



Design Thinking: A New Model for Future University Education

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Abstract:

Human civilization always opted for the comfort and happiness. There are many literatures supporting this perception. There are the evidences that the learning process started from the time of cognitive revolution, the time mankind started communicating each-other. In the course of time, many inventions happened, and technology emerged as strong tools for the maneuvering of human activities. The ideas and thoughts are evolving in different time interval in the quest of better life. However, dissatisfactions are emerging and education, as initiator and being the instrument of change, has not been able to control over these dissatisfactions. There are much evidences of antagonistic events. Conflicts are emerging in diverse forms and shapes in different parts of the world. Current social practices have created power centers in every societies. The foremost trend appearing right now is the race for controlling the resources and creation of wealth. This kind of trend prevailing in the society is detrimental in attaining satisfaction and happiness. Apart from this, rapid advancement of technology has caused dynamic changes in the culture and social behaviors. The cultural dimensions are taking new shapes owing to technology. In this adverse condition, education is under tremendous criticism. This is true that education creates knowledge & skill to the individuals, but it also sensitizes the societal issues. In this context, education is at the center of politics and many scholars consider education and politics complementary to each other. This signifies that education is an integral part of society and it has connection with the government or public affairs of a country. Visualizing the global and local conflicts, present system of education has not proved capable in generating type of knowledge that is relevant to today's changing society. The direction of education is especially important to establish peace and harmony in the society. Therefore, there is a need of rethinking rational model of education. The methodology adopted in the paper is the extensive review of the literature and the comprehensive study of societal issues appearing in the society. Besides, the experience of the author in the academia is also contributing to the preparation of the paper.

Keywords: Design thinking, Civilization, Education, Knowledge, Politics

1. Departure Point

We are standing today in the 21st century. It's time to discuss on different dimensions of higher education. Education is essentially important topic for shaping human civilization. To be more precise, higher education is the lifeline of human society. While talking about higher education, it is imperative to go back to ancient era and keep memory of "gurukul" (school of guru) by the lap of Himalaya. This is the place of guru- meaning professor, students stay there for few years, normally from 12-25 ages. Students learn all facets of the society, namely: politics, sociology, geography, economics, law, general administration, security strategies, engineering, architecture, arts and commerce, management, etc.

Once, the professor finds his/her students competent enough in all discipline, students are said to be graduated.

It is worth starting with noble statement from "Geeta"- the legendary epic in oriental culture.

"ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः । सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्यभवेत् । ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥"

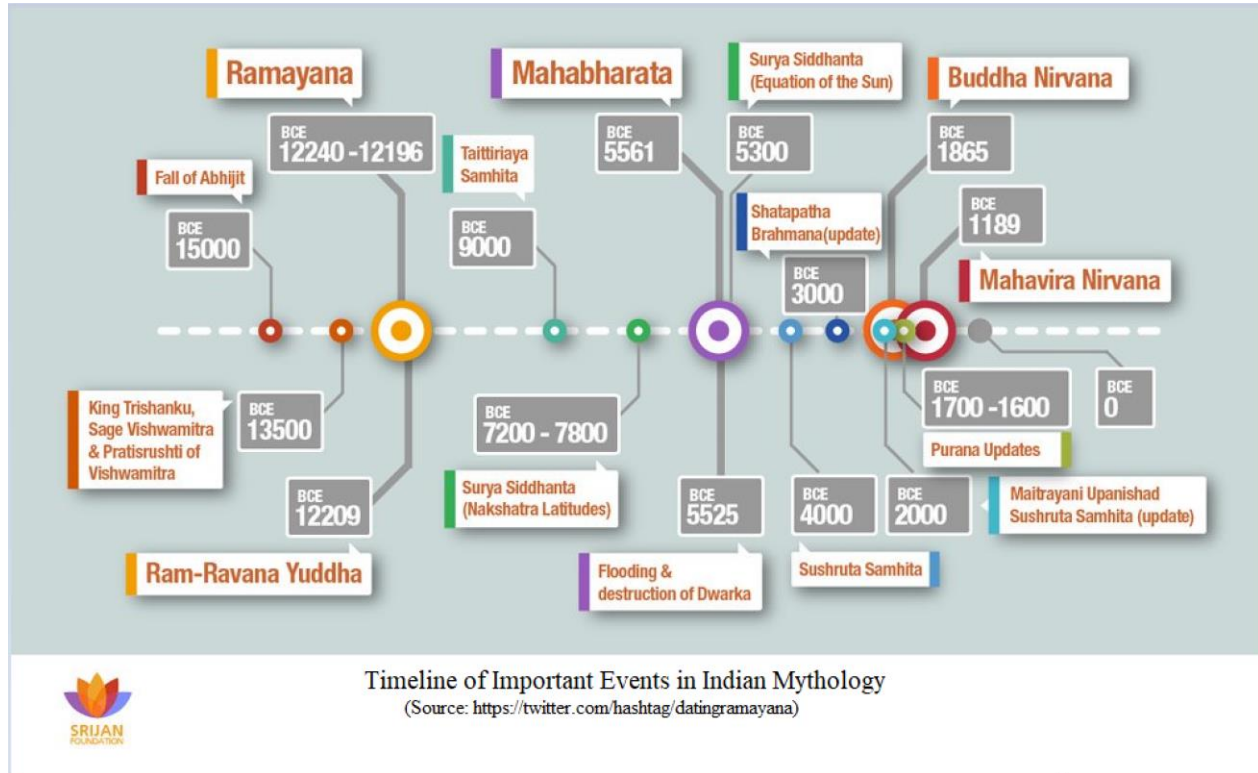
[Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Niraamayaah. Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantu, Maa Kashchid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet. Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih!!!]

Om, May All be Happy, May All be Free from Illness. May All See What Auspicious is, May no one Suffer, May peace prevail in the world [1].

The Mahabharat महाभारत is eminent epic in Indian sub-continent and probably known to most of the

academicians. If the timeline of this epic is checked, the historians track this time of Mahabharat era at about BCE-5561 years. The essence of education may well be compared to this statement from Mahabharat. The form and structure may differ from one culture to another, but, the mission of education, more precisely, the goal of prosperity, happiness, peace, and security of society remains the same. In the course of time, civilizations in different parts of

the world are evolving and also tumbling-down in search of better life. However, dissatisfactions are ever growing. Therefore, It is not just for today that we are seeking secured and comfortable life, but, the entire attempts of all times, are intended for the liberation from suffering and achieving better life, whether it is; wars, inventions, production and distribution of goods & services, forming of state & societies, etc.



The works of great philosopher-Confucius (551 B.C. to 479 B.C.) worth noting. That was about 2500 years from today. He developed social and ethical philosophy, which has established the social values, institutions, and transcendent ideals of traditional Chinese society. Precisely, this is the foundation of modern Chinese society.

Similarly, almost all religions and beliefs talk about moral values and discipline. There is the agreement in all communities that moral values and discipline are inevitable for the harmony and cohesion of the society, eventually, ensuring growth of civilization. This is the foundation of education.

In the course of time, almost all scholars and educationists are now propagating education as the means of survival and increasing productivity. More

precisely, human force is assumed as the economic unit. The whole thinking is turning around the economy. The consequences, as it is observed now,

is the erosion of human values.

The education has always meant with the evolution of civilization. The significance of higher education, in all times, is always with survival and prosperity of mankind. This is manifested as inventions, changes, and liberation in the society. If we talk about the education, it would be relevant to consider the timeline after the cognitive revolution. This is the time that human being started to communicate through a language. Following western history, this is about 70,000 years before (YN Harari, 2014). This may be the essence of thinking on a new model of

university.

With this background, this article aims to brainstorm on the dimensions of higher education, shed lights on its facets, discuss on the societal echoes and draw the attention of academicians on the new perspective of higher education and new model of university.

Time and again, higher education is at the crossroad. The universities, right from the inception, were considered as pathfinders in society. Whatever the form of predicament appears in society, it was always expected to find means to settle the difficult situation. The ideas, the behavioral patterns and the values were in the forefront. The time changed, the objective condition changed, and dynamism of the society is taking new forms. People are directed toward material wellbeing. The knowledge, behavior and values are eroding. The idea of a just-society with secure, happier and prosper life and the present global and domestic scenario distinctly implies a big gap.

2. Evolution of Thoughts

After the cognitive revolution, so many changes occurred. Human-being came up with communities, societies, and states in the quest of attaining survival and happiness. In this process, so many inventions happened, and technology has made the world a global village. The knowledge-based societies are emerging. The level of conscience & consciousness is attaining to new height. The notion of strategic world order has changed from hostile offenses to economic competition.

It was time up to 20th century that autocracy and control over the property were the mainstream in all parts of the world. This eventually steered to wars, armed struggles, genocides, etc. In the course of time, these phenomena are gradually changing, but in the form of trade embargo, provocations, economic sanctions, etc., which are the forms of hegemony. To add on this, traces of armed clashes are still taking place in different parts of the world [2].

However, the brighter side of society and states is also illuminating. People in all classes and levels are getting conscious on their rights and justice. They are putting concern on individual and social issues. As a result of this, efforts are being made to establish

harmony into the society. The echo of cohesion and inclusion is appearing more prominent. Today, we are witnessing cooperation, respect, compassion, etc. in the societies more effectively. This may be the indication of positive aspiration to a new model of education.

3. Global Scenario

Global scenario is rather alarming. The foremost trend appearing right now is the race for controlling the resources and creation of wealth. As a result of this, conflicts are emerging in diverse forms and shapes in different parts of the world. A new tendency is also becoming visible in many countries—the ultra-nationalist forces. Even in the western democratic countries, such as USA, UK, France, etc. the liberals and forces advocating breed and creed are coming into the power. This has created complications and intertwining in the dynamics of global politics.

Besides, the rapid pace of technology development has brought together different parts of the world, which were almost inaccessible in the past. This scenario has, actually, caused dynamic changes in the culture and social behaviors. The cultural dimensions are taking new shapes by the influences of technology.

In the dawn of 21st century, while the paradigm of world order was shifting from strategic security to economy, globalization came into effect extensively. The process of globalization is, actually, the barter of consumption materials. This began right from the inception of civilization. The globalization as it is in the practice, dates-back to first century BC, while Chinese merchants were exchanging silk textiles with Romans in Rome, Italy. The Chinese travelled all the way through Silk Road from China via Turkey, Greece and reaching to Italy. In fact, the meaning of globalization is the process of interaction and integration among people, companies, and governments worldwide. However, the form of globalization as of today came from the western capitalist power centers with the idea of controlling resources worldwide and accumulating wealth, eventually establishing new form of hegemony. Despite this fact, the digital technology and artificial intelligence have developed a new

paradigm shift today. Globalization has become a common phenomenon to all countries and societies, rather than just considering it only as a game of capitalists.

4. Current Societal Echoes

Current social practices have created power centers in every societies. Every person or the group wish to stay in close proximity with visible and elusive power centers that have influences to wider sphere in the society. The motive behind this is establishing supremacy in the vicinity and expanding this to wider horizon. Eventually, this leads to the control over resources. This has created a vicious cycle of anarchy, hypocrisy, deception, complexities, and state of despairs.

In the course of time, every societies are striving for social protection. The insurgents in the middle east, Asia, America or in Africa, their main claim is the social protection, liberation, and wellbeing of the people. Even the ruling class: such as in USA, is declaring advantage of its own clan(white), not even claiming the benefits of all fellow citizens. While observing the social processes in different parts of the world, the notion of ethnicity, faith, regionalism, etc. is taking momentum. As a result of this, inclusion, cohesion, patience, compassion, endurance, esteem, etc. are eroding. The critical question is, what model of university shall address these societal reflections?

5. Politics of Education

The education under consideration is rather the process of integration and development of human society. More precisely, education is a form of learning in which the knowledge skill and habits of group of people are transferred from one generation to next through teaching, training or research. It can also be considered as a tool to make decisive effects on the way one thinks, feels, or acts. Therefore, education has meaning on the human activities, their survival and happiness. However, many scholars talk only about the behaviors and the productivity of the human being. This is true that education creates knowledge & skill to the individuals, which is, in fact, very complex and need to be well governed and

directed. This understanding of the concept of education is the integral part of society and it has connection with the government or public affairs of a country and its relations with other countries.

While observing the process, every aspect of education relates to the government of a country. Therefore, politics and educations are complementary to each other[3]. The scholars of all time agree on this essence and accept globally the education as a necessary factor for creating politics. There is a common understanding and consensus that education maintains political power and develops the potentials of individuals and eventually socializing them for the political system. In this process, education prepares individuals so that they remain cooperative and cohesive in the society and the life would be secured and happier. Therefore, the scholars of the east and west have the concurrence that education is responsible to produce knowledgeable, experienced and selfless political leaders. The political system prevailing in any country seeks stability, peace, law & order and prosperity of the society. These goals are very essential to justify the existence of the system. These goals of society can be attained by creating an enabling environment for people to express their views on the growth and development. The education system is involved in this process. Therefore, education cannot be separated from politics, as it is the needs of society. Therefore, academics & philosophers of all times paid attention on education and emphasized that the realization of political ends is entirely on education.

Education has three facade in the society. The first face is that it prepares individual such that he/she can understand objective condition and develop logical capacity. This, eventually, prepares ground for changes in the society [4]. The other facade is that education acts as the instrument to bring about the changes in the conventional or orthodox social behaviors. The third façade is that education transforms itself with the notion of changes taking place in the society. The common consensus on education is that it molds the characters of individual such that the social moral and cultural values are preserved and transmitted to generations. In this process the ideas, objects and relationship carry value which helps to satisfy the desire. The

innovation and creation in the essence and process, naturally, involves conflicts. Therefore, when technology produces rapid changes in the interests of individuals or the group, these conflicts are extensive. In this situation, it is most important to mold the education into reduced timeframe and focus on adaptations into the situation. New change-phenomena are taking place world-wide, manifesting to economic and cultural levels. The developing countries are putting efforts to catch up with the pace of changes taking place in advanced countries and this has created tremendous pressure to western countries to develop the new knowledge. However, the values of both developed- and developing countries change with the pace of technology. It is observed that the long-term changes from the innovation are found effective mainly on countries pioneer in technology and apply in development process, the case of China is worth taking example. Change is obvious and it is the rule of nature. This change phenomenon should have positive impact into the society. However, dissatisfactions are emerging and education, as initiator and being the instrument of change, has not been able to control over these dissatisfactions. These discontents are manifested in the form of conflicts. They arise from the acts of deliberate attempt to oppose, resist or coerce the will of others. It involves emotional altitude of hostility and violent interference with others choice. It is observed that individual differences are ever increasing due to the diversified nature, attitudes, ideals, and interests. These human traits are developed due to different physical conditions, cultures, and beliefs. The maneuvering of society- the static delivery system, has also been instrumental in creating conflicts. However, the quest of mankind has always been to attain the safe and happy life. Even today, every country is advocating safeguarding rights, prosperity, and justice to the people. The governments are putting efforts to set the direction of education in this pathway. Despite all these, conflicts are arising resulting destruction of culture and physical infrastructures. In addition to this, extreme antagonism and huge casualties are appearing. Interestingly, there are many cases that the forces of conflicts, in the form of insurgency and liberation-war, succeed in controlling state power. However,

after some time, these forces are found not capable enough of managing demands of the general people. Eventually, anxieties and strains are growing in those areas. It is not just a physical dissatisfaction. The noble desires of safe, prosper and happier life are fading-up and just becoming hallucination-remaining merely a nice imagination. There are thesis and antithesis on conflicts and there are stacks of justifications from different school of thoughts. But conflicts are ever growing.

The process of change is obvious and phenomenal. Mankind underwent through restless struggles to conquer secured and comfortable life. In this course, almost all attempts were subjective and leaning to make secured boundary line[5]. The consequence of this is resistance to change-dynamics. The cultures, faiths and beliefs that were cultivated and extended in this course, became more static, otherwise very slow, in accepting change in essence. Almost all societies are living with this destiny. They have created their own taboo. This is the cause of conflicts and strains. In the meantime, technology has taken amazing lead, and this has followed significant changes in all dimensions of society. The upheavals appearing in the society have explicit relation with instability of political system. And change in societal system becomes inevitable. Such changes are distinct and occur in, form, characters, and appearance of society. Understanding of this occurrence is important to maintain smooth pace of change and manage peace & harmony in the society. This change process calls for keen attention. Obviously, there is a need of rethinking rational model of education.

6. New Model of Future University

In the dawn of 21st century, people in every corner of the world shall agree on their ultimate wish to social protection, wellbeing, human development, quality of life, etc. Even in the western countries, where they believe, they have peace and secure life, people are expressing their anxiety and deep concern on their future generation. As the societies are coming together due to the technology, people are building consensus on democratic, cohesive, culturally diverse, and prosperous societies.

Actually, whole world is moving with economy. An economy is a system of organizations and

institutions that either facilitate or play a role in the production and distribution of goods and services in a society. Economies determine how resources are distributed among members of a society. They determine the value of goods or services. They even determine what sorts of things can be traded or bartered for those services and goods. In fact, structuring of economic system is largely a political and social issue in society. At the end, this political and legal structure of a society governs the accumulation of wealth and distribution of resources. It also governs the manner of competition permitted between different participants in the economy. Moreover, there are limited quantities of resources in earth. Through economic process, these resources are just changing their form, characters and appearance by the application of labor and technology. Resource is same comparable to energy, it can neither be destroyed nor created, it just changes the form. Therefore, the essence of economy is the process of, use of resources, production, distribution and consumption of products.

Visualizing the global and local conflicts, present system of education has not generated the type of knowledge that is relevant to today's changed society. The employment potentials or investment demands prevailing now are not addressed properly and appropriately from system of education and inherent body of knowledge. Interesting fact is that the value framework developed by the prevailing education system has failed to prepare committed politicians, bureaucrats, technocrats, and professionals to lead the country to the higher level. Following the notion of economy, population has been considered as assets and education is oriented in promoting values of the urban competitive consumer society. Education has become the instrument of economy.

The happiness has always been the quest of all civilizations. In the early days, the safety and satisfaction of desire were considered as the main objective and all efforts were focused on this. Many civilizations extinct and lots of new civilizations appeared. Those, who adopted the change survived and others disappeared. In this process, the conscience of human being has taken a new height. The human traits, such as endurance, patience, cohesion, inclusion, esteem, etc. are getting more prominent than before. The liberation, freedom and enlightenment are becoming the ideals [6]. This scenario needs to be addressed in the new model of education.

The western model of development has emphasized on the physical wellbeing of the mankind. Therefore, people are considered as the assets and tools for production and distribution. The physical demands were considered as the core desire and focused to satisfy those desires. But there was strong campaign of spiritual development in Nepal, China and India before Christ. The teaching of Confucius (500BC) and Rishis & Gurus (2000 BC and even today) in Nepal & India were distinct and are the evident of spiritual teaching. In the course of time, spirituality and state of mental condition are equally considered to achieve the happiness. The attention of the whole world is slowly drawing in spirituality as an effective means of achieving happiness. This dimension should be considered in the new model of education. The direction of education is especially important to establish peace and harmony in the society. It is worth recalling, once again, the noble statement from "Geeta"- the legendary epic in oriental culture that says [7] ;

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः

सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु

मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत् ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah

Sarve Santu Niraamayaah !

Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantu

Maa Kashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet!

Om Shaantih, Shaantih, Shaantih!!

Om, May All be Happy,

May All be Free from Illness.

May All See What Auspicious is,

May no one Suffer.

Om Peace, Peace, Peace.

It says; let all be happy, let all be free from any illness, let all be auspicious, let all have no sufferings (be happy) and let peace prevail everywhere.

There is one more very effective noble statement that says;

बसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् । Basudhaiva kutumbakam; meaning- the world(earth) is a family[8].

The essence of society is in the cohesion and inclusion. All forms of antagonism and foes that are prevailing today must be transform into unified whole [9]. The fact is that conscience that evolves from the association with production relations decides the attitude and behaviors of mankind. The conscience changes with time and the world would move towards the notion of **Basudhaiva kutumbakam**-forming the world to a family and all societies enjoying secured life with happiness. The direction of model of future education should be such that it leads population to behave like a family and build the capacity for prosperous and happy life.

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