

**PROSPECTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE
MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS IN THE GLOBALIZING
WORLD OF 21st CENTURY***



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Prof. Sangram Mudali, the young and energetic Director of National Institute of Science Technology, Prof Ajit Panda, Dean of the Institute, Prof. Mohapatra, Principal, NIST Business Management School, Prof. Gitika Mudali, Director, Placement, Prof. E Raja Rao, distinguished invitees, members of the media, and my dear graduating students. It is indeed a memorable day for all the young graduating students, and the award winners, who are going to enter the real world as managers with a lot of dreams and high expectations. My dear graduates you will have a unique distinction of being the first batch of Alumni of this PGDM programme of this Institute. Your shining in the real world will reflect the credibility of this young Institution. At the outset I take this opportunity to bless you all to become successful in your chosen profession and career. In addition to managing the conventional responsibilities of managing men, machine and finances; you will be asked upon to manage the environment around you based on the environmental impact assessment (EIA)/ socio-economic and need based studies, and to draw remedial measures under newly emerged budge word of corporate social responsibilities (CSR). You will be responsible to ensure a sustainable environment in and around your organization. Dear graduates, in your endeavor, you are going to face a variety of challenges along with many new prospects in this globalizing world of 21st century that has simultaneously created many opportunities for you. Let me share with you my thoughts on prospects and opportunities for the budding managers like you in the 21st century where knowledge is going to play a dominant role for your success.

The concept globalization / structural reforms, based on the economic concept of new neo-classical economics, often implies the growing interdependence of countries as well as among industrial units worldwide through free international capital flows, more rapid and widespread diffusion of knowledge and technology, and increasing volume and variety of cross boarder transaction in goods and services. The emerging paradigms for the intellectual capital era has created a situation in favour of young masses like you who are more informed and who have the ability and potential to think differently in divergent situations. However, it is also widely recognized that globalization has economic, political, cultural and technological aspects that are closely intertwined. Since these aspects are central to an individual's quality of life, the socio economic, cultural and environmental consequences flowing from globalization have generated a strong debate in the world.

Today's world is on a path of great transformation. People, ideas, images, information, objects, symbols and capitals circulate in complex material and virtual flows around the planet. Whether for pleasure or work, desired or forced, physical or virtual, mobility seems to have become the new condition of a globalised world. In such a world the capacity to move and to circulate becomes essential for the new generations. Thus, globalisation has redefined boundaries, identities and with them one's sense of belonging.

On the other hand, globalisation affects the world in several ways; it has led to the emergence of worldwide production markets and broader access to a range of foreign products for consumers. Material and goods now freely move between and within national boundaries. Worldwide financial markets have emerged and borrowers have better access to external financing. A global common market, based on the freedom of exchange of goods and capital has been realized. It is now possible to think of a world government or cartels of government which regulate the relationship among the governments and guarantees the rights arising from social and economic globalization. Equally important effects of globalization include increase in information flows between geographically remote locations, growth of cross cultural contacts, the advent of global environmental challenges and the spread of multi-culturalism and better access to cultural diversity.

In this globalised world of 21st century, India is poised to be the 3rd largest economy of the world, next to China and the USA, because it enjoys certain advantages over other countries in terms of high growth rate potential, demographic dividend, 3rd largest scientific manpower, vast natural resources, a long coast line, and above all, rich culture and heritage, which need to be marketed in its proper perspectives. In terms demographic dividend, we have around 50% of our population below the age group of 30 years. There are 540 million in this group, out of which 183 million belong to your age group of 18-23 years, who are going to join the job market soon to take up the new challenges. However, these challenges and opportunities are to be converted into income and wealth with the help of 3Is, viz., innovation, information and infrastructure. The large army of youth should be well prepared to handle projects, positions, and work situations in office, in shop floors and sites across the nations and indeed in the globe. In this endeavour, the University / Institution can provide a kick start for a "take off" of its students like you in their career, but thereafter you have to face the competitive world. You will be judged on the job market by your merits and ability to innovate/ create a turn around situation for the organization for which one has to adhere to some traits. **Hence**, the opportunities for the professional have been wide open provided they exhibit their competitive spirit, creativity and managerial abilities.

However, the opportunities created by globalization should not make us loose sight of the challenges in terms of sustainable development and participatory approach. If nations, especially the developing ones, do not measure up to these challenges, they may have to face a serious crisis in near future, and the gains of globalization may be

cancelled out in a world torn apart by conflict and violence. Globalisation has led not only to increased prosperity through technological progress in terms of rapid growth of information, communication and technology (ICT), it has also caused damage to the planet, deepened inequality, and eroded traditional values and culture. Social disintegration, increasing poverty, individualistic and indifferent attitude, breakdown of democracy, rapid and extensive deterioration of the environment, the spread of new diseases and above all, it has led to alienation. These are counted among the negative consequences of globalization.

Although our country has taken great strides in the field of industry, especially in the IT sector reversing the deceleration remains a major challenge. This deceleration has caused rural distress in many parts of the country and reached crisis level in some areas. Widespread displacement without proper resettlement and rehabilitation, poverty leading to distress migration, rise in the number of female headed households in rural areas and an increase in women vulnerability has taken place. To add to it, the disenchantment with the development process has led to growth of naxalism, terrorism and many social unrests in the country. Hence, what needs to be done is to address the issues with sympathy rather than apathy and to recognize the role of the community in solving these problems. As an alternative, remunerative non-agricultural employment opportunities are seen as solutions that would provide employment opportunities to billions of workers currently engaged in traditional agriculture sector in the form of disguised unemployment.

Providing essential education and health services to large parts of the population who are still excluded from this remains a major challenge. Education empowers people to participate in the growth process and in bridging gender and other divides. Overall literacy is still below 70% and rural female literacy less than 50%. Only universalisation of primary education will not equip India to meet the challenges of a globalised world; the country must plan to universalize secondary education as well. Education should not be thought only in terms of quantitative expansion by way of inviting private capital to add numbers of educational institutions. Providing quality education should also be our priority with participation of all stake holders including the corporate houses and industries.

In the context of an emerging knowledge economy, improving the quality of higher education has become imperative with the growth of knowledge intensive industries in the era of globalization. To ensure a continuous supply of quality manpower large investments in public sector institutions of higher learning should be made. Curriculum and service conditions should be reformed to attract dedicated and qualified faculty. Inter disciplinary research at the University level should be encouraged and Universities should emerge as knowledge hubs. Private sector initiatives in higher learning should be explored while maintaining quality standards. Vocational training institutes should be expanded to create opportunities for self employment and to enable people to meet the growing demand of industries and in all these areas the managers of industries have to

play a key role. Even we can think of promoting “Innovation Universities” to promote our vocational skills.

In the area of health a vast majority of the people of the country still find it difficult to access most basic services such as mother and child care, clean drinking water and basic sanitation facilities. Partnership with industries, stakeholders and nonprofit and civil society organization will enable the government to facilitate access of the poor and the marginalized to these services.

It becomes clear that technology has come to occupy the centre stage in the globalised world today. Only those societies which are able to constantly innovate in the field of technology and put these innovations into practical use are able to survive and prevail in a highly competitive ethos. India, for instance, has used technological innovations in recent years to take giant strides in several spheres of life. The GDP growth rate which was around 3.5% has started rising above 8% per annum. It is now recognized as the third largest country in the world in terms of science and technology manpower. Many of our industrialists and industrial houses have made their mark in the world. Urbanization is taking place at a fast rate. Life expectancy has risen. The road network and transportation system has expanded. Progress in the field of ICT has been quite impressive and the foreign exchange reserves have gone up steadily. However, conventional ways of viewing technology as the engine of development and a source of prosperity should not be accepted uncritically. A technology-driven society, which is what a globalizing world is rapidly turning into, tends to become dehumanized. Technology multiplies the unnecessary. It insulates and isolates; while it seems to bring us together, it does so only by creating new ways of separating us from one another. Some of the outcomes are broken homes, break down of relationship and unrestrained individualism. Technology uproots us and separates us from our own special time and place. On account of the pollution emanating from industrial and technological progress the economic system has become more brutal and inhuman. The arms race made possible by technological progress threatens our planet with possible annihilation. Technological progress has further brought in a throwaway culture.

As Alvin Toffler had aptly put it, *‘In our haste to milk technology for immediate economic advantages we have turned our environment into a physical and social tinder box.’* Further, in the words of E.S. Mishan, *‘The more science, technology and GNP grow, the more nasty, brutish, vile and precarious become human existence.’*

One need hardly emphasise that in a world where technology has become a necessary evil, the way it is managed assumes great significance. Traditional methods of managing technology and its impact on human life have become obsolete. One may look at the engineering approach which is associated with technological advancement and consider the limitations inherent in it. This approach focuses upon production and productivity, i.e. efficiency measure. It is based on the philosophy that technology can

bring about a better world environment and defy the pessimistic vision of Malthus. Science and technology can conquer everything on earth and in outer space (a neo-classical perspective). However, in their zeal to attain higher technical efficiency the technology managers usually lose sight of the equity and social justice aspects of development. This point is best illustrated by reference to the way irrigation and power engineers remain insensitive to the rehabilitation and resettlement (R & R) problems of land oustees. Managers in the globalizing world should therefore learn and master new and appropriate ways of managing a technology-driven society.

The managers of the globalizing world can find these ways only if they learn how to establish a link between technology and human values. They have to abandon the facile optimism of neo-classical economists, who were confident that technological progress would offset the dismal consequences emanating from diminishing returns and population growth. They will do well to pay particular attention to ideas of holistic thinkers like E.F. Schumacher, who have drawn heavily on the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. Schumacher maintains that *“man’s current pursuit of profit and progress through capital and technology, which promote giant organizations and increased specialization, has in fact resulted in gross economic inefficiency, environmental hazards, inhuman working conditions and loss of human values.”* In my judgement, our economic policies will be effective and meaningful only if human values are taken into account while designing and execution of the development projects.

It should be clear to our future managers that better economic policies depend on better ideas with a focus on human value systems. It is the quality of education rather than quantity which matters the most for attaining the goal of maximum social welfare. While planning for future and designing development models they should take into account the predictions and prescriptions of economists, and assimilate the state-centered forces of technocrats and bureaucrats as well as society-centered forces of different classes, interest groups, political parties, and above all the voters. But, as society and the state-centered forces are deeply influenced by human value systems, human value will play a lead role in the years to come.

The managers in the 21st century should realize that this theory of development with its emphasis on human capital has a particular relevance for a developing country like India. Countries like India are facing a crisis in their value systems. The indigenous value system comes into conflict with western/imported values. This has lead to a dualistic structure that may perpetuate the conflict. Therefore, while promoting technological progress, our new generation of managers must place a higher value on *morality, honesty and integrity*.

As new generation of managers you have to play a leadership role in this situation of conflict and crisis. In doing so you cannot afford to focus upon the efficiency measure of production and productivity alone. You will succeed if you display the leadership qualities which I want to put forward for you in terms of 09 Cs:

- **Creativeness** (to bring innovative changes for dynamic growth)
- **Confidence** (i.e., self-confidence) and Conviction
- **Courage** (to take up challenges & to Speak the Truth)
- **Commitment** (to work for achieving the desired goals)
- **Character** (with focus on moral and ethical values)
- **Communication** (with focus on clarity for connectivity)
- **Co-operation** (the Gandhian gospel for prosperity), i.e., to build a team spirit, where the word TEAM implies **T OGETHER, E VERYONE, A CHIEVE, and M ORE**
- **Community spirit**, (working together for efficiency- a participatory concept), and.
- **Compassion** (a humanitarian approach for the deprived sections and the poor.

Hence, you have to seek unity in the midst of diversity and develop a participatory approach. In this endeavour, your success will depend on the 3As: **Abilities** (not undermining one's potential); **Achievement** (reaching goals one sets for oneself); **Activation** (using one's abilities with sincerity, commitment, devotion and hard work). In short, you should be inspired by a holistic vision of development which is sustainable and *focuses on human values and moral system*. I hope that under your leadership in future these human values which have been crushed by the new process of development will be reinstated and the foundation of a just society will be laid.

Let me conclude by making an appeal to the graduating students by repeating a few well known home truths. ***Remember that a single positive thought can end all negativity.*** When we find that our thoughts are negative in a situation, we tend to have more negative thoughts and we get caught in a vicious cycle of negativity with no chance for transforming our thoughts. Never forget that negativity kills one's creativity.

Therefore, in order to change our thoughts we need to consciously take a powerful positive thought and repeat it to ourselves so that we can feel and experience it. This will enable us to free our mind from negativity. **Our positive thought is like a single switch, which once touched would dispel all darkness.** Hence, in order to attain success in life, be positive in your approach. Thus, let me conclude by quoting from our *Rig Veda*:

- ***Aa no bhadra kratobo yantu viswatah***

(***Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides***)

**Jai Hind,
Vande Utkal Janani.**