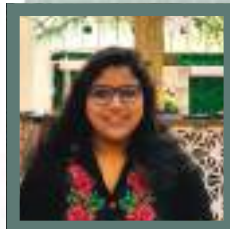
**MUSKAAN SAHAL**

Welcome to the real world. It sucks. You're gonna love it!



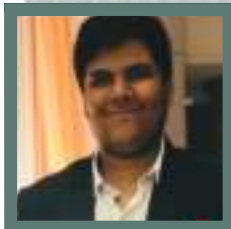
**SHOHOOD AKBAR RASHIDI**

"So here's how I take headshots. Look down, keep looking down, and then I look up. see!"  
- Joey Tribbiani



**ZAINAB G.M**

Proud of staying awake through all 4 semesters of virtual lectures.



**NISCHAL AGARWAL**

The difference between what you expected and actually happens can make you look at future in a very different way.



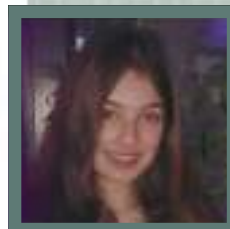
**SHREYANSH BHUWALKA**

Rising by lifting Others.



**PRIYAM DABRIWALA**

Your future is only as good as the work you put into it.



**NIYATI SINGH**

Can you extend the deadline? There was covid so I couldn't live my college life.



**AAYUSH GOKULKA**

It's gonna be legend... wait for it... DARY!



**MAYUKH SARDAR**

In the end, it will be alright.



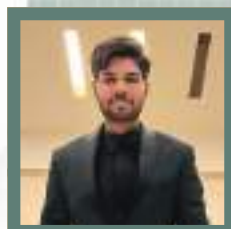
**MADHUKARI BANDYOPADHYAY**

The exciting thing about life is there is no core curriculum, the entire place is an elective.



**PARIDHI AGARWAL**

High school music is pretty unrealistic.



**SHREYANS CHOWDARY**

Graduated already? That was quick.



**SEJAL PADIA**

Lulu SLUJ 7:55.

# BATCH OF 2022



**GAURAV LATH**

Didn't attend a single class and still passed with 100% attendance from Xaviers.



**TANVI PUGALIA**

The first sem was fun! Can I please stay another year?



**PRATYUSH CHITLANGIA**

Without Google, I won't be graduating.



**PRATYUSH KEDIA**

Loyalty is a two-way street. If I'm asking it from you, then you're getting it from me.



**TARUN KUMAR DAKALIA**

I was looking forward to bid adieu with 'miss my hand' option. What a turnaround it has been!



**AANSHIK PANSARI**

I would like to express my gratitude to Ctrl C, Ctrl V and the network of KARAN.



**DIVYA SONI**

It's past the deadline and couldn't decide on anything so just, keep it real, keep yourself hydrated, okay bye.



**RITWIKA JAIN**

Nobody is going to remember or care what I wrote here by the end of this summer, including myself.



**AYUSHI PATWARI**

Master has given Ayushi a SMS diploma. Ayushi is free!



**SHIVANI KASHLIWAL**

Wu, I don't play basketball.



**KESHAV GUPTA**

People find soulmates in their college and I didn't even know my classmates.



**RISHABH SINGH**

"I understand nothing."  
- Michael Scott



**ADITI PANDEY**

After 3 years of college, I realised it was an expensive way to make 2 friends.



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