Ethical Concerns for the Global Technological Societies: Some Observations

Jyoti Verma

Some ethical concerns are addressed that seem to have been omitted as the technologically advanced global world goes about its regular business. The following issues have been touched on: 'Bypassing the conscious behavior choices and the dangers of compulsive use of digital technology,' 'the morally insensitive world of technology-backed marketing and advertisement,' 'some ethical matters for the digitally connected global village and globalization-influenced atmosphere,'' and 'the moral concerns of the economic growth of emerging economies in a technology-loaded world.' It occurs that the addressed topics have a pattern. For instance, compulsive indulgence and proclivity for addiction to technology get pronounced as mindful or conscious engagement with digital gadgets and the internet are progressively trivialized. Additionally, technology-savvy globalized societies have the tendency to subscribe to hedonistic leanings, giving significant importance to personal space and the freedom to decide one's lifestyle and time utilization. The danger dawns when technology becomes detrimental for behavior, interaction, relationships, and business, and the user starts experiencing the adverse impact of imprudent use of technology on his or her physical and psychological wellbeing and social world. Similarly, the matter becomes of concern when the commercial world decides to disregard the righteous goal of income generation (i.e., purusharth), conceptualized as inseparable from the concepts of dharma, or duty, and social responsibility. Lastly, when the values and normative standards of the technologically advanced affluent countries are adopted senselessly by the emerging economies rich in cultural wisdom and indigenous traditions, it is time for contemplation.

Key words: Ethical concerns, global technological societies, *Purusharth*, Internet addiction, Technology consumer

Technology has made life convenient and remains an enviable gift conceived and created by the human mind. However, considering that globally people are choosing to live in the company of digitally powered cell phones, computers, videogames, digital music players, and video cameras and are becoming hopelessly dependent on or addicted to them, the trend looks frightening. Therefore, it remains questionable whether new technologies are a guarantee to a new life and a promising future for global societies. Having said this, one would like to ask: Why so? A YouTube video entitled 'How to manifest what you really want,' presenting the well-known spiritual teacher Sadhguru,

has a clue. In this video, Sadhguru explains that when the four dimensions of our existence, namely, body, mind, emotions, and fundamental life energies, decide to work together in one direction, innovation, or for that matter, things that one wants, will manifest. He observes that innovation in technology seen in the course of the last hundred years was aimed at making human life convenient, but when we begin to use technology 'compulsively' instead of 'consciously,' technology becomes a threat to our very existence. As things stand, the global consumer has largely become a compulsive, repetitive, and mindless user of digital technology, while our mind, body, emotions, and life energies are not steering in the same direction necessary for making a conscious move towards a safe and functional relationship with technology.

Former professor of psychology, Patna University, Patna, Bihar, India.

Here the spotlight shifts to ethics because a mindfully chosen act is upright for others, is self-elevating, and is therefore ethical. Lately, there has been mention of the term 'social mindfulness,' which refers to manifestations of a broader awareness of people around you. This seemingly insignificant idea is fodder for the larger foundation of how societies are structured. We may now briefly touch upon ethics in Indian traditional thought.

Ethics in Indian Traditional Thought

In its spirit, Indian traditional thought believes in the path of righteousness, which is also the path to self-evolvement and the wellbeing of society. The Vedic ethical position holds that all good actions are a kind of yajna, or sacrifice, above pretty self-interest. Similarly, the 'ethics of activism' of the Bhagavad Gita notes that as no one can remain inactive even for a single moment, renunciation in actions, but not renunciation of actions, is the mode of ethics. The great Indian epics, *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat*, strongly emphasize the value-supported conclusive goals of life, or purusharth, to be attained by following one's dharma or duty. The concept of *purusharth* ratifies considering the well-being of all and spiritual salvation for the individual in the process of realizing the purusharths. Both epics exemplify how to create and practice ethical values and norms through the actions and intentions of their characters. In fact, all the major Asian religions, i.e., Jainism, Buddhism, and Islam, strongly support practicing morality in one's everyday life, including efforts made for gaining *arth* or material prosperity. Following are a few words on the concept of purusharth.

Purusharth

One of the significant concepts of Hindu traditional thought, purusharth, refers to the four-value-backed 'end goals' of human life. The term is derived from two Sanskrit roots: purusha, meaning human being, and *artha*, meaning purpose or objective. Accordingly, *purushartha* can be translated as the 'object of human pursuit' or 'purpose of human beings.' More specifically, the four end goals of human life are: *Dharma* (righteousness, i.e., moral values); *Artha* (prosperity, i.e., economic values); *Kama* (pleasure or love, i.e., psychological values); and *Moksha* (that is, liberation, or spiritual values). Notably, the ancient Indian texts also confer a spiritual objective on the purusharths, connecting the purpose of human life with seeking truth and attaining salvation. The concept would make sense

for business ventures that aim to pursue the goal of prosperity in an ethical manner. Having said this, we now proceed towards the proposed issues, and the first among them is as follows:

Bypassing the Conscious Behavior Choices and the Dangers of Compulsive Use of Digital Technology

There are a number of dangers associated with the compulsive use of digital technology, and out of them, the following two are noteworthy: (i) Addiction to technological gadgets and the internet; and (ii) Changes in personal characteristics and behavior of technology users Apparently, these cases not only express the dangers of mindless use of technology but also imply missing out on some moral guiding principles that help in making physically and psychologically rewarding behavior choices.

Inability to distinguish compulsive behavior from conscious behavior in relation to overuse of digital technology could be associated with loneliness, proclivity for succumbing to undue negative peer pressure, competition for excelling, possessing, and utilizing technology, inadequate work and family life balance, unsettling hedonistic leanings, inability to decide priorities, absence of sound guiding principles of life, and even wanting parenting upbringing ways. A number of these conditions have discernible ethical and moral undertones.

Addiction to technological gadgets and the internet

The digital platform fascinates and becomes indispensable because it can bring friends, music, videos, games, shopping facilities and abundance of information at a click besides offering enormous possibilities for entertainment. However, the excitement, enjoyment, convenience, and power to have control sourced in internet and digital technology, has strayed the global technological societies into danger zones too. Some people find it impossible to get away from this virtual world so much so, that for one minute of checking an email notification they may unnecessarily spend thirty minutes on the gadget. This is labelled as an 'addiction' by the doctors.

One of the hazards created by the virtual technology is known as the concept of 'fear of missing out' (referred to as FOMO). FOMO is an uneasy and sometimes all-consuming feeling that you're missing out an event or an opportunity that your other peers

have and know. A FOMO afflicted person fears that his/her peers are in possession of more or something better than what he/she has. Cutting across cultures for technology users, and considered to be a universal phenomenon, FOMO is identified as a significant problem for young users of technology and is linked to worsened mood states and overall lower life satisfaction (Baker et al., 2016).

Apparently, the problem did not originate with technology; but the increasingly tech-reliant cultures are likely to promote values that magnify the effects associated with FOMO. In case of FOMO, even futile ideas, messages or products acquire value. Consequently, it turns important for the FOMO addict to get updated, possess and experience certain things that may not be essential or of consequence to him/her but becomes unavoidable because they are part of his/her peer world. There is much material available on how marketers use social media to sell things to young people with FOMO issue. Undoubtably, the value of *vivek*(discretion) does not seem to be working for the FOMO addict.

On the other side, the technology consumers' irresistible attraction for sophisticated gadgets and innovations, has made technology developers and promoters turn a blind eye to the ethical buffers that could have acted against the harmful and addictive side effects associated with overuse of technology. Remaining in constant company of technology has done its bit in alienating people and heightening the demand for personal space to be shared preferably with one's gadget. Moreover, spending long hours with different sources of social media is making people physically and emotionally unavailable to each-others and remain distant from the nature. This general disconnection with others, weakens the possibility of undertaking socially responsible activities (individually or with team of close friends) and diminishes the possibility of having self-gratifying bonding. All such changes have implications for our social existence and philosophical concerns like, 'what are we doing', 'where are we heading' and 'who do we want to become.'

Basically, being led by the desire for excitement and deriving pleasure, the urban adolescents and youth in particular, are hugely smitten by the digital revolution. The overpowering influence of the command obeying technological gadgets is shaping the younger lots' interaction with others, cutting on their precious time, turning family and romantic relationships unappealing and work life less productive besides, making the users captive to the incessant pleasure-seeking behaviour. Similarly, nonsensical interaction with technology hampers business relationships, professionalism and business outcomes for young employees and big businesses aspirants.

As people are succumbing to the exciting world of technological gadgets, throwing values like *saiyam* and *vivek* (patience and wisdom), and falling prey to the bewitching technological innovations and products, the global technical societies are now compelled to realise the need for attending to the physical impact of using technology (possibly in partnership with medical and neurological sciences and physiology) because, the body and the brain both are significantly impacted by technology consumption.

Ironically, the treatment for the technology user's addictive behaviour is often digital too. The digital treatment for excessive users of social media and particularly the smart phone user's habitual behaviours like scrolling, swiping through messages, memes, and innumerable pointless videos, could be some 'digital de-toxing' App. These Apps come with different names (i.e., Moment, Flipd, Good Night Chrome, Anti-Social and Forest, etc.) and claim to help the affected users limit their screen time and spend time more productively. Such Apps are well publicised in Western countries. One of the main players of internet business, China has hundreds of internet detox centres that try to help 'web junkies' turn away from their screens. In fact, a film by the name 'Web junkie' focuses on the Chinese government's classification of internet addiction as a clinical disorder and focuses on the treatment used in Chinese rehabilitation centres. However, there isn't serious effort to establish and revive values and ethical principles that might help understand the root cause of the pathological behaviour, enable establishing healthy life style and finding better options for constructive utilization of time.

Similarly, people may become OTT or over-the-top (i.e., media service offered directly to viewers via the internet bypassing cable, broadcast, satellite television platforms) addicts and spend massive chunks of time viewing all kinds of easily available stuff. The world of OTT is creating its own value premise that permits relentless supremacy of individual's control on one's life, demand for interference free lifestyle and freedom to define sexuality that suits one. Very often

the OTT narratives ignore the morals helpful for initiating and maintaining gratifying relationships and offer stories that are primarily about doing gainful businesses, winning fierce competition, taking revenge and extreme expressions of sex, violence and brutality, etc. It seems dangerous that this virtual entertainment world doesn't necessarily acknowledge the sound foundational values of *satyam, shivam, sunderum* ('Truth-Godliness-Beauty') and hence, is capable of robbing finer humane values, creating tolerance for negative emotions and allowing nonchalance in attitude towards ugly and brutal things happening around or even enjoying them.

Changes in personal characteristics and behaviour of technology over users and the unaccounted ethical concerns

There is evidence to suggest that over use of technology can bring changes in personal characteristics and behaviour. It is disturbing to note that addiction to technology does not only affect mental health but is also capable of diminishing the users' finer emotions, aesthetic sense, soft skills and respect for relationships. It may be argued that this could have been contained to an extent if priorities were rightly placed on virtues of 'balance,' choosing the 'middle path' and remaining watchful of the over indulgent pleasure-seeking aspect of the mind. Clinical professor and a M.D., Aboujaoude (2017), recommends further investigation of the internet's potentially negative effect on personality and its extension on the society at large. More so, because it is a fundamental part of online psychology. Some of the personality traits nurtured by the internet are impulsivity, narcissism, and aggression (Aboujaoude&Starcevic, 2016).

Aboujaoud (2016) observes that impulsivity has been recognized as a risk factor for suicide across diagnoses. Moreover, rise in suicide rates has been linked to an internet effect that makes self-harm impulses irresistible via providing an 'encouraging' environment that weakens the offline deterrents that could have prevented the act of harming one self. It seems that the 'encouraging' environment in this case, allegedly wears off the philosophical and ethical principles and preventive offline forces that check and restraint the self-harming inclinations and moves. Ultimately, in the absence of life respecting, forward looking, wholesome life perspective, the compelling toxic self-harming forces are likely to take over. Things happen swiftly because social media gadgets hardly

object to the given commands or mind the user turning individualist or even narcissistic. Another example is that of compulsive online shopping. In this case, the addict derives motivation to purchase things on line for immediate gratification out of a relatively frivolous behaviour and the possibility to shop unobserved (Duroy, Gorse, &Lejoyeux, 2014; Kukar-Kinney, Ridgway, & Monroe, 2009).

Aboujaoude (2011) also has reasons to say that internet users can demonstrate more unwarranted aggression prominently noticeable in the expressions of anonymous blogging bulletin and chat room. Moreover, online interactions often ignore the standards of ethics and civility and are driven by base instinctual tendencies. Such predispositions are quite evident in online shaming and name-calling, cyber bullying, racist expressions and ideologically radical opinions that suggest disregard for values of equality, kindness, politeness and acceptance and respect for others, etc. On the other hand, social media is capable of instigating communal violence, and blood shedding is well known to terrorism ridden India. Results of a cross cultural study (Anderson, et al., 2010) suggests that exposure to gaming violence was a causal risk factor for offline aggression, aggressive thoughts and emotions, decreased empathy and pro-social behaviour. Apparently, violent online discourse may lead to a hostile and a less cohesive society where humanitarian values like peace and brotherhood are not vital.

At times, the relentless technology consumer is likely to develop unwarranted traits that are uncharacteristic of a wholesome personality. For instance, narcissism is a trait that is often featured as online behaviour. Apparently, a lonely, and perhaps non-self-accepting narcissist keeps eagerly looking for his/her daily doses of 'likes' and 'thumps up' without being interested in genuine sharing and learning from others. In this context, the term '*cultural criticism*' (Aboujaoude, 2011) also attracts attention. The term refers to concentrating on websites as vehicles for self-promotion and banking on social networks that imply popularity by the number of friends and followers, and emphasis on "I" in naming sites and internet-powered gadgets. Understandably, a narcissistic person is keen on self-promotion and hungry for self-praise. However, these are not the qualities that are in consonance with virtues of modesty, regards for others and altruism. In other words, internet can act as a magnet and a magnifier when it comes to narcissistic traits.

In sum, unscrupulous internet users feel deceptively immune to the possibility of being subtlety driven against the guards that protects their mental and physical wellbeing and yield to the enthralling charm of the new technologies. In fact, the global technological societies cannot ignore the elusive effects of the internet on personality or subscribe to the addiction modelimplying severe pathology. Moreover, at no cost, the global technological societies can afford to stop contemplating on the value based cultural shifts that are happening.

The Morally Insensitive World of Technology Backed World of Marketing and Advertisement

The next issue, namely, 'the morally insensitive world of technology backed world of marketing and advertisement,' is initiated by recalling that this field has learned much from the discipline of psychology because its concerns are, what attracts people and what is the average span of their attention, how to capture and hold people's attention and whether Indians are receptive to an emotional or a rational argument made in favour of a product, etc. On the other hand, the expert creative heads of the technology driven world of marketing and advertisement do their best to exploit people's sentimental values and cultural preferences along with their globalization inspired standards and choices. The major objective of the commercial world of advertisement and marketing is to promote and sell products (i.e., cars, mobiles, grocery, cosmetics, clothes, and countless varieties of consumer items) and Apps (i.e., educational Apps, home service Apps, property sell and purchase related Apps and more), by using sophisticated communication processing digital gadgets.

Often, this world appears to be morally insensitive as it endorses and sells exorbitantly priced products, unrealistic images, acts of meaningless heroism and keep triggering unwarranted desires and stealthily demeaning the values of austerity and minimal living. The commercial ventures try to reach people's hearts and minds astutely and heighten the tendency of social comparison, encourage arbitrary purchasing behaviour and maximization driven lifestyle. In fact, they can often create a general dissatisfaction with what one has. These are fundamentally moral issues and business ethic related concerns that are either not addressed sincerely or are ignored. In other words, the contemporary commercial world of technology may not subscribe to 'social consciousness' while

developing, promoting and selling appliances and services to their clients.

In general, one gets the impression that the profession of marketing and advertisement is primarily concerned with profit making. However, if one refers to the traditional world view, the core of income or 'arth' generating *purushartha*is grounded in moral principles that believe in remaining socially responsible and inoffensive towards the consumer. Therefore, trade and profession are not solely an income generating occupation or act of eulogising and vending products not in consonance with a society's values and needs or the consumer's physical and psychological wellbeing. In this context, the editorial note of The Times of India, Patna Daily (Thursday, September, 9, 2021), entitled, 'Being nice pays' is relevant. The note goes that, "before Adam Smith came up with The Wealth of Nations that provided insights into the role ofself interest in market economy, he wrote The Theory of Moral Sentiments, which dwell on human sympathy" (p.6).

Ironically in a country where many people keep struggling for meeting their basic needs, coming across technology aided attractive promotional and marketing ventures for luxury products like diamonds, cars, and fashionable accessories for exclusive consumer groups seems morally wanting too. Heavily paid and expensively draped models advertise the luxurious commodities, that create desire for them in the minds of an average person. Often the people behind such businesses have a lifestyle and business trajectory which is not in line with the principles of righteous business. There is a Netflix documentary namely, 'Bad Boy Billionaires: India,' which presents true stories of well-known big Indian business men who wandered far away from the premise where ethical concerns and moneymaking ventures are not separated and ultimately land themselves into hugely calamitous situation. Similarly, glitzy promotional strategies of the global companies often over shadow the country manufactured goods and lessen their chance of becoming popular. However, for the world of marketing and advertisement, presenting and promoting their products alluringly by the support of erudite technological aids remains an everyday business.

The author is tempted to bring forth an example from a certain health insurance company which she finds morally apathetic and insensitively conceptualized. More so, because health insurance is essential for

everyone. It is well known that the policy of the health insurance companies for the advancing age citizens is to keep asking for progressively high premium after a certain age (70-75 years) for which they have their commercial logic. On the other hand, the mandatory premium becomes unreasonably high and cannot be afforded by all the aging needy. However, lately the policy comes with an 'air ambulance' facility. The author was amused and asks, whether a person at the fag-end of his/her life, would look forward to the prospect of enjoying an air-ambulance ride, an event, that speaks of crisis and is a reminder of the air ambulance passenger's impending end?

Similarly, one may sense an unethical undercurrent beneath the promotional efforts made for selling online children's educational Apps, globally demanded processed food items and online fashionable clothes, etc. These well publicized products of the big companies, cannot be used by the children who do not have access to internet and digital devices or who cannot afford to buy them. It is also unsavoury to see promotion of unhealthy beverages endorsed by film stars and star athletes. There are countless examples for making the point.

Unfortunately, the popular belief is that ethical concerns are in contradiction with the profit-making business rules. Contrarily, the Indian business ethos supports upright and welfare-oriented business practice, also considered the sacred duty of the wealth generating person and institutions. True, the world of advertisement and marketing does many proactive promotions and can leave powerful and desirable impact. However, for now the focus is not on that.

Some Ethical Issues for Digitally Connected Global Village and Globalization Influenced Atmosphere

The third proposed issue invites attention towards 'some ethical issues for digitally connected global village and globalization influenced atmosphere.' It goes without saying that today, 'cultural globalization' and 'global village' are a reality. The term global village was coined by a media and communication theorist, Marshall McLuhan in early 1960s. According to the Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, global village is a world, viewed as a community in which distance and isolation have been dramatically reduced by electronic media such as television and the internet. Interestingly, global village describes the phenomenon of the world's cultures shrinking, and expanding, at the same time due

to pervasive technological advances that allow for instantaneous sharing of cultures (Johnson 2007, p. 192). Undoubtedly, today the easily available internet and instant messengers (i.e., Facebook, Myspace and various online forums) have changed the way people communicate across physical and cultural boundaries considerably, and with an accelerated rate.

Dixon (2008) thinks that cultural globalization is likely to lead to prospective marketplace where countries of all economic opportunities would be represented and the economically weaker ones stand the chance of being aided by the more fortunate ones on humanitarian ground. At the same time, (Johnson, 2007) has some ethical concerns. He observes, "The idea of the world's cultures drawn together in a global village raises questions about equal representation, reciprocal sharing, enriched diversity, and mutual understanding" (p.192).

Additionally, often the technologically advanced countries have an advantage over others. For instance, they can leave an over-arching influence much faster, excel in income generating activities, can readily establish and run research and development facilities, exceed others in manufacturing and selling war weapons and can digitally control and monitor activities of those who could be a threat to their power. Such apprehensions are not morally sterile.

Social scientists and those interested in occidental and oriental culture, ethics and beliefs of the economically advantaged (perhaps individualist), and economically disadvantaged societies, would be interested in understanding the process and the moral standards used for deciding who is justly and ethically powerful in a deeply interconnected world. A related question is what makes the technologically advanced countries capable of enhancing conflicts between cultures, causing fragmentation of cultures, or leading to cultural domination and perhaps creating hybrid cultures (Johnson, 2007, p.191-96).

As the standard choices of the global world are often copied and adopted mindlessly, the influence and impact left by the economically affluent and technologically advanced powerful countries becomes a matter of concern. Copying and adopting behaviour doesn't always stay limited to superficial changes in behaviour, life style and choices, but has implications for giving away one's own cultural values (i.e., throwing away the baby with the bath water) without a need, rhyme or a reason. Often the forces of globalization

are capable of controlling the cultural standards by which the rest of the world will decide to live. At times, they are powerful enough to dilute, confuse, and pollute the cultural and the moral standards of societies that cannot resist them.

For instance, Indian youth like youth all over the world, is drawn towards music and the global entertainment companies have successfully begun to shape their preferences and dreams like other ordinary citizens irrespective of where they may be located. MTV (Music Television), a huge player in the technological expansion of cultural boundaries and a pervasive American company, is consciously endorsing a global diffusion of diverse music media. However, MTV's permeation of the music market surpasses the alleged diffusion of cultures that it claims to inspire globally. Similar is the case of the international fast-food chains. These chains have hugely become the 'taste' of the global village and the urban Indian middle and higher middle-class children and adults. Moreover, they are relished despite being costly and highly processed and add pace to the consumer culture.

In times when internet, satellites, and cable TV have swept away the old national cultural boundaries, Indians have to think about safeguarding their indigenous cultural identity, all-inclusive values, traditional wisdom and spiritual outlook towards life. This would require keeping a safe distance from the overwhelming consumerist, materialist, and blatant individualist values that not only overshadow the Indians' sense of community and social solidarity, but also vastly affects their viewpoint of a contended life and minimalization endorsing virtues. An optimistic way of looking at things would be to expect that a common culture would pave the way to greater shared values such as 'political unity' but this doesn't seem to be the case.

While discussing ethical concerns related to the technologically global societies, the concept of 'culture sharing' waits to be addressed too. Besides taking note of the good things of 'culture sharing,' Johnson (2007) cares to ask an important question. That is, whether and in whom "cultural contact is creating uniformity, standardization, homogenizational global monoculture that is sterile, dull, and artificial" (p.193), and what kind of cultures can handle the unstoppable storm brought about by the process of globalization without getting uprooted? Once again, the editorial note of Times of India Patna Daily (Thursday, September, 9,

2021) is handy as it notes, "Social norms, a society's implicit rules about traits such as honesty and work ethics, have huge influence on economic development. This is one reason why blindly copying "best practices" produce varying results" (p.6).

A related significant issue is that of language loss, associated with loss of cultural boundaries in global village. Dixon (2008) refers to an online language database namely, "Languages of the World" which cautions that the world faces massive challenges in maintaining language diversity as out of more than 6,912 languages, half may be in danger of disappearing in the next several decades. In fact, smaller cultures are nested in their respective languages, losing them is a serious risk. That is, with the extinction of language, it becomes very difficult to articulate the values, beliefs, ethical concerns and knowledge of some small cultures which is almost like losing that culture.

However, on the flip side, internet is also a major tool for preserving languages that are the repositories of world knowledge. Professor Harrison of linguistics (Swarthmore College, USA), has created a talking dictionary and videos giving global voice to one of the indigenous tribal languages (Karo Aka) of Arunachal Pradesh of India (The Times of India, Patna, Saturday, January, 23, 2021, p. 13). Dixon (2008) is correct when she observes that in view of all the changes that have come and shall continue to come, hope lies solely with human beings because, they are obliged to look at the implications of the shifting realities like the one of the new global technological societies and respectfully acknowledge cultural boundaries. This is important because it is within the cultural boundaries that the values, morals and normative standards of the small cultures live and can survive.

Some Thoughts on the Moral Concerns of the Economic Growth of Emerging Economies in a Technology Loaded World

Now, a few ethical inputs relevant in the context of digital technology and the economic growth of emerging economies are briefly touched upon. In one of his blogs, Ratna Tata (2020) draws attention towards some ethically compatible core concerns important for the business world at the time of entering the year 2021. Tata writes, "Technology is transforming the way we eat, live, learn and play-let us be brave enough to embrace it and find solutions collectively through collaboration." The Indian business icon Ratan Tata,

of an emerging economy country talks about embracing technology and (a) finding solutions collectively through collaboration, (b) taking note of creative and relevant ideas, (c) having ability to transform such ideas into opportunities and (d) supporting right investment and passion. In his mentioned blog, Tata admits being "truly inspired" by the leaders who have been at the forefront of embracing technology. He mentions Bill Gates who "helmed change and challenged the ordinary with authenticity, values and respect."

Having said this, Tata sounds philosophical and asks not to take the universe for granted; reminds about the uncertainty of life; advices learning to live with humility and gratitude; recommends doing one's best to remain safe by co-creating solutions that address all humankind; suggests to be part of the high world transformation happening around, and foster a culture of innovation that converges with the right investment without fear of failure. Tata's observations make sense because, he gives business a value laden, righteous conceptualization along with the necessary appendages required for a successful business.

One may also mention a commonly observed phenomenon involving the Indian consumers of an emerging economy country. Indian markets are flooded with cheap Chinese goods of everyday domestic use that may not be fully health safe, ecologically friendly, and even aesthetically wanting. Similarly, all kinds of imaginable commodities arrive in time from China for the frequently impending Indian festivals. It goes without saying that the country in point, is technologically advanced and produces plentifully due to heavy mechanization and abundance of labour force.

Coming back to the merchandise, countless miscellaneous Chinese products keep drawing the economically weaker sections and even the middle-class population of the Indian society. However, there is scope for bringing up some ethical issues that need to be considered by both the producer, and the huge segment of the Indian consumers who are the targets of the manufacturing country. In case, the manufacturer's one-point agenda is profit making even if by disregarding the products' quality and safety standards for the economically vulnerable consumers and their ecology, it becomes a business ethic question to which the exporting country is answerable.

The other line of ethical concerns is meant for the consumer and the trade policy makers of the importing country. Often the consumer does not ask whether it is morally correct to buy something not durable enough, perhaps health wise unsafe, damage causing for the ecology, and has economic repercussions for one's own country made goods? Sometimes the availability, abundance and the price of the imported products encourage the consumers to switch their choices and at times, modulate the manner in which they celebrate their cultural traditions. We have seen how home and village industries gradually lost their sheen as the Indian consumers did not question themselves like aware country lovers or felt concerned about the self-dependent economic growth of their emerging economy country.

Similarly, one often hears that the emerging economy countries are used as 'experimental labs' and 'dumping ground' by the technologically powerful rich countries. India has suffered Bhopal gas tragedy and the effect of exported hybrid cotton seeds in the past. These are just a couple of eye-opening illustrative events but strongly advocate addressing the moral and ethical questions linked to the trade deals made between the emerging economy countries and the rich countries. The trade polices between countries do ignore ethical concerns, give priority to the profit position of the business and accommodate political agendas. However, it is time to sincerely and seriously contemplate on the matter.

In the end, it may be said that societies that believe in progressive, righteous and compassionate virtues, think of the wellbeing of their people and avoid repressive laws are ethically responsible societies. On the contrary, societies that do not value trusting its constituents, are immune to the needs of the human spirit, lack social consciousness and disregard higher order values, are likely to encourage harsh and repressive, ethically void economic laws and policies and end up with demoralized citizens.

Summing up

Usually, the young technology users are stirred by the possibility of having excitement and fun and are fascinated by the command obeying digital gadgets. Soon enough, the captivating internet and digital technology begin to shape their interaction, eat up their time, turn social relationships unappealing, and make the values of *saiyam* (patience), *vivek* (wisdom), balance and 'middle path' redundant. Two of the 'dangers of compulsive use of digital technology' especially draw attention. They are (i) Addiction to the technological gadgets and (ii) internet and changes in

personal characteristics and behaviour of technology over users. As the compulsive user evades the morals that inspire conscious use of technology, addiction to internet and digital technology becomes a problem. 'Fear of Missing Out' is an addiction where the user constantly fidgets with the technological gadgets fearing 'missing out' on things and event supposedly known to his/her peers. Confused at the value end, the addicted person experiences negative mood state and dissatisfaction in life.

Ironically, often the treatment for detoxing is also digital and there is hardly any serious effort to revive the values and principles that help understand the root cause of the problem and teach constructive time utilization. Similarly, OTT creates a self-serving value domain glorifying supremacy of control on one's life, interference free lifestyle, and freedom to define sexuality conveniently. The virtual entertainment world doesn't necessarily acknowledge the foundational values of 'Truth-Godliness-Beauty' and smothers its viewers' finer values by allowing tolerance for ugly and brutal things. In fact, the technological revolution has implications for asking ethical questions like, what are we doing, where are we heading and who do we want to become?

Empirical evidences show that traits of impulsivity, narcissism, and aggression are nurtured by the internet and are a fundamental part of online psychology. Seemingly, the unscrupulous internet users are deceptively immune to the possibility of being driven against the guards and moral cautions that protect mental and physical wellbeing and encourage having a wholesome personality.

Coming to the 'morally insensitive world of technology backed world of marketing and advertisement,' the fundamental things is that this profit-making world generally, does not endorse the ethos of upright business practices that are welfare oriented and treat wealth generation as a sacred duty (i.e., *purusharth*). Professionals of the line work with sophisticated technology-aided projects for promotion and marketing of commodities and services that may not be in consonance with the needs of the common Indian consumer.

Touching upon the 'ethical issues for digitally connected global village and globalization influenced atmosphere,' it goes without saying that technology has created enormous connectivity between diverse cultures and made the world a global village.

Nevertheless, the technologically advanced rich countries have an advantage over others as they excel in generating income, have more research and development facilities, exceed in manufacturing and selling war weapons, and can digitally control and monitor activities of those who could be a threat to their power. However, their supremacy also leaves scope for asking ethical questions. For instance, what makes them capable of enhancing conflicts between cultures, causing fragmentation of cultures, or leading to cultural domination and perhaps creating hybrid cultures (Johnson, 2007, p.191-96).

Mindless copying of standard behaviours and norms of the affluent and technologically advanced countries does bring superficial changes in behaviour. However, when the forces of globalization dilute, confuse, and pollute the cultural and moral standards of societies it causes concern. As the national boundaries are erased by internet, satellites, and cable TV, the taste for music, food and apparel has already changed significantly for the Indian youth. However, when India's indigenous cultural identity, traditional values and wisdom, and the spiritual perspective is feared to be tampered, it becomes a matter for contemplation.

Similarly, when the Indians' sense of community and social solidarity, viewpoint of a contended life, and minimalization endorsing virtues are affected by the standard globalization principles, it needs to be given a thought. Dixon (2007) gives the sole responsibility to human beings for respectfully acknowledging the cultural boundaries within which the values, morals and normative standards of the small cultures live and be vigilant of the 'shifting realities' of the new global technological societies.

Lastly, there are 'some moral concerns of the economic growth of emerging economies in a technology loaded world.' A couple of points are made here and the first one refers to the words from a blog of Ratan Tata. Tata (2020) talks about embracing technology and finding solutions collectively through collaboration, taking note of creative and relevant ideas, having ability to transform such ideas into opportunities and supporting right investment and passion. He admits being "truly inspired" by Bill Gates who embraced technology and "helmed change and challenged the ordinary with authenticity, values and respect."

In a philosophical spirit, Tata, a business icon of an emerging economies country, tells not to take the universe for granted; remember the uncertainty of life,

learn to live with humility and gratitude; do one's best to keep safe by co-creating solutions relevant for all humankind; be part of the high world transformation that is happening, and foster a culture of innovation that converges with the right investment without fear of failure. This is a decent blueprint for righteous and successful business.

Finally, a commonly observed scenario involving India (an emerging economy country) and China (a heavily mechanized, technologically advanced, labour abundant country) is described to make a point. Chinese goods, flood the Indian markets that may not be fully health safe, sturdy, aesthetically the best and eco-friendly. In this trade relationship, if the manufacturer's sole agenda is profit making even if by disregarding the products' quality and safety standards for the markets of the emerging economy countries, it becomes an ethical question to which the manufacturer is answerable.

The consumer and the trade policy makers of the importing country are answerable for the other concern. Often the consumer does not ask whether it is morally correct to buy foreign products that might not be the best choice besides, adversely affecting the home country's manufactured commodities. On the other hand, the policy makers must answer why the emerging economies are allowed to be used as 'experimental labs' and 'dumping ground' of the rich and technologically advanced countries for making such highly unethical moves.

References

Aboujaoude, E. (2011). *Virtually you: The dangerous powers of the e-Personality*. New York,NY: W. W. Norton.

Aboujaoude, E. (2016). Rising suicide rates: An under-recognized role for the Internet? *World Psychiatry,* 15(3), 225–227.

Aboujaoude, E. (2017).The Internet's effect on personality traits: An important casualty of the 'Internet addiction' paradigm. *Journal of Behavioural Addictions.* March, 6(1): 1–4.Published online Feb 28, 2017.

Aboujaoude, E., &Starcevic V. (2016). The rise of online impulsivity: A public health issue. *Lancet Psychiatry*, 3(11), 1014–1015.

Anderson, C. A., Shibuya A., Ihori N., Swing E. L., Bushman B. J., Sakamoto A., Rothstein H. R., &Saleem M. (2010). Violent video game effects on aggression, empathy,and prosocial behavior in eastern and western countries: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 136 (2), 151–173.

Baker, Z. G., Krieger, H., & LeRoy, A. S. (2016). Fear of missing out: Relationships with depression, mindfulness, and physical symptoms. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science,* 2(3), 275–282.

Dixon, V. (2008). Understanding the implications of a global village, *Reason and Respect*: Vol.4 (1), Article 13.

Duroy, D., Gorse P.,&Lejoyeux M. (2014). Characteristics of online compulsive buying in Parisian students. *Addictive Behaviors*, 39 (12), 1827–1830. doi: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2014.07.028

Johnson, June (2007).*Global issues, local arguments*. New York: Pearson Education Inc.

Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary. Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/global%20village. Accessed 30 Jan. 2021.

Kukar-Kinney M., Ridgway N. M., &Monroe K. B. (2009). The relationship betweenconsumers' tendencies to buy compulsively and their motivations to shop and buy on the *Internet. Journal of Retailing*, 85(3), 298–307. Doi: 10.1016/j.jretai.2009.05.002

Sadhguru. 'How to manifest what you really want' (https://youtube.be/UwGsgJtufY)

Tata, R. (2020). Be humble, but also be brave.*Voices,* India, TOI.https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/voices/be-humble-but-also-be-brave/

The Times of India, Patna (Saturday, January, 23, 2021). Indigenous languages havewisdom that can save us from climate crisis. Srijana Mitra Das talks with linguist professor David Harrisonin *Times Evoke*'s. Published in Times of India, Patna, p.13.

The Times of India,Patna, (Editorial, Thursday, September, 9, 2021). Being nice pays: Social norms influence both a country's politics and economic performance. Behaviour always matters, p. 6.

✦