



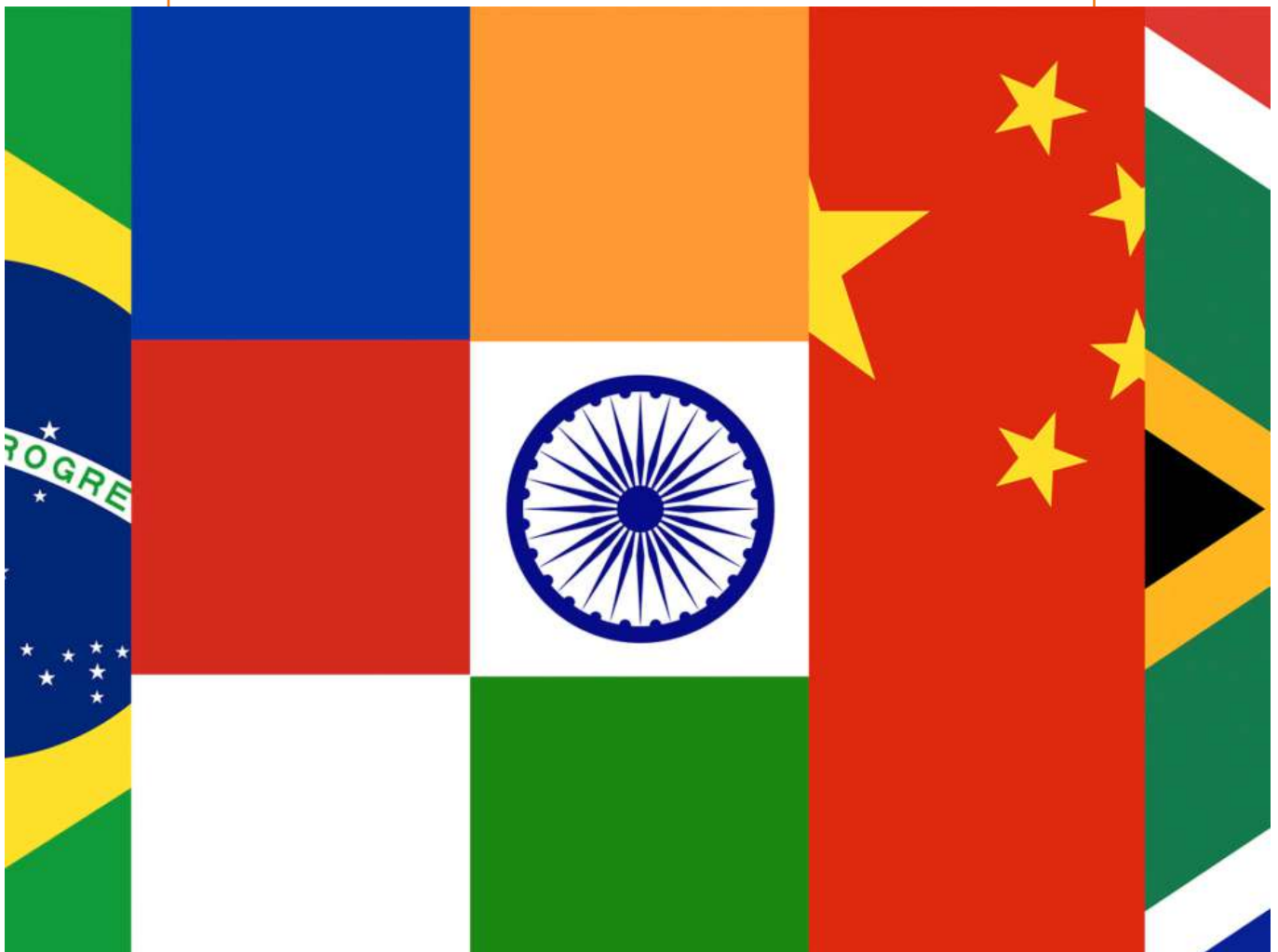
AMITY
UNIVERSITY
— GURUGRAM —

BUSINESS IN **BRICS**

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13th BRICS Summit - September 2021 - Highlights



BRAZIL

RUSSIA

INDIA

CHINA

SOUTH AFRICA

VISION OF HONOURABLE CHANCELLOR



In recognition of the strategic significance of BRICS in global politico-economic architecture, the Centre for BRICS Studies was inaugurated on February 10, 2011 at Amity University Haryana by Dr. Aseem Chauhan, Honourable Chancellor. His dynamic leadership has constantly been a source of inspiration in strengthening and transforming the “Centre for BRICS Studies” into a premier Centre of Excellence in Amity University Haryana promoting high-end research, practice and outreach. The Chancellor’s insight and vision of BRICS dynamism and the politico-economic grouping’s influence in the spheres of multilateral diplomacy, business and socio-cultural relations allowing for extensive research and academic exploration, people-to-people cooperation thereby creating unique diaspora for a large university like Amity University Haryana has been truly a momentous inspiration in making the “Centre for BRICS Studies” a hub for research, knowledge creation and dissemination while effectively addressing emerging challenges in uncertain times. The launching of 8th Volume of the Centre’s Magazine on the occasion of “Innovation Day” reiterates the commitment of the Centre’s endeavour to promote the spirit of academic research through academia-industry-society linkage in conjunction with relentless effort towards innovation, entrepreneurship and capacity building having strong underpinning of practice-research-outreach even during most challenging times of global pandemic, thereby truly epitomizing the vision and charismatic leadership of Hon’ble Chancellor Dr. Aseem Chauhan.

Dr. Aseem Chauhan
Chancellor,
Amity University Haryana

ABOUT AMITY UNIVERSITY HARYANA

Amity University Gurugram is a premier research and innovation driven university in India providing its student with world class academic and learning environment. Spread over a sprawling campus of 110 acres and located in the millennium city of Gurgaon, Amity University Gurgaon has become a stellar destination for students from across the country and abroad. Currently Amity University Gurgaon takes pride of having more than 5000 students in campus thereby creating a vibrant academic environment for all round development. The University is at present offering more than 100 programs in the field of Management, Engineering, Bio-technology, Applied Sciences, Forensic Sciences, Environment, Medical and Allied Health Sciences, Nursing, Journalism & Mass Communications, Liberal Arts, Computer Science, Foreign Language, Law, Architecture, Medical, Commerce, Economics, Fashion, Fine Arts, Liberal Arts, Laser Technology and Optoelectronics and Hotel Management both at undergraduate and post graduate levels, besides offering Doctoral Degree in many of these disciplines. The Centre for BRICS Studies at Amity University Gurgaon is a multi-disciplinary practice-research-outreach initiative comprising representatives from Amity Business School, Amity School of Economics, and Amity School of Languages.



FROM THE
HEAD - CENTRE FOR
BRICS STUDIES AND
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Prof. (Dr.) Padmakali Banerjee

Pro Vice-Chancellor,
Dean Academics,
Amity University Haryana

The world is currently at a crossroads with so many dynamic changes taking place ranging from withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan resulting in Taliban coming into power there to the havoc caused all across the world by various successive waves brought about by COVID-19 global pandemic. Amidst such unprecedented times that is characterized by so much of anxiety and agony amidst COVID-19 global pandemic, the BRICS countries have stood the test of time and come up in a meaningful manner to address the emerging challenges. With BRICS becoming the most formidable politico-economic grouping accounting for around 41% of the global population, 24% of the global GDP and 16% of the global trade its impact can be felt all over the world convincingly. The BRICS community's intervention in politico-economic development in conjunction with socio-cultural upheaval fostering people-to-people contact in an inclusive manner while strongly encouraging women empowerment and universal, affordable, quality education to comply with the tenets of UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Fourth Industrial Revolution are towering contributions to the international geopolitical diaspora. The 13th BRICS Summit recently held and presided over by India in September 2021 can be regarded as a milestone in creating a viable roadmap that can further embolden multilateral cooperation in addressing pressing issues ranging from health and environmental safeguard measures, terrorism, poverty alleviation, innovation, information and communication technology and other strategic issues in such developmental processes that can provide relief and remedy during the uncertain times amidst COVID-19 global pandemic with a sense of urgency in terms of rejuvenation and upliftment of millions of peoples' wellbeing. Today there is a larger necessity to extend humanitarian relief in terms of instilling the message of positive emotions, hope and optimism. The 13th BRICS Summit has deliberated on all such issues extensively thereby providing ray of hope to international community about the resiliency and resolve of this grouping in creating a better world of tomorrow.

I take pride to state that the Centre for BRICS Studies has evolved as a premier Centre of Excellence promoting research, practice and outreach related to emerging geopolitical, business, management and socio-cultural and mental wellbeing among BRICS community. It focuses on high-end research, creation and dissemination of knowledge and information on BRICS, analysis of politico-economic cooperation among BRICS, deliberation on public policy matters, and enhancement of people-to-people contact. I am extremely glad to inform that the Centre for BRICS Studies has been dynamic in relentlessly providing guidance to students on social entrepreneurship to cope with evolving challenges successfully. Currently the Centre for BRICS Studies is also offering Doctoral program on BRICS issues in collaboration with Amity Business School (ABS), apart from existing courses in MBA program in International Business stream at ABS, Amity University Haryana. Also, importantly while keeping track of the latest happenings in BRICS including various Summit meetings, the Centre for BRICS Studies has been at the forefront in providing a major platform for academia-industry integration.

The September 2021 Magazine rolled out by the Centre for BRICS Studies, while deliberating the changing geopolitical and geo-economic dimensions, continues to showcase the Centre's profound academic and intellectual engagement aimed at enhancing people to people cooperation within BRICS community with focus on innovation. I wish the Centre for BRICS Studies the very best in days to come.

About the 'Centre for BRICS Studies' at Amity University Haryana

The Centre for BRICS Studies was inaugurated on February 10, 2011 at Amity University Gurgaon by Dr. Aseem Chauhan, Honourable Chancellor of Amity University Gurgaon. Since then the Centre, under the stewardship of Dr. Padmakali Banerjee, Honourable Pro Vice-Chancellor, Amity University Gurgaon has evolved into a Centre of Excellence in its practice-research-outreach endeavor. Over the years the Centre for BRICS Studies has organized various talk shows, discussion forum, guest lectures and college competition. Students have also submitted research articles on issues related to BRICS economies, which have been sent to journal for review and publication. A BRICS centre has been established in AUH library, which carries news articles related BRICS countries everyday and also research articles, reports, journal and magazines. In order to promote the Centre of BRICS Studies in Amity University Haryana and understand the importance of trade between BRICS nations among students, few initiatives are taken and activities organized for enhancement of understanding and intensification of the cultural contacts between the peoples of BRICS countries through organizing various events, short programmes and courses, including promotion of the languages of BRICS countries.

The goals of the Centre are outlined below:

- To promote high-end research, creating and disseminating knowledge and information on BRICS along three levels:
 - a. Analysis of political and economic processes within BRICS (domestic level);
 - b. Comparative analyses of BRICS (inter-BRICS level);
 - c. Analysis of BRICS activity in the wider realm of international relations (international level).
- To analyze the cooperative agenda of BRICS as an emerging politico-economic bloc and contribute to the debate on public policy through following initiatives:
 - a. Promotion of public debate on BRICS-related issues;
 - b. Publicizing the agenda of the BRICS' to raise public opinion on their achievements;
 - c. Tracking the evolution and dynamics of BRICS cooperation over the years;
 - d. Disseminating information about the initiatives of the Centre for BRICS Studies to larger audience across academia and industry



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BRICS SUMMIT DURING COVID -19 PANDEMIC IN VIRTUAL MANNER – HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND WAY FORWARD TO 13TH BRICS SUMMIT IN 2021

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With the onset of COVID-19 global pandemic, the first BRICS Summit that was held by Moscow in virtual manner in 2020 making a way forward for 2021 Annual Summit and was attended by the heads of states of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The BRICS grouping aims to promote peace, security, development and cooperation. It also aims at contributing significantly to the development of humanity and establishing a more equitable and fair world.

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Moscow summit 2020 sounding as a beacon of hope amidst the Covid 19 pandemic devastated world.

The theme of the Summit was "Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth" and it was held at the invitation of the Russian President Vladimir Putin. The 11th and 12th summit agendas included some common themes related to pandemic mitigation and intra-BRICS cooperation. The 12th summit's specific agenda also included critical global issues such as reforming the multilateral system, the UN and its bodies, counter terrorism operations, trade, health and energy issues and cooperation among BRICS members.

Both the 11th and 12th summits were held amidst the India - China border standoff which emerged in the open in May, 2020. While giving a quick call for a coherent and robust strategy of recovery, the Chinese President was sending mixed signals by doing exactly the same things for "strategic advantage" in matters of interstate trade and commerce as China has been pursuing since the last decade.

Russian president Vladimir Putin said it is difficult to eliminate terrorism because there would always be a black sheep in every family. Putin proposed the speeding up of the creation of vaccine research Centres for BRICS countries.

Modi further delved on India's contribution in helping other countries during the Covid lockdown era. Due to the growing strength of India's pharma sector, India was able to provide medicines to over 150 countries during the early period of the pandemic and reiterated India's efforts at indigenous vaccine production and delivery to its vast population by 2021. Modi promised to promote digital health and traditional medicine among BRICS countries.

He praised Russia's leadership in people-to-people connections such as BRICS film festival, organizing of young scientists meetings etc. Lauding the reforms required in multilateral bodies like IMF, WTO, WHO, Prime Minister Modi said terrorism is the biggest problem the world is facing today since it is funded beyond borders. Modi has been talking of reformed multilateralism for quite some time. In the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, he had said that UN institutions have to move with the changing times, though India's commitments towards UN values have been paramount. He urged the UN to take up the cause of "terrorism" as the biggest challenge of our times.

The Prime Minister can well speak with pride on India's contribution to the UN in the last 50 years, yet question the effectiveness of irrelevant global institutions, which brings a bad name to multilateralism.

The theme of this BRICS Summit is Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth, a theme which is not only contemporary but also future oriented. The world is seeing major geopolitical changes, the effects of which will continue on stability, security and growth.

India's Prime Minister could well focus on recovery since India's Covid 19 numbers have taken a turn for the better. The rate of new infections being reported across the country is at the lowest level in five months, a drop of this magnitude and consistency has been unexpectedly recorded recently. For the first time in months, the Covid situation is under control in all of India's "hot spot" states. By all accounts India is well on the road to recovery and will be in a position of renewed assertions in BRICS vis-à-vis China. There is a new Presidency in the US and Covid-19 being on the decline, the pre Covid world configurations may get back to bring BRICS diplomacy to where it was - jointly working out a strategy to deal with the growing assertiveness of China in the world today. This, to my mind cannot be dealt with without a wider coalition of likeminded democracies. The Chinese officials have repeatedly emphasized the threat of US unilateralism and a new Cold War while keeping in mind the need to checkmate India as a regional hegemon in South Asia. China piped the US to become the EU's largest trading partner, the trade remains skewed, with European imports outstripping its exports. This is the standard Chinese pattern of "induced" dependency it strategizes always, on all states which are its trading partners.

India has tried its level best to come out of this dependency trap since China has also become its largest trading partner in recent years. Through "Atmanirbhar Bharat" she is moving towards strength and assertion vis-à-vis China, to gain a position of equality in the BRICS system.

India stake over as the Chair of BRICS and host the 13th Annual Summit in 2021.

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13TH BRICS SUMMIT CHAIRED BY INDIA: LEADERSHIP SHOWING VISION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

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The 13th BRICS Summit held on September 09, 2021 and chaired by India is widely acknowledged as a turning point in providing renewed vigor and impetus to BRICS politico-economic grouping towards shaping the trajectory of the emerging world order in a rapidly dynamic geopolitical architecture in the wake of ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic. This is the 13th summit held between the BRICS nations. These five nations together represent 41% of the global population, 24% of the global GDP and 16% of the global trade. International community in contemporary global polity considers BRICS to be a rising superpower. Since the 1990s, BRICS countries economic growth is higher than global levels and in future too the BRICS community is expected to grow at a faster rate than rest of the world.

While presiding over the 13th BRICS Summit India has shown visionary leadership while providing new direction to BRICS community by adopting the “New Delhi Declaration” during the Summit. The theme of the 13th BRICS Summit has been ‘BRICS @ 15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation for Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus’ that incorporates the foundational pillars of BRICS cooperation in dealing with pressing global challenges. New Delhi’s recognition and emphasis above stated four Cs further reiterated the spirit and strength of BRICS partnership in addressing the mutual concerns especially with regard to boosting intra-BRICS trade, strengthening counter-terrorism measures by adoption of BRICS Counter Terrorism Action Plan, starting a virtual BRICS Vaccination Research and Development Centre, and promoting green tourism initiative while enhancing the spirit of shared progress in an inclusive manner. During presiding over the 13th BRICS Summit India’s focus has been extensive on issues related to reform of the multilateral system, counter-terrorism cooperation, using digital and technological tools to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and enhancing people-to-people exchanges. In addition to these areas, the leaders also exchanged views on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and other global and regional issues. (<https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/pm-modi-to-chair-13th-brics-meet-today-101631146560669.html>). All these aspects are critical and momentous as India led the way forward in charting out of a strategic roadmap and future direction for BRICS community to achieve in near-global and trans-global dimensions.

Commemorating the achievements of BRICS on the landmark occasion of 15th anniversary the “New Delhi Declaration” reiterated commitment and resolve of member countries to enhancing intra-BRICS cooperation under the three pillars - political and security, economic and financial, and cultural & people-to-people exchanges while promoting shared values of peace, rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and democracy in a more inclusive, equitable and representative multipolar international system. One of the distinctive highlights of the 13th BRICS Summit has been the adoption of Counter-Terrorism Action Plan that allows for implementation of the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Strategy while defining the approach and actions of the grouping towards combating the menace of terrorism (The Times of India, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/brics-has-adopted-a-counter-terrorism-action-plan-pm-modi/articleshow/86078056.cms>). India’s emphasis on dealing with terrorism effectively and with conviction under a setting of reformed multilateral cooperation was duly acknowledged by BRICS community. There was convergence of views on the threat posed by growth of terrorism and extremism, and all BRICS partners agreed to accelerate the implementation of the BRICS action plan on counter-terrorism. While the meeting took place

less than a month after the Taliban regime has taken over Afghanistan following US withdrawal of troops, the joint statement at the conclusion of the 13th Summit expressed concern about developments but did not refer to the insurgent group by name. However, the grouping has called for an “inclusive intra-Afghan dialogue”, even as they underlined the need to prevent the use of Afghanistan’s territory as a launchpad for terror groups. (<https://thewire.in/diplomacy/taliban-takeover-brics-afghanistan-terror-hub-covid-19>).

During the meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi recounted the initiatives taken by India during current year as Chairman of BRICS community, ranging from a collective document on reforming multilateral systems to an agreement on remote sensing constellation. With the agreement on Remote Sensing Satellite Constellation between the BRICS space agencies a new chapter of cooperation has begun, and this can be considered as a landmark development in the history of BRICS. Simultaneously, cooperation between BRICS Customs Departments has further simplified and facilitated boosting intra-BRICS trade enormously especially during the challenging times of COVID-19 pandemic. (https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/34235/Prime_Ministers_Opening_Remarks_at_13th_BRICS_Summit)

The leadership role provided by India during the 13th Annual BRICS Summit in reforming and strengthening the existing multilateral system has been acknowledged by other members of the grouping while expressing confidence that such interventions will play a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of global governance in future. In this context emphasis was given on the following aspects in making efforts towards streamlining the contemporary geostrategic architecture as incorporated in the “New Delhi Declaration” duly adopted during the Summit:

- Making instruments of global governance more inclusive, representative, and participatory to facilitate greater and more meaningful participation of developing and least developed countries, especially Africa, in global decision-making processes and structures and make it better attuned to contemporary realities,
- Being based on inclusive consultation and collaboration for the benefit of all, while respecting sovereign independence, equality, mutual legitimate interests, and concerns to make the multilateral organizations more responsive, effective, transparent, and credible,
- Making multilateral organizations more responsive, effective, transparent, democratic, objective, action-oriented, solution-oriented, and credible, so as to promote cooperation in building international relations based on the norms and principles of international law, and the spirit of mutual respect, justice, equality, mutual beneficial cooperation and realities of the contemporary world,
- Using innovative and inclusive solutions, including digital and technological tools to promote sustainable development and facilitate affordable and equitable access to global public goods for all;
- Strengthening capacities of individual States and international organizations to better respond to new and emerging, traditional and non-traditional challenges, including those emanating from terrorism, money laundering, cyber-realm, infodemics and fake news,
- Promoting international and regional peace and security, social and economic development, and preserve nature’s balance with people-centered international cooperation at its core.

The 13th BRICS Summit also took stock of the evolving geopolitical and health related issues in the wake of ongoing coronavirus pandemic. With cases of COVID-19 soaring again across the world, the BRICS community expressed concern that are reflected in joint statement quite explicitly while highlighting several sensitive political issues which have arisen from the pandemic. Regarding the subject of the study of the origin of the coronavirus, the BRICS said that they supported an investigation that was science-based inclusive of broad expertise, transparent, and timely processes and free from politicisation or interference. Simultaneously, the grouping has called for better international preparedness and enhanced cooperation to fight the pandemic and other current and future health challenges through the mobilization of political support and necessary financial resources.

Overall, the 13th Annual BRICS Summit has been phenomenal in deliberating the pressing challenges faced by BRICS community in emerging world order especially in the aftermath of COVID-19 global pandemic. The Summit highlighted the strategic concerns of member countries and delineated robust action plan in addressing the growing complex challenges in a cohesive manner within the spirits of reformed multilateral cooperation and transparent global governance mechanism.

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IMPLICATIONS OF INDIGENOUS BUSINESS ETHICS OF BRICS COUNTRIES

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When we talk of our commitments to business values, we are often reminded of our indigenous business ethics that we normally acquire from our socio-political surroundings. These indigenous business ethics considerably play a crucial role in the success of modern corporate governance. Many a time in tumultuous situations, ethics does wonder where rule or law fails to mitigate business issues. Therefore, this study takes a dig into understanding prevalent indigenous ethics of the five BRICS countries. In its brief account of business ethics and ethos, the article has explored distinct indigenous ethics idiosyncratic to BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) countries as follows.

1. Brazil

As for Brazil's business ethics, they are enshrined in Portuguese culture and values. Brazilian business environment revolves around *jeitinho* a term referring to private and public connection. As most of the Brazilians love to live a hassle-free life they resort to *jeitinho* for getting things done easily, timely, and unethically (Duarte, 2006). *Jeitinho* is compared with reciprocity strategies and is believed to have the unique characteristic of a valid problem-solving strategy that requires a relationship of sympathy and affinity between the involved parties so that the favor can be offered or requested. The *jeitinho*-based business model is a subject of debate as Rodrigues et al. (2011) identified *jeitinho* as an indigenous psychological construct used as a problem-solving strategy that involves social and cunning tricks to break formal rules.

2. Russia

Although Russian business considerably abstains from discussing codes of ethics in business, many companies in the recent past including LUKoil have not only started formalizing ethical codes for its workers but have also formed a committee to monitor the efficacy of the code (Narizhnaya, 2011). This trend is seen as an example of transforming the economic model from wild capitalism to socially responsible business. Since, Russians like to live by the rules, many companies are adopting codes based on international best practices and include clauses on conflicts of interest and social responsibility. Although, effective codes of conduct are still far from reality in Russia, many initiatives are being taken up to standardize and formalize behavior patterns of manager and employees towards clients. Russian managers are more inclined to apply situational decision rules when solving ethical dilemmas and feel that being loyal to their in-group is a sign of ethical behavior, even if general societal rules are violated (Ardichvili, 2012).

3. India

With its vast reservoir of knowledge enshrined in Vedas and Upanishads, India has set a yardstick not only in business but more importantly in its lifestyle, commitment, and codes of conduct. Let's see India's four indigenous ethics which prove useful for any business or corporate governance.

Panchtatwa: The way panchtatwa (five elements consisting of Land, Water, Air, Fire, and Sky) governs our existence, similarly it has its values. The first element Land expects a business firm to be grounded in physical and pragmatic sense because it must deal with the ground realities concerning all the stakeholders. As for Water, it denotes flexibilities. The attribute of water is such that it takes the shape where it is contained. As for the implication of Air, the way air exists everywhere, similarly, a business firm is expected to observe its employees invisibly in a way that employees remain unaware of being monitored as over-monitoring is one of the impediments in the organizational growth as it deprives an individual to use his/her potential instinctively. As for Fire, it implies termination of wrongdoers and low performers. As for Sky, it connotes hope and endless opportunities for the firm as well as its employees.

Samatva: Samatva in the Gita implies integration, team-spirit, and mutual interdependence. It also implies impartiality as encapsulated in the maxim of vasudhaiv kutumbkam (the belief that whole world is our family) and athithi devo bhav (The visitor is our guest.). Thus, in Indian business environment, a customer or client is equated with God and serving a customer is equal to serving God. It further implies finding right job for right person because every person cannot do everything, but every person is capable of doing something.

Nyas: Nyas in the Gita refers to detachment. To accomplish any work perfectly, it requires utmost concentration which is possible only through detachment. A detached mind is more productive when it comes to taking right decisions; being creative, being visionary, being innovative, and being industrious. Many great leaders of India are examples of nyas including our present prime minister Shri Narendra Modi, Shri Yogi Adityanath, Baba Ramdev, etc.

Sthitpragya: Sthitpragya is a term taken from the Gita (2:54) which is the quality of being firm in every situation no matter be it painful or pleasant. The lesson is 'a successful manager needs to be unperturbed.' Such a person ignores an insult, meaningless fight, and any false allegations. A management with proper combination of values and skills can assure harmony and progress of organization as well as society.

4. China

The indigenous business ethics of China can be traced in Confucian philosophy. The underlying principle of Chinese business ethics lies in the practice of guanxi. Guanxi is a Chinese term that describes an individual's ability to connect or network with people opening doors for new business and facilitates deals for productive business purposes. Guanxi, which bears close resemblance to Network Theory, hypothesizes that "what you know is not so important as who you know. In other words, a person who has a lot of guanxi will be in a better position to generate business than someone who lacks it (Kenton, 2019). Given the conflicts arising out of Guanxi, some effective measures are being taken to improve Chinese business ethics at societal and individual, level.

5. South Africa

South Africa is a country where business culture is still in transitional phase due to a number of social and political inferences and influences. After the Apartheid, the country started redressing the racial imbalances and inequalities with special focus on ethicalities in business by presenting the King's Reports on Corporate Governance for South Africa in 1994. Despite paucity of literature on ethics and values for a business set-up, the African value system is sometimes captured under the term Ubuntu which means a commitment to co-existence, consensus and consultation (Shonhiwa, 2001b:19). Ubuntu is a term in Africa that means "I am because we are.". From business perspective, Ubuntu implies co-existence, empowerment, and enrichment of one and all.

Conclusion

To sum up, this article has made an attempt to understand the psychodynamics and underlying principles of different indigenous ethics found in the business environment of five BRICS countries. The study concludes that a business organization should have ethical plus lawful governance in parallel from societal, individual, and organizational perspectives. It is hoped that the outcome of this study will help today's business managers in decision-making especially when they face regulatory, contextual, cultural, political, and socioeconomic challenges in their day-to-day business functioning.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES BEFORE BRICS NATIONS (BRAZIL, RUSSIA, INDIA, CHINA, AND SOUTH AFRICA) IN NEW NORMAL

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The world has several multilateral organizations which contribute to the socio-economic development of their member's economies. These economies have been grouped based on their political, economic, and regional interests. BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) is one of the popular organizations. Their size of economy is significantly large and collectively these countries contribute approximately 24% of global GDP. Trade and Commerce, among countries are based on not only financial and economic fundamentals but also on political, relationship of different countries and contemporary geo-political issues.

In Brazil deforestation is big issue causing the climate change. The Amazon is often described as the "lungs of the world" - for good reason. But the lungs are collapsing due to man-made fires and creating illegal deforestation. On political front the country is also facing lack of strong leadership, social issues like increasing rate of crime, inequality among the population. Accountable, responsible, and representative leadership and public service are fundamental to revitalizing the social contract and sustainable socioeconomic growth of any economy, and when societies and living standards start moving backwards, people are engaged in social protest, causing unrest in the operational system. Irresponsible and unsocial leaders can take advantage of the fear and uncertainty created due to information gap and sense of injustice and inequality.

Russia is facing disturbance on civic activism. The government has imposed many restrictions especially on privacy rights in last few years. The government has introduced many new bills in the summer of 2020. During COVID-19 regime. Since more than a year, it has been noticed that the authorities filed 170 administrative and 42 criminal cases against spreading fake, or false information about the spread of COVID infection. Initially, the health workers have faced shortage of necessary equipment to fight against COVID-19, but when they reported the matter to the higher authorities, then they have been threatened to lose their jobs. However, the government also failed to provide correct and transparent way of getting views and information about COVID -19 outbreak in hospital and for people with disability. Many Moscow hospitals suspended provision of legal abortion during the pandemic, even though it is an essential time-sensitive medical procedure that cannot be delayed. School children faced lot of distress, in COVID-19 pandemic, due to their isolation, and burden of distance learning. Being away from school also made them away from their mind. Due to COVID protocol the freedom of assembly was also compromised and people for detained for even peaceful protest the government policies. Many human right activists have been sentenced to jail by the courts in few years. The government also curtailed freedom of association. Russian authorities never investigated credible complaints of torture and fabricated evidence. Russia is also facing challenge of price war in oil and natural gas segment due to higher export by its enemy US. Hence, there is setback on their GDP growth due to imbalance between demand supply of oil and natural gas. The country is also facing high level of corruption and leading to poor rating of institutions, resulting to poor level of governance and satisfaction among the common man. Trust of people towards government policies, its functions has deteriorated gradually. This overall environment is forcing people to migrate from the country, leading to reduction in consumption and other economic activities.

South Africa is also facing high growth of poverty, sense of inequality in the population and disparities in accessing public services rendered by the government to the common man. These issues directly hamper the economic growth of any country and widen the gap between rich and poor, which further lead to corruption. President Cyril Ramaphosa took office in 2018, after a series of corruption scandals under the administration of his predecessor, Jacob Zuma. Zuma, elected in 2009, resigned under intense pressure in early 2018.

Macro-economic factors in the economy like low prices for commodity exports, weak investor confidence, policy uncertainty, violent crime, periodic anti-immigrant violence, labor unrest, and protests over public service delivery, corruption and rigid local labor markets have contributed to slow down the economic growth of South Africa.

Due to large population China and India, having unemployment and poverty as standing problems. Since there is a difference in political structure between India and China, the problems have been presented in different way. Unemployment leads to attract antisocial elements to create continuous disturbance and work for the instability of present government, which surely disturbs the intrinsic value and face value of such countries.

In 2019 end, when the COVID pandemic has been diagnosed in China, most of the country took significant time to anticipate the impact of this COVID breakdown on their economies. They were clueless about how long they will face recession in the economy. These countries have challenges to fulfill expectations of their domestic population as well outside poor countries to extent support for medical infrastructure on urgent basis. The tax collection of states has decreased drastically, and expenditure has increased, which has created wider the gap between revenue and expenditure leading to high deficit. High deficit is also significant economic impact on other macroeconomic variable like inflation, rate of interest, planned and unplanned expenditure etc. India houses world biggest biopharmaceutical companies, with enormous capacities to produce bioproducts for immunization. The BRICS, under the chairmanship of India since January this year, should agree to launch, with the outmost urgency, a series of summits and ministerial meetings - foreign affairs, health and science and technology - to address equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines among their own population as well as to the world at large in a true display of humanity and solidarity. During latest BRICS virtual summit held on September 9, 2021, Indian prime minister Sri Narendra Modi had outlined four priority areas; like Reform of the Multilateral System, Counter-Terrorism, Using Digital and Technological Tools for achieving SDGs and Enhancing People to People exchanges.

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MANAGING MOUNTING INDO-CHINA CONFLICTS: FINDING SOLUTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES AMONG BRICS ALLIANCE



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BRICS at a Glance

From the leap of time and inception the alliance has undergone a consistent transformational phase, while the analysts also projected this alliance to be strongest superpower of the world in the times of 21st Century. The formation of this bloc had a critical responsibility to create and build a new marketplace through consolidation of international efforts. The formation of BRICS was a step towards construction of new era of globalization in contrast to the western unipolar power. BRICS is an important grouping bringing together the major emerging economies from the world, comprising 42% of the world population, having 23% of the world GDP and over 16% share in the world trade. BRICS countries have been the main engines of global economic growth over the years. At the same time, BRICS has emerged as a major factor in a peaceful, prosperous and multi polar world. Some of the role of BRICS includes: Promotion of technological information exchange, achievement of regional development, removal of trade barriers, optimal use of resources, economic development, improvement of professional development and education of countries.

Indo-China Conflict Status-quo

Mounting tensions among the two giant countries India and China have throttled alliance members of BRICS to paralyze the growth engine of alliance. With COVID-19 and current situation both the sides conflict with issues related to border security and trade. Disturbances on the border started early in May 2020 and later had strains of hand fight on the banks of Galwan river valley on Indo-China border resulted fatal and severe casualties at both the strings. Few researchers and experts state that the tension on 3380 km spread border between the two nations is result of western imperialism. Besides border issues between the two nations China's action of expanding its military influence in South Asia has marked its intent on the doubt chart of other nations as well with India. India's affinity with US is one of the biggest dilemmas which China is dealing with in the scenario where the entire world is aware about the US-China trade war. While India is known to be one of the strongest soft powers in the world with largest democratic setup, on the other hand China is known for its autocracy. However, the fact lies that both the nations have not opened firearms on the border issue. Foreign ministries from both the ends have emphasized with measures to normalize the current situation and preventive measures in such a way that these incidents do not happen again in future. The sides also agreed to adhere earlier agreements on border problems and recourse measures.

Facts & Figures

During the years 2018 to 2020, the import to India from China rose from 13% to 14% percent which majorly comprised electronics, pharmaceuticals, and auto parts. On similar lines and volume, the Indian exports to

China also grew from 5.1 % to 5.3% in 2018-19 until February 2020. The main exports during this period comprised ores, slags, mineral fuels, and other industrial products. Chinese investment in India is over \$26 billion with most of the Chinese companies increasing the quantum of investments and funding starts up. It can be drawn from the statistics that India heavily relies upon China for imports and any disruption shall further have substantial effects on both the sides. It is an open secret that India is largest market of Chinese products outside its territory. Trade reports from leading report makers post an investment over USD 4 billion in technology-based Indian starts up since year 2015. Chinese electronic giant Xiaomi leads the Indian smart phone market with nearly 30% market share followed by Realme, Oppo, Vivo and Samsung. While the combat with pandemic is and will be a big challenge in front of India, banning more than 59 Chinese Apps is a big decision from the Indian side. Since India is a market with more than 574 million internet users the ban is big blow for the Chinese IT industry in the app business. Some of the Chinese apps which are banned in India are Tik Tok, US Browser and We-chat which are estimated to have approximately 120-400 million users on multiple platforms. The ban leads to phenomenal loss and thus shall have huge impact on revenues of Chinese firms.

Challenges for India

- While India has made its opposition to the Belt and Road Initiative clear, all other SCO members have embraced the Chinese project.
- The growing closeness of Russia and China might prove to be worrisome for India.
- India's bilateral trade with Central Asia and Russia is very low compared to China's trade with Russia and Central Asia.

Conclusion - Map for Better Future

BRICS is a vital assertion of federalism at supra national level. The governments of BRICS member countries are working in collaboration with international development agencies for fiscal measures and boost trade. BRICS is an integration of emerging economies and major markets of world comprising Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, Republic of India, Peoples Republic of China, and the Republic of South Africa. In the immediate Post Covid-19 years, BRICS need to refocus on its long-term vision of forging south-south cooperation and building an alternative multilateral financial architecture in response to the developing world's needs. It cannot be denied that China has been in the eye of storm since the Covid-19 pandemic began. Whether it be tough stands at the home corner, or supply of defective personal protection kits, suspicion on China to suppress facts regarding the medical casualties in Wuhan, (the epicenter of coronavirus) has pushed China to being on the "defensive" in the world of today. With belief and focus on resolving issues by bilateral talks on conflicting issues the two giant neighbours - India and China - it is expected that common interests may be found from both sides to maintain international peace and strengthen BRICS alliance.

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THE TURBULENCE IN THE AIR POCKET CALLED AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPACT ON BRICS COUNTRIES.

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The crisis in Afghanistan is, most certainly, causing turbulence in BRICS countries too. Whether it's India, China or Russia, there have been many speculations related to their reactions, endorsements, and the impact on their economy. Russia, China and India have had their history with Afghanistan and the world is watching them for their riposte on the latest occurrences. China, categorically spoke about chances of discussion on Afghanistan during the 13th BRICS summit. So far BRICS countries have maintained respectful communication and fine collaboration and, it is yet to be seen that, in the aftermath of the crisis, what kind of equation is built among these countries. We do hope that the countries continue to see eye to eye in regional issues and common interests.

India finds itself in a tight position. India has so far maintained its staunch commitment towards fighting terrorism. Top security officials of the BRICS nations adopted an action, committed to combating terrorism and terror financing. There is a grave concern of escalating tension as the aftermath of Taliban control, and the expected step up of terrorist activities in the region. India has been constantly pitching its concern over extremism, radicalisation and terrorism.

But, to remain hostile to Taliban brings its own bag of woes for India. With China and Pakistan endorsing Taliban, India finds itself isolated in the region. Other than that, India has high stakes in the region. The reconstruction and developmental work, India had undertaken, has halted unexpectedly. This will result in heavy losses for the country economically and politically. On top of that, Taliban's statement regarding voicing Muslim's voice in Kashmir has deepened India's fears and leave it no choice but to continue to oppose Taliban's government formation.

Meanwhile China and Russia have established contacts with Taliban and their embassies continue to hold their business as usual. While China was indiscrete in showing their support, Russia spoke more diplomatically. It's President Putin stated that they expect Taliban to stay civilised and they would remain channels of communication open with Taliban to save Afghanistan from disintegration. It is quite clear that American evacuation has been a victory for Russia. This was the band aid they had been waiting for to cover up wounds of their broken egos. So, as Russia continues to evacuate its citizens from Afghanistan for security reasons, it has its embassies and option of dialogue open.

Although, the potential risk of terrorism is real for all countries nevertheless Russia may try to reinforce its position in Central Asia via Afghanistan.

China has maintained the similar position and kept its embassy open too while others shifted it to UAE. It is, therefore, not unusual for China to project Taliban as an "important military and political force in Afghanistan". China is visibly the most significant partner of Taliban. Within a month, the Afghan government fell and as the Taliban proceeded to rule the country, it said China is the most important partner of the Taliban and this is not a speculation but the statement of Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid himself. The new Silk road, the infrastructure initiative of China, is purported as an opportunity for Taliban to reach the markets all over the world. This is the reason why China is advocating Taliban as terror free and inclusive government. As per China, it is Afghanistan's only chance to have a land free of Foreign military intervention. Under the garb of peace China could be nurturing its own selfish motives but only time will tell the reality.

Countries like South Africa and Brazil will be majorly impacted due to the influx of Afghan refugees. South Africa has been receiving requests to accommodate refugees as they travel en-route their final destinations for which they have showed inability for want of better resources.

The BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) brings together five of the largest developing countries of the world, representing 41 per cent of the global population, 24 per cent of the global GDP and 16 per cent of the global trade. As the crisis unfolds in Afghanistan, it is inevitable that its implications are felt at every corner of the world. The 13th Summit of BRICS held on 9th September and chaired by India, with its theme of cooperation and continuity, consolidation and consensus, has expressed concerns on Afghanistan and Taliban unfurl. The peace in Central Asia and many other parts of the world will rest on the countries in the region and their responsible tackling of the issues in Afghanistan. Most of the countries have remained tight lipped so far and the need of the hour is one leader who can show the path towards peace, harmony and cooperation.

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COPING WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 IN BRICS COUNTRIES: ROLE OF CREATIVITY AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

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COVID -19 outbreak has been referred to as loneliness pandemic (Santos,2020). The fear of getting infected from the virus, social distancing and lockdown have adversely affected mental health of individuals. Further working from home, limited or no social interactions with outside world, financial pressures and altered daily routines has also added to the psychological distress of people. Research in China has documented an increase in the levels of depression and anxiety, stress, and panic disorders post COVID-19 outbreak (Qiu et al. 2020; Wang et al. 2020). Similarly, Roy et. al. (2020) also reported high anxiety among Indians. Researchers have also found evidence of high prevalence of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress symptoms in Brazilian general population during COVID-19 pandemic (Goularte et.al.2021). The mental health consequences of the sudden disruptions in the daily lives of people brought about by the pandemic poses substantial challenge in countries like India, South Africa and Brazil who have limited mental health infrastructure, high rates of poverty and unemployment.

Despite an increase in emotional and psychological difficulties during the COVID-19 crisis, there have been reports of people engaging themselves in creative pursuits like painting, art, cooking etc. and learning new skills through online classes all over social media. Creative expressions and innovative solutions have enabled people not only deal with boredom and limited resources available during the outbreak but also enabled them to bolster their psychological strengths. The current psychosocial crisis has also enabled a lot of people to look back at their lives, reframe their life goals, differentiate between needs, and wants and identify their strengths and resources. Corona pandemic has also evidenced creative uses of technology in healthcare, education, business etc.

Psychological strengths like creative adaptability and resilience have always played as protective factors in dealing with fear and uncertainty during times of uncertainty. Creativity has been posited to be essential for coping with unexpected life challenges (Moreno & Moreno, 1944) and high creativity has also been found to be associated with low stress and the ability to adapt (Runco,2014). Researchers have mentioned the ways in which artists and public health professionals can collaborate effectively to promote wellbeing of local communities (Cameron, Crane, Ings & Taylor 2013). Actively engaging in artistic, literary and other creative endeavors has been proposed to be linked with increased wellbeing and improved coping during the pandemic (Kapoor & Kaufman,2020).

Creative problem solving is an effective way of dealing with stress. In March 2020 India announced nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus. Several thousands of migrant labourers became jobless and could not travel to their native places as the transportation facilities were also halted. In this scenario the actor Sonu Sood in India coordinated with government and transportation agencies and reached out to the migrant labourers through social media platform to send them to their home states.

Another factor that has been particularly found to act as a protective factor for mental health during COVID-19 pandemic is resilience (Li et. al, 2021). Psychological resilience has been described as a dynamic process of positive adaptation to a significantly adverse situation (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000). In times of pandemic, community action is a significant component of public health system (Laverack & Manoncourt, 2016). Community resilience is the ability of communities to cope with and bounce back from large-scale emergencies (Patel et al., 2017). In India, Odisha has effectively demonstrated community engagement to cope with pandemic. Gram panchayats were assigned the responsibility of isolating and managing suspected cases. Under Mission Shakti Program, women led campaigns to spread awareness about hand washing, social distancing, and motivating people to contribute essential items and cooked meals for poor and disadvantaged sections of the society (WHO, 2020).

Community of Lujiazui in Shanghai, China demonstrated effective response strategies towards COVID-19 through public participation, information sharing, engagement of volunteer groups and collaborative action (Zhang, Zhao, Liu & Chen, 2021). An outbreak management map was developed and colored entrance identification were issued to residents. The different colors represented different people (Red for healthy person, white refers to a person in quarantine). The map showed the risk level in the community of Lujiazui, and helped the authorities to identify risk hotspots in the community.

The adverse effects of COVID-19 on economy and physical health of people in BRICS countries is huge and long lasting. The mental health implications of the pandemic are also equally disturbing and need to be addressed by mental health care strategies based on positive psychological perspective. Social isolation and physical distancing aimed to contain spread of coronavirus has added to the vulnerability of people. There is a strong need to promote and build community resilience through participatory creativity intervention programs as creativity and resilience have been found to be associated particularly in response to adverse situations (Metzl and Morrell, 2008).

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SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN BRICS: DRIVING SUSTAINED, HIGH-IMPACT SOCIAL CHANGE

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Businesses in today's contemporary times have entered into a new paradigm of management. Its transformation from an 'organization' to an 'institution' is giving a new dimension to way of doing business integrated with the social dimensions. Inclusive growth and development has become one of the top most goals to accomplish in their schema of achievements. The BRICS partnership has been portrayed as an accelerator of growth and the alliance can collectively assert the high impact social development. BRICS pronouncement focuses at a broader dimension of growth which is inclusive of social and sustainable transformation. Social enterprises in these countries play a significant role in bringing changes in dimensions of social development.

Globally, societies are riddled with multiple problems and long-standing issues that remain unresolved by the institutions and the government sector. This is where social enterprises step in to challenge, question and rethink concepts and assumptions. They work on the existing infrastructure, plugging the gaps, providing time and innovative solutions to alleviate problems that exist at the grassroots level. These innovators have pioneered sustainable approaches and inclusive business models, and serve as a clear demonstration that these models of innovations can indeed bring the change required.

Social enterprises in Brazil have risen to alleviate the challenges faced in Brazil in terms of poverty, income inequality, social upliftment and community development. They are creating innovating solutions to the social problems thus leading to a positive impact in reducing poverty, enhancing basic education, and economic inclusion. Educational centers such as The Center for Digital Inclusion is present in low-income communities, prisons, psychiatric institutions and care for people with physical disabilities, indigenous villages, and public schools by bringing technology to the classroom. Social entrepreneurs in the country are evolving to tackle the needs of the marginalized masses. Across the country, these entrepreneurs are exploring sustainable solutions to scarcity challenges, including access to affordable housing, health care services, and information technology.

On July 26, 2019 Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law fixing the term of social entrepreneurship, which combines the tasks of business and charity. The special status provides entrepreneurs implementing an important social mission with prior support of the state. That is envisioned by the National Project 'Small and medium-sized entrepreneurship and support of entrepreneurship initiative'. Contemporary statistics show that there are more than 50,000 social enterprises in Russia which are combining market-based solutions and charity. The law empowered the federal and regional authorities extend support to the existing and emerging social enterprises and further develop and facilitate and resolve issues related financial, advisory, taxation, property, and education, etc. The adoption of the new law encouraged the establishment and development of social enterprises in various states of Russia.

Social enterprises in India have been successful in bringing the much-required transformative change in the society. History of development of the social enterprises goes long back with creation of Amul, SEWA, Lijjat and others. The movement has gained momentum since then with more and more new age entrepreneurs joining in with creation of enterprises addressing the fundamental needs of the community with innovative product and services and through their transformative leadership taking the way forward. Many contemporary large organizations had a very humble beginning like CRY, Goonj, Boond, and SEWA to name a few.

Social enterprises gave a new dimension to India's inclusive growth. Modern ideas and innovative solutions to challenges have facilitated community development by providing employment and livelihoods to substantial number of people across the country. Social impact and entrepreneurship are deeply rooted in the Indian culture. Cooperative and community-owned business models like Amul and Fabindia have long existed in India encouraging social entrepreneurship. The Indian social enterprise ecosystem is one of the most developed in Asia, with an increasing number of domestic and international investors and support institutions. These enterprises are meeting their objectives by innovating and involving people in a range of income-generating activities: facilitating services; development of entrepreneurial support system; sales; and manufacturing. They are the key accelerators in filling gaps of India's inclusive growth story.

China among the BRICS along with its economic growth observed a promising growth of social enterprises generating employment opportunities, addressing the community issues, social well being of the local community thus filling the gaps in the social arena of the country. Local governments have been actively engaged formulating regulatory guidelines, making financial support available and making public aware of the contributions of social enterprises which has led to the rapid growth of social institutions in the country. Social entrepreneurs have written significant growth story in China in spite facing challenges in the lack of support from the government, lack of funds, not getting due recognition from the community in the early years of development. But with the support of the local governments these enterprises have emerged as the driving force for resolving various social, economic and environmental issues.

Social enterprises in South Africa have emerged as a development actor in addressing the social needs of the country and have emerged as a leading country in the Africa in growth of these enterprises. These enterprises do not face any major regulatory barrier and the policy environment is favorable for their growth in the country. South Africa has the most developed infrastructure in Africa, but access to basic services for low-income communities remains a distant dream. The emerging sectors of growth are health, education, and energy sectors, but their presence is still limited. Though commercial credit is available, major source of funding of social enterprises has been grants provided by large corporations as a part of their CSR strategy. The health, energy and education sector provide promising opportunities social entrepreneurial growth in South Africa by providing innovative and sustainable products and services, providing low cost education to the community, and good quality health care services.

Social enterprises are playing a key role in fostering inclusive growth in BRICS community. In recent years they have gained considerable attention for their capability and adaptability of combining economic and social goals through innovative and sustainable strategies. A need for more inclusive development calls for rapid development, and adequate support infrastructure of these enterprises. Increasingly socially responsible investment across the globe has revolutionized the growth of social enterprises. Supportive government and collaborative institutions can considerably impact the growth story of the social enterprises. This is the right time for the social enterprises to flourish, to address and make positive impact to the world's most challenging issues in the dimensions of healthcare, climate change, development of renewable energy resources, education, sustainable production and consumption patterns.

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INDIA AS ROLE MODEL WITH AATMANIBHAR BHARAT TO MAKE SELF-SUSTAINABLE BRICS COUNTRIES POST COVID-19: PEOPLE TO PEOPLE COLLABORATION | BUSINESS GROWTH

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Under the recent development of BRICS countries, India has led the way of showcasing its “Aatmanirbhar Bharat” initiative in COVID19 times to showcase BRICS partners a self-reliant and positivism; a positive approach to improve the conditions of other BRICS members even during adverse conditions. India showed that COVID-19 has proven to be blessing in disguise for progressive countries like India that has initiated working to become self-reliant with campaign called Aatmanirbhar Bharat and suggested the BRICS countries to strengthen the same context in their countries to become self-reliant.

“When India speaks of becoming self-reliant, it doesn’t advocate a self-centred system. In India’s self-reliance there is a concern for the whole world’s happiness, cooperation and peace”
(<https://transformingindia.mygov.in>)

Hon’ble PM, Shri Narendra Modi

India highlighted its ‘Atamnirbhar Bharat’ model which can act as a force multiplier for the global economy in the post-COVID-19 world. For Example, In the healthcare segment, India has played a vital role in supplying lifesaving drugs and medicine to the world community.

Example of ‘Self-reliant’ can be seen with PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) kit which was zero at the time of first lockdown to now it is producing 2 lakh PPE kits daily and growing steadily proving its mettle to the world to be self-sufficient and utilizing the resources properly.

Another significant example comes from manufacturing of life support system, generally known as ventilator that uncovering the potential opportunities from automobile sector to utilize their unit by producing ventilators.

Hon’ble Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi has always emphasized on Skilled India, Better India, Productive India and thereby becoming Self-Reliant and giving push to Indian Economy. To create such enabling environment, numerous initiatives have been taken to build a 5 Trillion Dollar Economy, such as Skill India, Digital India, Startup India etc. Besides that, various schemes have been in the pipeline to nurture employment and creating conducive environment for making the pathway for faster growth. Considering youth population of India in hand, more

active participation and utilization of youth power for better employment and self-reliance, have the potential to build India a superpower and thus the notion of Aatmanirbhar Bharat can be visualized from the broad spectrum.

Accordingly, Aatmanirbhar Bharat model is trying to cover the nation economy through following ways.

1. **Creating Jobs:** Being Self Reliant means more emphasis on startups, MSMEs, better policy driven agenda for large corporates.
2. **India's GDP:** India's Micro Small and Medium Enterprises sector, comprised of 36 million units that provide employment for more than 80 million people, now accounts for over 37% of the country's GDP. Each new addition to these 36 million units makes use of even more resources like land, labor and capital to develop products and services that add to the national income, national product and per capita income of the country. This growth in GDP and per capita income is again one of the essential goals of economic development.
3. **Exports:** This is an important ingredient of economic development since it provides access to bigger markets and leads to currency inflows and access to the latest cutting-edge technologies and processes being used in more developed foreign markets. Another key benefit is that this expansion that leads to more stable business revenue during economic downturns in the local economy.
4. **Community Development:** Here it comprises development of infrastructure, education, training leads to better sustainable growth.

Under 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', India is focusing on 5 major and significant Pillars viz

1. Economy
2. System
3. Infrastructure
4. Demography
5. Demand

And that will be implemented in a gradual manner.

- **Phase-I: Businesses including MSMEs**
- **Phase-II: Poor, including migrants and farmers**
- **Phase-III: Agriculture**
- **Phase-IV: New Horizons of Growth**
- **Phase-V: Government Reforms and Enablers**

In Phase I the focus will be on building Entrepreneurial Capacity of our nation. There has been a comprehensive package of 20 Lakh Crore which is about 10% of India GDP to push the economy post COVID-19. With this campaign #Vocalforlocal and make them global has also been initiated.

To increase the capacity of Micro Small & Medium Enterprises sector and working capital push, Government has extended loans to MSMEs companies which needs additional funding to meet operational liabilities and restart their business. Approx. 3 Lakh Crore loan and Equity Infusion of Rs 50,000 Cr in MSMEs will take place.

Another most significant decision which has been taken Indian government is disallowed global tender below Rs 200 Cr for Government Procurements giving clear signal for Vocal for local and leading by example. BRICS Countries has lot to learn from this and can make their nation product first manufacture internally and export globally.

Further, India is also focusing on building E-Market place with fast track investments and clearances. It has initiated various ranking models to increase the competitiveness amongst its states to bring efficiency and efficacy at faster pace.



The most significant step that India has taken is that it has identified new champion sectors such as use of Solar PV manufacturing, Electric Vehicles, Reducing Coal consumption, Advance Cell battery usage etc which has the capability to outperform and contribute to nation growth responsibly. To give a boost to these sectors, India has already identified 3376 Industrial parks in 5 lakh hectares with GIS mapping for new investments in Land and SEZ spaces.

BRICS nation can take a brilliant lesson to push their economy which is environment friendly with a scope of vast growth opportunities. .

A nation needs security and country like India which is developing fast as comparison to other nearby countries, it needs a strong defence system as well. Another significant self-reliant model India has shown in the defense sector promoting Make in India Campaign in which defence ministry has notified list of weapons/platforms on which they'll be banning to import with year wise timelines giving clear signal to Indian industry to move ahead with capacity and will improve autonomy, accountability and efficiency in Ordnance Supplies by Corporatization of Ordnance Factory Board. An important initiative has been taken in the FDI policies as well that FDI limit in defense manufacturing under automatic route will be raised from 49% to 74% with a strong focus on Focus on Aircraft, Atomic Energy, Space activities, Tariff reforms etc.

Other BRICS Countries need to bring major reforms in their government working structure to strategies their internal working to promote growth. India has taken bold steps to reform several policies which were almost 50 years old and has matched at par with global competitiveness.

Countries like Brazil can work on their strength build a sustainable growth for economy. Their 13% of Population above 14 years is not working, and its economy has only recently started showing positive sign of growth recovering from 2014 recession. Despite being 8th largest economies in the world, its export is still very low.

Similarly, South Africa which has rich mining resources, and it also produces and export of world's largest part of gold, platinum and exports a significant amount of coal and diamonds, and thus it can push off its FDI investment to make it a global manufacturing hub in various industries.

To sum up, to be an Atmanirbhar or self-reliant, Nation must build a cross fencing across the major decisions like structural changes in Polices, creating conducive environment for startups, a strong political will to implement the policies at grass root level etc. making it growth driven environment friendly. India is paving its way to become Trillion Dollar Economy with self-reliant policy. Next 10 Years would be worth to watch the economic growth of these BRICS Countries, who'll encase the opportunities and who'll be the laggard?

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BRICS: EMERGING PLAYERS IN GLOBAL ECONOMY

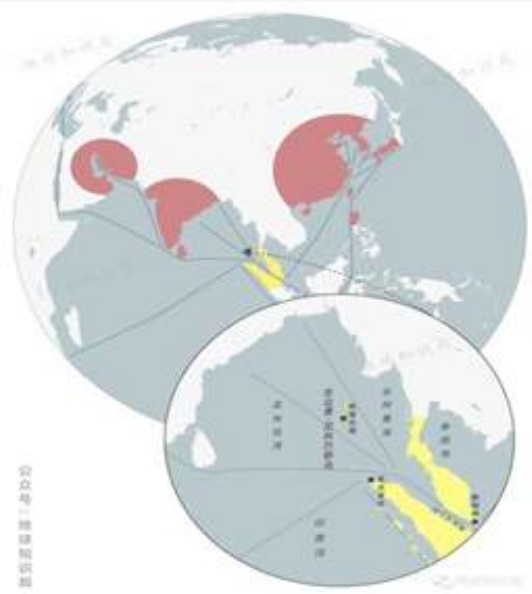
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BRICS, an abbreviation for Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, a group of five influential and emerging economies successfully completed its fifth annual summit in Durban during March 26-27, 2013. A significantly unique feature of the group is its geographical spread as evident from the location of these five constituent states which are situated in four continents. The article seeks to explain the phenomenon of the disparate group BRICS through literature in Critical Geography as it is understood that the recent phase of globalization has created spatial patterns which were hitherto not experienced and therefore not clearly recognized in the literature on International Relations and traditional geography. With time changes take place. after WWII, when entire east Asian communities turn up in the first lane of corridor, consumption of energy increased; despite lack of resources(energy resources), they starts importing oil from middle eastern countries mostly. Malacca become the most reasonable and mainstream route for the oil stake holders in Middle East region. Today, 90% of the oil big tankers in China's extreme South China Sea will take the course of Malacca. China has sent for a long time and plans to guarantee oil wellbeing through broadened wellsprings of oil imports. Up until this point, it has just assumed a part in mitigating the weight on the Malacca course. Similarly, created economies, for example, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong additionally rely upon Malacca for endurance, and mechanical items delivered in different nations and districts should likewise be traded along the reverse channel. Globalization has brought about a shift in economic and political power away from the advanced economies of the west and here we will talk about the epicenter of new global economy and how BRICS has unlocked the growth potential in the 21st century and how it's assessing the countries with similar economic characteristics rather than a legitimate grouping of nations. Although the BRICS shares certain advantages, where India has emerged as a key global provider of services and Brazil, Russia has become major exporter of raw materials, resources that China and India requires for their industrialization.

It is difficult to anticipate this long energy repository, the Strait of Malacca is Singapore toward one side and Banda Aceh at the other; in any case, if the presence of the Andaman Islands keeps on fortifying, it might be possible that it will end up being another "interface Or a link". Hence, Malacca turned into the immediate lifeline of East Asia. The Andaman Islands resemble another gateway that is outside Malacca. Albeit restricted by the national power of India at that point and the drawn-out worldwide circumstance, this gateway has been available to the world, however, its significance in the advanced and contemporary international structure has not vanished. Unobtrusively rises on national power come into existence.

During the 1980s, India attempted to reinforce its military presence in the archipelago. Malaysia and Indonesia kept up a serious extent of cautiousness against this, stressing India would utilize the military bit of leeway brought by the island's



military to stop encompassing zones. Around then, India's public and military force didn't have a staggering favorable position over the previously mentioned nations, and its strategy was generally moderate, so it was more limited and just kept up a low-level garrison. .

India still stands strong at the North Indian Ocean, however, the inheritance of British India, still in place; northeast and the Andaman Islands are the best examples and seeds of the eastward expansion of the colonial regime. The Indian Party, generally supports its own national identity and interest and that has progressively looked for the status of as one of the biggest driving force in the diplomacy, besides its tact has more dynamic and more active. Subsequent to getting to work, present government would like to extend economic participation with Southeast Asian countries, put forth all binaries with different nations to build up a territorial collaboration component to expand India's regional and sub-regional impact. India's diplomacy mechanism for Southeast Asia has additionally been fortified from "Look East" to "Act East". The developing requirement for pride in patriotism is unending. A modest quantity can help self-assurance and join the individuals, yet this minimal effort delight is effectively addictive. On the off chance that the administration that induces patriotism needs to stop, it is equivalent to selling out the rudiments of its citizens. Consequently, it can just keep on making a scene of the nation's solid ascent, and increment the portion to shape a cycle.

It is difficult to predict that whether the government tied the people to the chariot or the government is riding a tiger on a tiger; but one thing is clear that India's goal of becoming a supreme power will not change. While the country has deep pockets, there are economic and financial challenges at home, and if things go belly up domestically it could put strains on President Xi Jin ping's ambitions. As the Chinese general Sun Tzu wrote in "The Art of War" two and a half millennia ago, "first count the cost." So a million dollar question for China is: What kind of great power does China aim to? Of course, China wants to be in no 1 in Asia, its backyard and at the regional level, projections of the Middle Kingdom's economic growth, population size and defense spending suggest it will have outstripped the U.S. by 2030. However, being a regional head in power politics isn't the same as being a global superpower—a concept first used to describe the British Empire, the Soviet Union and the U.S. Here's one definition:

"A 'superpower' is a country that has the capacity to project dominating power and influence anywhere in the world, and sometimes, in more than one region of the globe at a time, and so may plausibly attain the status of global hegemon." China is already an economic superpower. At purchasing power parity, which adjusts the value of a dollar for what it can buy in a given country, China now has a larger economy than the U.S. The gap is only likely to grow, given that China has far more people making and buying things, and they're likely to get richer than they are today.

Just looking at the scale of an economy in terms of what it can buy domestically may be misleading, however. Superpowers buy military bases, influence and goods abroad. The high-tech stealth fighters they purchase have an international price. The dollars that China invests through its Belt and Road Initiative to connect with markets around the world are just dollars, with the same purchasing power as anyone else's. One way to measure how much extra buying power China has on the global market each year is to look at its GDP growth in current dollars, unadjusted for inflation or purchasing power parity. That paints a different picture. And the most remarkable part of China's military modernization which gives an impression of China's aspiration for becoming a super power and that even accounting for a large suspected underreporting of defense spending in official statistics. As China's defense spending has risen from around \$19 billion in 1989 to \$228 billion in 2016 dollars, and on present day it's \$320 billion the cost as a percentage of GDP has barely changed, probably remaining below 2 percent. As a share of government spending, the burden imposed on China by its defense budgets has actually fallen to a third of what it once was.

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BRICS: A POTENTIAL STRATEGIC FORUM FOR INDIA

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The BRICS, a bloc comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, has expanded rapidly in its short existence. It has over the years expanded its diplomatic activities, has been vocal in security and global forums for its members and created a new financial institution. There is a lurking desire among the members to have a greater role in world affairs. But despite repeated shout for global reforms two of the five members—China and India have deep differences between them.

The new normal in the COVID-19 era has been virtual summit and 2020 BRICS Summit was no different. Amidst global pandemic the Summit was held under Russian chairmanship with the motto for the year as 'BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth.' President Vladimir Putin had declared at the end of 2019 Summit in Brazil that special attention would be paid to "expanding foreign policy coordination between our states on key international platforms, primarily at the UN." A goal was also set up to update the strategy for economic partnership signed in 2015 and formulate a strategy that will set the agenda for BRICS cooperation till 2025.

Origin

The origin of the idea of "BRICS" can be traced to Goldman Sachs papers in early 2000s. The institutional reality of BRICS could only take shape on the margins of 2008 G-8 meeting comprising then leaders of China, India, and Russia (Hu Jintao, Manmohan Singh, and Vladimir Putin) in St. Petersburg. The first BRIC summit was held at Russia in 2009 excluding South Africa. In 2010, at a foreign ministers' meeting, the initial four agreed to invite the African nation; by its 2011 summit, the five-country organization—with the "S" now standing for South Africa—acquired its present shape. (Ayres, 2017)

Derided in West

The BRICS since its inception has been continuously derided in West. The forum has been often mocked as a talk shop among incongruent powers and an investment banking acronym that has well passed its sell by date. The countries that make up the forum provide some curious optics. To put things in perspective Chinese economy is roughly 36 times bigger than South Africa, Brazil, and Russia. Indian and Chinese geopolitical rivalry has the potential to erupt into overt military hostilities any time.

But despite all these odds BRICS persist. The BRICS stand tall amidst adversity for more than a decade now. The Group has touched upon wide range of political and economic issues. There have been notable joint statements, along with meetings and respective national security advisors of member countries. The latest entrant to BRICS has been the BRICS' New Development Bank (NDB), established in 2014. It advanced a loan of \$1 billion to India in May 2020 to fight COVID-19 induced costs. If we add many other activities at the non-governmental level, then the picture doesn't look as grim as it is painted frequently by commentators in the West.

Outcome

BRICS, the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa grouping, met virtually on November 17, 2020 for its 12th Summit. Prior to the meeting, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) released a statement saying that the meeting would discuss intra-BRICS cooperation around counterterrorism, energy, trade, health, and ways to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Each of the five leaders stressed various aspects of cooperation in the face of the pandemic and the resultant economic slowdown.

Chinese President Xi Jinping talked about “global epidemiological security” and said that “the BRICS countries firmly believe in the primacy of international law” and considered the World Health Organization to be the leading institution in addressing the pandemic. He added that once the pandemic is taken care of, focus must shift to economic recovery. Here, he argued “China can once again lead the way.” Citing how China’s “economy already bounced back from its low point earlier this year,” he said, “its new development paradigm of dual circulation where domestic and international circulation mutually reinforce one another will help stimulate the global economy” as well as “repair the damage done by some countries’ protectionist policies.” He concluded by saying that there will be “hiccups along the way” but “the trust-based relations between the BRICS countries could serve as a very stabilizing factor during this unprecedented transition in global political and economic affairs as the world begins to embrace new models.” (Kapoor,2020)

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi also spoke about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the reform process that has been initiated by his government to get the economy back on track. Modi highlighted the need for reform of multilateral institutions such as the IMF, WHO and WTO, but his particular emphasis was on terrorism, which he characterized as “the biggest problem today.” Modi said that the group must ensure that “countries that support and help terrorists are also held to account.”

Although PM Modi raised a very pertinent issue, but it looks highly unlikely that other members of BRICS would necessarily share the same views on terrorism. If the Indian-Chinese standoff is added to the list of difficulties for BRICS to move smoothly, it would have definitely served bilateral interest if the Summit would have been physically held as it would have given the opportunity to India and China to meet on the sidelines of the Summit. Such an opportunity would have definitely carried some problem-solving edge but unfortunately the opportunity was lost amidst pandemic. For India the value of BRICS as a strategic forum counts more than any other country. (Rajagopalan,2020)

Strategic value of BRICS for India

The BRICS strategic value for India can be understood from the fact that it allows both India and China to modulate their rivalry within a small grouping when bilateral relation has hit rock bottom between the two countries. This was manifested during the Doklam crisis when both sides preferred to engage through BRICS throughout the crisis. This might have been true for the Ladakh standoff as well. It has been these groupings like SCO and BRICS that offer India and China to decouple their strategic contests from other dimensions of their relationship. (Rej, 2020)

The strategic importance of Russia is also unique as it has the ability to bring both sides to the negotiating table. Although India has moved towards US more these years but its dependence on Russian weaponry is deep enough for New Delhi to offend the Russian sensibilities directly. The BRICS platform provides an opportunity for India to also balance its strategic depth and reach vis-à-vis US and Russia.

Conclusion

This year BRICS Summit was an extension of the earlier agreed economic commitments of the group. But member countries have found common interests to cooperate and negotiate within the agreed principle, mechanism, and institutions. The Summit is also vital because the world system is in a flux and BRICS have found avenues to cooperate. The new world order in the post COVID-19 scenario is still to emerge and BRICS seems to have taken a head start. India has already seen the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the global system leading to a rethink of several of its foreign policy measures. As it takes over the presidency of BRICS for 2021, India's conduct as the chair will be an indication of how New Delhi sees its own position within BRICS going forward. This will be an interesting development to watch in light of its complicated relations with China, a growing closeness with the US as well as the implications of the growing Russia-China rapprochement.

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EDUCATION PROSPECTS AND BRICS – THE ROAD AHEAD

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The year 2009 was a landmark in the history of the world. Four big economies of developing continents got together to work in tandem with each other on all the fronts starting from economic and trade relations to social welfare of these countries. These countries were India, China, Brazil and Russia. The organization was called as BRIC. Then, Africa was given the representation in 2010, by adding South Africa and making it BRICS.

These eleven years of BRICS have proved to be fruitful in terms of their cooperation in the field of economics, finance and culture. However, still there is a long way to go as the economies are still developing. Large population size is one of the main drawbacks of BRICS economies.

As these economies have high demographic dividend, education ought to be the highest priority sector for the group to focus on and enhance the level of cooperation amongst themselves. Studies reveal that one out of three students in the world belong to the BRICS countries. But lack of high quality education and access of it to all the potential candidates has posed a major challenge for the Governments in these countries. This is the main reason why majority students find education avenues in the developed countries, which especially in India, has been termed as “The Brain Drain.” And the irony suggests that this is not going to change. Not at least in the near future. In 2019, The United States of America was the main destination for the students specially from China and India. The total of 3,72,532 students from China and 1,93,124 students from India enrolled in US Universities.

However, we also have to see the other side of the coin, which is equally rosy, if not more than the first side. For students from countries in Africa, South America and South-East Asia, BRICS have emerged as an important education hub. Russia has led the way with enrolling almost 2 Lakh students. Russia is followed by China with enrolment of almost 1 Lakh students. South Africa has seen the enrolment of almost 80,000 students whereas India and Brazil have almost 50,000 and 35,000 students respectively.

“The Beijing Summit” of BRICS Education Ministers, in 2017, pledged to deepen the education ties with each other. “The Beijing Declaration” reaffirms the commitment of BRICS countries in achieving Quality Education i.e. the fourth goal in Sustainable Development Goals. The BRICS countries reiterated their belief in development of the agenda to ensure equitable, inclusive and quality education based on worldwide education standards. The BRICS has also pledged to open a BRICS Network University, in collaboration with five top universities from all the five member countries. This BRICS Network University aims to attract and enrol students from fellow BRICS countries and strengthen the ties through people-to-people contact. These collaborations amongst the member countries on teaching course and their practical implementation, have helped in enabling mutual recognition of qualifications and transfer of credits as per the requirements of the participating institutions.

As per the latest developments, BRICS Academic Forum met in Moscow in October 2020 and reiterated the commitment of BRICS nations to encourage and strengthen the ties between Governments and Academia. One of the key issues discussed was digitization of education platforms for the students and academia specially during the unprecedented times like COVID-19 pandemic.

Concludingly, it can be said that with changing scenarios and changing poles of powers in the world, BRICS nations should work on the forefront and lead the developing nations on all fronts; education being the forefront.

On the road ahead, the BRICS nations must include more and more institutions in the Network University so that more students can get admissions under student exchange. This will help the people intermingle with each other. School students can also be added to this program eventually. Along with academic interface, job and employment opportunities interface should also be created. Walking on these lines, BRICS nations can set world standards for everyone else to follow.

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BRICS AGAINST COVID-19: NEW HOPE FOR A BETTER WORLD

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Introduction:

In a highly interdependent and globalized era, the BRICS economic regionalism exhibits the implementation of institutional arrangements that is designed to facilitate the free flow of goods and services and coordinates foreign economic policies. Physical and geographical proximity is often seen as a reason for conflict among countries which can be drastically resolved by the formation of economic ties. Strong economic relation among BRICS countries reduces the chance of conflict, creating the possibility of a peaceful global atmosphere.

In the past five years, BRICS has managed to begin a process of institutionalisation as well as increased intra-BRICS cooperation in areas like health, science and technology, environment, finance, trade, agriculture, etc. (at the ministerial, sectorial, and senior official level). This has also meant that despite the differing foreign policy positions in several areas, BRICS had remained an important arena for 'discussing the prospects of geopolitical evolution.' Also, despite its shortcomings, in a time of an evolving world order, a continued format for discussion among emerging powers has been 'worth maintaining.' The role of other emerging powers, their foreign policy choices in an evolving global order and response to the US-China equation will also affect multilateral behaviour, including that of BRICS.

The BRICS brings together five major emerging economies comprising 41 per cent of the world's population, having 24 percent of the global GDP and around 17 per cent of the share in world trade. The five nations also account for 50 per cent of the world economic growth, 30 percent of the world land area and the bloc's voting share in the world bank rose to 13.24% and its share in IMF climbed to 14.19%.

The group established the New Development Bank with its base in Shanghai. The purpose of the bank is to mobilise resources for infra structure and sustainable development projects in BRICS countries and other emerging economies and developing nations, complementing the existing effort of multilateral and regional financial institution for global growth and development. The bank's initial lending has set up for the infrastructure project with authorise lending up to \$34 billion annually.

In the past five years since it began actively investing, the NDB has recorded a number of successes and has cemented its place as a preeminent multilateral development bank focused on sustainable infrastructure. As of November 2020, it has approved 65 sustainable development and infrastructure projects across all BRICS economies worth \$21 billion, spanning clean energy, transport infrastructure, water resource management, urban development, environmental efficiency, and social infrastructure.

Even as COVID-19 began to take centre stage around the world, the NDB stepped in and committed to a \$10 billion Emergency Assistance Program to help BRICS countries tackle immediate health impacts and economic recovery concerns; assistance that would not have existed without the NDB. As the Bank looks ahead to its next five years, it must draw upon and double down on these experiences of successfully operating in an increasingly volatile and multi-polar world. In the immediate future, there should be an emphasis on building healthcare capacities and national health preparedness for its member nations and other vulnerable countries, with special support towards containment of the spread of COVID-19 and assistance for social and economic recoveries in terms of incomes and jobs.

Is COVID-19 Opportunity for BRICS?

The BRICS nation can be a hope for better world. The coronavirus pandemic has pushed the geopolitical rivalries and cultural fault-lines to the fore. International institutions are struggling to ensure cooperation and coordination among member nations that are riven by distrust. The COVID-19 crisis has hurt the credibility and reputation of leading international organisations. The hegemonic role that the US played with support from the G-7 and the EU appears to be an event of the past.

The decline of the liberal international order offers an opportunity for the BRICS to step in and lead from the front. Its tasks are clear and well cut out: combat the pandemic and help others with the supply of medical gears, testing kits, medicines, and vaccine at reasonable rates; second, devise a roadmap for the economic revival of states in Asia, Africa, and Latin America; and third, evolve a long-term policy on pandemic and climate change.

The BRICS bloc has launched the 'New Industrial Revolution Innovation centre', during the 12th BRICS Summit. The innovation centre will provide a foothold for BRICS countries to make use of technological innovation and digital transformation brought by the new industrial revolution and it will help BRICS countries to pool ideas on how to best use of technologies, including AI, big data, and block chain. This is the far-reaching repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic have become an unexpected accelerator of the digital transformation. The BRICS countries have actively fulfilled their social responsibilities, chronicling BRICS' joint fight against the pandemic and facilitating the mutual assistance and support between peoples of BRICS countries and world. The BRICS has grasped the trend of history and acting as "facilitators" for peaceful development.

The COVID-19 pandemic has deepened existing fractures and fault lines in the political economies of the rising powers in the world-system. And significantly, this complex and contradictory scenario will also be the terrain upon which social movements will organize and mobilize for years to come. Whether or not these movements will be able to chart out alternative developmental pathways that are less unequal and less precarious than those which the BRICS countries have pursued so far, of course, remains to be seen.

The present moment indeed is imperative to raise an array of critical questions about the nature of growth processes in the BRICS countries. This is necessary both in order to unsettle those narratives that too easily and one-sidedly see the rise of the BRICS as a progressive shift in the world-system, and - to paraphrase the British cultural theorist Raymond Williams - to make hope practical, rather than despair convincing. We hope the perspectives offered in this collection go some way towards that end.

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OVERCOMING ANXIETY CAUSED BY COVID PANDEMIC THROUGH OPTIMISTIC DISPOSITION AMONG THE YOUTH IN THE BRICS COUNTRIES.

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From what appeared to be local infection in a particular city in China late 2019, the COVID - 19 pandemic spread like wild fire across the globe thereby becoming a pandemic which has brought untold hardship to millions of lives the world over. With more than 200 million cases of infection, the pandemic has claimed the lives of more than four million people globally with no continent left unaffected no matter how small (WHO). Even though most of the deaths that resulted from COVID -19 have been from the older age brackets, nevertheless the pandemic has had significant disruptive effects on the lives of more than 70% of the youth population. Apart from the direct and indirect effect of losing a family member, probably parents, uncles, and aunties, the youth have been mostly affected in the area of disruption in education, training, and jobs, employment prospects, job loss, boredom, and mental well-being, especially anxiety.

Anxiety can simply be defined as a state of unease characterised by worry and uncertainty either with regards to future or the outcome of a specific event or experience. Due to the fact that the COVID -19 is a new variant of SARS COVID, many medical practitioners and virologists have been having a hard time in understanding the full nature of the virus. A lack of clear understanding of the nature of the virus therefore made it difficult to come up with specific prognosis. This has been one of the main reasons for anxiety among the youth in the BRICS countries and all over the world.

One of the things that the youthful life is interested in is adventure. With the attendant lockdown in several countries around the world, life became very difficult for the young people and coupled with the fact that there is no certainty when the end will come to the lockdowns and clampdowns necessitated by the pandemic, the level of anxiety among the youth has heightened. It is estimated that one out of every four youth globally are experiencing clinically elevated depression symptoms while one out of every five youth are experiencing clinically elevated anxiety symptoms (Nicole, et al (2021). Globally, more than 50% of youth experienced anxiety as a result of COVID-19 with more than 50% of youth in Brazil alone, more than 80% of adults in India (youth included), more than 57% level of depression and more than 30% level of anxiety among the youth in China.

Even though there were limitation of data in the Russian population, nevertheless some of the research results pointed to higher levels of depression and anxiety among the youth and this was typified by a lack of trust in the government. Research results from South Africa also showed significant mental well-being impairment as a result of the fall-out of COVID-19 pandemic. No doubt, there has been a lot of negative impact on the mental well-being on the general population especially the youth who are the future of every nation and particularly the BRICS nations. It is important therefore to address this solution not only from the medical perspective and governmental policies, but also from psychological dimension especially because of the fact that despite the rolling out of the vaccines, many are still very sceptical as to how this will assure them of a bright future. This is perhaps one of the reasons why our youth need to imbibe an optimistic attitude at such a time like this.

A Way forward

Since anxiety has to do with constant worry and a state of unease especially with regards to future outcomes, perhaps a very good intervention approach to deal with this problem among the youth and even the general population is the inculcation of optimistic attitude through awareness creation, visualization, cognitive priming, mindfulness, and attitude formation which will also lead to self-efficacy.

Optimism is a positive behavioural attitude which allows people to hold favourable expectations for the future. It is a psychological state which exists in a continuum. It can further be described as an inclination that reflects positive expectations about the future. It is a relatively stable and generalized expectation that good outcomes will occur across life's domains. This is perhaps one of the ways to address the issue of anxiety among the young people in the world today. Just as negative disposition in life could be developed or formed as an habit over a period of time due to both internal and environmental factors, so also can positive disposition (optimistic disposition) be inculcated into the lives of our youth at a trying period like this so that they can face the challenge of this pandemic with the right attitude and coupled with a clear expectation that the battle against the pandemic can be won and indeed will be won.

Evidence have shown that several people diagnosed with terminal illnesses have bounced back to life as a result of going through Optimistic Attitude Training Model and were eventually able to live a fulfilling life, being blessed, and also being a source of blessing to others. With conscious shift of perspective, one can invite more happiness and a feeling of overall well-being into one's life as well as into the lives of others.

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IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON LOGISTICS INDUSTRY WITHIN BRICS COUNTRIES

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COVID-19 pandemic spread across the world rapidly bringing the business world to almost standstill. Approximately 42% of the world's population resides in the BRICS countries and being major economies of the world, BRICS countries play an important role for recovery of the tumbled economy, worldwide, due to Corona crisis. During the summit the member countries of BRICS underscored the issue of cooperation amongst the BRICS partners on production and supply of the COVID-19 vaccines and stressed upon establishment of a Centre for Development and Research of BRICS vaccines. Although many industries were severely affected by the pandemic situation, India delivered essential medicines to more than 150 countries because of the capability of the Indian Pharma Industry. In fact, when the governments worldwide scrambled to secure PPE for frontline workers, India not only produced PPE kits and Ventilators for domestic consumption but also exported these essential items.

The immediate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown amplified the crisis in the logistics sector, which provides significant macro contributions to the national economy by way of cross border trade development. This sector connects various markets, creates employment and important for business areas like Material handling, Warehousing, Packaging, Supply chain, Procurement and Customer Service. The lockdown restrictions affected the supply chain and logistics segment to the core creating vast logistics challenges like sharp fall in freight capacity, freight availability, shortage of fleet movement and qualified drivers. Consumers were constrained to shift to online buying, turbocharging the inexpensive e-commerce platforms. The e-retailers having a high degree of digital supply chain already built into their system were able to cope up lot better and quicker. During widespread lockdowns consumers flocked online to buy essential goods, groceries, pharmaceuticals, and PPE kits. The surge in consumer demand pushed up companies' need for warehouse space in locations that could help expedite deliveries.

In India, post COVID-19, the most important change is expected to be the rise of domestic sourcing to make supply chains more local, under the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" and "Made in India mission". India's success and economic growth in the future is heavily dependent on the evolution of its logistics sector. This is essential not only for generating employment or providing broad social benefits to farmers and low-income workers but also for competing with the rest of the world in terms of last-mile connectivity, efficient transportation, time of delivery etc. Strong growth supported by government reforms, transportation sector development plans, growing retail sales, and the e-commerce sector is likely to be the key drivers of the logistics industry in India. Logistics aggregator aligning with the Government's self-reliant movement have become the one-stop fulfilment solution with automated warehousing and packaging services. According to the "National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)", the logistics sector emerged as the top employment-generating sectors in India in the aftermath of coronavirus pandemic. In view of risk management, "NSDC" suggests the companies to proactively build more safety stocking and develop the supply chains by increasing more warehousing space across networks. Companies must explore alternate channels of transportation like combination of small trucks, three-wheelers or two-wheelers for the last-mile delivery of essential goods.

China, the second largest economy in the world was the first to suffer due to corona crisis. Being the top exporter worldwide, global industries suddenly experienced a shortage in commodities and goods due to huge backlogs at the ports, travel restrictions affecting local transport mechanisms, and many cargo ships prevented from vessel berthing and unloading of goods in and out. China supplies 60% of the world's exported goods and so the sudden halt in production left many Chinese industries short of the essential

components they need not only to operate effectively but also to weather the economic storm brought by the pandemic. The first-quarter GDP figures of China shows a 6.8% contraction over the previous year, the largest decline since the 1990s. The business volume of logistics enterprises plunged sharply in the first quarter of 2020. Compared to last year China's logistics demand severely contracted and the freight volume was 4.5 billion tons down by 19.8%. The crisis broke out during the Chinese spring festival when most of the workers had returned to their hometowns away from their workplaces. Due to Government's control measures on people's mobility, there was a significant shortage of workforce and transportation capacity, as the cities were locked down. To avoid in person contact, consumers preferred to purchase necessities through e-commerce platforms giving rise to new modes of logistics services such as Contactless Delivery. To quickly respond to the emergency, some companies resorted to smart technologies, with Government providing immediate support for overcoming the difficulties of logistics operations. Post COVID-19, China will invest significantly to promote the implementation of the 'new infrastructure construction' project and technological-driven intelligent applications with 5G technology, integrated with industrial IoT so as to enable the logistics industry to enter into a new era of rapid development. With China's National Development and Reform Commission launching construction of national logistics hubs (NDRC 2020), the reformed trends of China's logistics industry should bring about remarkable improvement in the areas of demand, supply, infrastructure and IT services.

In Russia, like other countries, corona crisis changed the course of the FMCG market and triggered a number of changes in many areas of business and private life. During the pandemic and mass quarantines, the consumers were forced to alter their purchase habits and store visits with the consumer basket changing. Stock piling of essential goods like health, personal hygiene products, and shelf-stable foods was the primary need, putting an additional strain on manufacturers and suppliers. Sales growth for online trade continued to exceed 100% over the first two weeks of March. According to a survey by Nielsen, even after recovery from the corona-crisis when the Russians return to seemingly normal life, consumers will retain some of the new habits acquired during the crisis, opening up new opportunities for manufacturers and retailers in Russia. Russian market is fragmented, privately owned "WildBerries" leads market share with 15% and Ozon at 7%. Behind them comes AliExpress Russia, a joint venture between Chinese online shopping giant Alibaba and Russian partners. "WildBerries" has over 34 million customers, 13 warehouses and dozens of sorting and distribution centres across Russia which reduce delivery times in the Far East and Siberia. E-commerce accounted for just 1.4% of Russia's economy in 2019, according to research by "Data Insight", compared to 2.6% in the United States and 5.1% in China. With foreign players largely absent, Russian companies are cashing in as online shopping surges. E-commerce penetration in Russia increased from 7% of total retail sales in 2019 to about 11% in 2020 which is less than in the United States, where penetration is about 19%. In Russia's far east region where winter temperatures can fall below minus 50 degree C, there has been a boom for online retailers since the pandemic started keeping consumers at home. Traditionally unable to make speedy deliveries in a large country, where roads become clogged with ice and snow for months, e-tailers have invested heavily in logistics centres and delivery points. Logistics and poor infrastructure are big challenges, but door-to-door couriers have boomed in big cities, with low labour costs helping companies keep prices down.

In Brazil, the social isolation helped to boost e-commerce at a lightning speed. However, the same transformation is yet to be seen in the logistics industry which is lagging in technological terms. The country's largest e-tailers like "Mercado Livre", "Americanas", "OLX" adopted express deliveries in the past few years, which means consumers can receive their goods on the same day as ordering. The platform of the Brazilian company 'TruckPad' engaged in last-mile delivery services and connecting independent truck drivers and transport companies, saw the demand grow by 66 percent per month during the pandemic. In order to adapt to new normal, Brazilian companies have now started making up for the lost time in technology adoption and investing in technologies in logistics sector to meet consumers' expectations. Despite cargo transport being an essential service in the logistics sector, the economic disruption has taken its toll as demand was 34 percent below pre-pandemic levels by the end of June 2020, and 91 percent of companies reported a drop in revenues. Although delivery activities were allowed even in quarantined cities, the delivery market in Brazil is composed of mainly independent players that rely on complementary delivery offer, making it insufficient to compensate for the loss of revenues associated with the closure of dining areas. The distribution logistics was severely affected during the lockdown due to reduced workforce, raw materials shortage and bottlenecks in packaging supply. With quarantine stipulated in most states in the country, digitalisation and online commerce services have been greatly favoured by the "stay-at-home policy", with both e-commerce, delivery and streaming platforms seeing a surge in demand. E-commerce players which demonstrate greater robustness in their operations in digital channels and logistics, were able to mitigate part of the impact of the lockdown, to some extent.

In South Africa, diversification is the new normal in supply chains post COVID-19. "Bidvest International Logistics (BIL)", one of South Africa's largest logistics businesses, which provides an end-to-end supply chain solution across industries including essential services, healthcare, and perishables food sectors, realized that clients and consumers are increasing their stock levels in preparation of future supply constraints, while volumes for non-essential services is lessening. As part of digitisation roadmap, the company is increasingly using a combination of data analytics, automation, blockchain and the internet of things (IoT), to help reduce the cost of business and curbing the problem of non-reliability of suppliers. Due to pandemic companies such as "Transnet" with only 50% of staff operational, have been able to make barely 60% of its forecast revenue during quarter one. In June 2020, Transnet was operating with only 60% of the port staff. This forced some exporters to transport goods hundreds of kilometres away or risk millions in lost revenue as well as severe reputational damage. In the case of fruit exporters, many trucked their goods cross-country to Port Elizabeth and as far as Durban which is 1635 kms away. The enormity of the challenges faced due to corona crisis present the retailers an opportunity to potentially reinvent themselves as the businesses and industries pull together to realize that digitisation and technology-based upgradation of supply chains must happen sooner.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global logistics industry created rippling effects with supply chains under increasing pressure due to lockdown restrictions on free movement of goods and people. "The World Economic Forum" predicted that the logistic sector may need to make drastic changes soon. Some companies may choose to move supply chains closer to home, or to different countries. Others will increase the digitalisation of services to secure greater long-term sustainability and offer premium services that go beyond current offerings. Logistics companies need to fundamentally change their IT infrastructure to meet the new challenges. Logistics firms can gain complete visibility over the entire business, from design to full-scale deployment and operations, by bringing together data from Processes, People, Products and Assets. Every element of the logistics process whether it is planning or execution should be reconsidered for Digital transformation. Rapid automation in handling systems and management including Palletization of cargo, Conveyor systems, Robotics, Drones and Drop boxes amongst others should be considered seriously by all

BRICS countries. During the corona crisis the B2C market exploded as people turned to online purchases. As there will be more variables in volumes, companies must be more adaptive to the practice of developing and implementing robust contingency plans. Large suppliers and logistics operators must prepare and take seriously major catastrophic events such as weather-related calamities, lethal pandemic outbreaks, strikes, social unrest and associated disruptions.

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PARADIGM SHIFT IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND LEVEL OF OPTIMISM DURING COVID 19

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The Covid 19 pandemic brought about turmoil in the lives of individuals. The sudden pandemic made everyone evaluate various aspects of their lives. With the announcement of the country - wide lockdown, every individual portrayed behaviors which they had never thought of. The consumers were buying products in bulk, there were stick out in stores for groceries, medicines, huge demand for travel and transport services. The business houses and the marketers were not ready for such a situation. The complete paradigm for shopping and consumption of various services changed overnight. The important question now is will this shift stay or will the consumers revert to the original ways of buying once the pandemic is over. This article will help us to understand the changes that have happened in the buying behavior of consumers and how optimistic are the consumers about these changes.

Consumer Behavior is generally predictable and there are various models and tools available to predict the way consumers will react to a particular product or a situation. The models help us to predict the consumption patterns of consumers, their frequency of purchase, the quantity of purchase and, also the usage patterns of various products. The consumption of various products is guided by the situation and context. An alteration in the situation or context leads to a change in the consumption pattern. One such change which disrupted consumption and led to a paradigm shift in behavior was the Covid 19 pandemic.

There were 5 major shifts that the consumers of the BRICS nation witnessed were :

1. Shift to Value and Essentials – Consumers across the globe have seen a drastic fall in their income levels. This has led to a lowering of the levels of optimism in consumers and most of the consumers feel that the economy will not be able to recover soon in the global scenario. However, the consumers of India and China have shown a different trend and they remain optimistic about their economies. As per the COVID - 19 Consumer Pulse Survey conducted by MC Kinsey and Company India's Net Optimism was approximately 50%, China had a Net Optimism of 50% and Brazil portrayed a negative Net Optimism score. Consumers have also shown a shift in the product categories that they are buying. The consumers in Brazil, India, South Africa, and China were seen to be spent largely on products that are essential such as Groceries, household supplies, personal care products, home entertainment, books, pet care services, fitness and wellness services , and cutting or delaying their expenditure on luxurious products like Cars, Air conditioners etc. The consumers also became mindful about the categories of products for which they are spending their money. People in India started researching more about the brand they were buying during the pandemic and also they showed a shift by choosing the lower- priced alternatives for a product to increase their savings.
2. Adoption of Technology – Technology played a crucial role in bringing about the shift in consumer behavior. Consumers adopted the process of digital payments, online shopping, Online entertainment services. Consumers improvised their habits by embracing digital technology. With the government announcing complete lockdown in India it had become necessary for the consumers to look for alternative solutions for work, education, shopping, healthcare, and other activities. The consumers embraced technology for all these activities with open arms. Consumers started using various digital payment apps such as Paytm, Phone

Pay, Google Pay, BHIM UPI etc. The usage of OTT platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney + Hotstar, Zee 5 witnessed a huge surge. Platforms like Zoom, CISCO Webex, Microsoft Teams, Skype were used as a platform for work meetings and delivery of educational services. The economy also witnessed the improvisation that various businesses also made to themselves. Online Food delivery apps such as Zomato started Grocery Delivery services via their app. The app provided delivery of essentials at the doorsteps by collaborating with the local retailers. The consumers increased usage of social media and many business houses shifted their business to Facebook, Instagram, Youtube as a maximum share of consumers were available on these platforms.

3. Switching of brand loyalty - The COVID 19 pandemic made the consumers switch their brand loyalties. Consumers became more mindful of the brands they were purchasing and also they reconsidered the outlets from where they shopped during the pre-pandemic times. Shoppers in India and China gave importance to Value and Convenience while choosing a new place to shop. The value for money, availability of a brand, and the quality of the product were the important factors that made the Indian consumers choose newer brands for usage and also motivated them to change their loyalties.
4. Emphasis on Health and Self Care - Consumers are concerned about the how health and hygiene is taken up by various employers. The store which takes care of hygienic surroundings, good sanitization standards inside the stores, employees who follow protocols like wearing mask etc have high chances of being accepted by consumers. Indian consumers are giving the highest priority to instore cleaning and sanitization. The fear of infection from fellow shoppers is making them choose stores with high barriers such as temperature checks, masks, social distancing for in - store shopping. Consumers have also shown their concerns about how employers are taking care of their employees. This is highly visible in the hospitality sector where there are several physical touchpoints. The companies or employers who have adopted strict measures for the safety and care of their employees are receiving a positive response from their consumers. For eg. Airline companies like Indigo Airlines, Vistara have made it mandatory for their in - flight crew to wear PPE Kits, Face masks and Face shields and also to undergo RT - PCR tests at regular intervals. This has instilled confidence in the consumers and as a result, the consumers are preferring these airlines for domestic and international travels.
5. Homebound Activities - With the easing of the Covid - 19 protocols by the government consumers still are not ready to engage in outbound activities. The Indian government has opened up Movie Theaters, Restaurants, Places of Worship for people but with restrictions. As per the Covid 19, Consumer Pulse survey conducted by McKinsey and Company 60 to 79 % of Indian consumers are ready to go out for shopping groceries/ necessities, Work outside the home, have get- together with family and friends. However only 20 to 30% of consumers are ready to visit a crowded outdoor public place, use a ride - sharing service, use public transportation to go out for family entertainment and dine at a restaurant.

Will the new habits stay?

Behavior does not change easily however with external interventions or under situations, people do exhibit change in behaviors. Many of the old habits will come back as the government eases the restrictions. The recent data by SIAM (Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers) on automobile sales shows that domestic passenger vehicle sales have increased by 119.31 % in June 2021. The Indian consumers are optimistic that the economy will bounce back and they are now ready to invest in other products or luxurious products as opposed to only buying essentials. Indian consumers are ready to change their shopping behavior and have made shopping of food products and groceries, apparel, household supplies, fitness, and wellness programs online

and prefer it over the offline mode of shopping. A study by PWC shows that Indian consumers are preferring buying Frozen foods, perishable groceries, household and cleaning supplies, non-perishable groceries, non-alcoholic beverages, personal care and pharma, pet care, alcoholic beverages, and infant products via the online mode of shopping with home delivery over the online mode of shopping with store pickup. The crisis has made people reflect on many aspects and these introspections have led to long-lasting effects. Globally 50 % of individuals have started trying new brands/ products, 28% have picked up new hobbies and 48% intend to maintain newly acquired health and wellness habits over the long term. Indian consumers have adopted the use of Digital Payments online mode of shopping, online health programs with open arms and intend to continue the same.

The new normal for the Indian consumers will consist of a few new activities, some modified habits , and a certain amount of old habits.

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