AN ORGANISATION FOR PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIETY (OPUS)

India and the World at the Dawn of 2016
Report of a New Year's Listening Post

Encouraging The Reflective Citizen

Part 1: THE SHARING OF PREOCCUPATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

In this part of the discussion the members were invited to identify, understand and express their experience related to the various social roles. The members of the group were also asked to share their preoccupations and experiences about the year that had passed by and how they welcomed the new year of 2016.

One of the major preoccupations that played in the minds of the members was about the technology and its effect on the society. The members shared both pros and cons technology has had on the society. Due to the improvement in technology a certain sector of the society are being employed as delivery boys but on the other hand popular textile and book stores are shutting down because of the emergence of online stores leaving some people unemployed. Advancement in technology has resulted in the world to shrink and made it possible to connect with people across the world but also has left with lack of communication among members who are at their proximity due to involvement in social media. Emergence of new mobile applications has made life easy for people but also made them lazy and hence do not take efforts.

We are at the state of young India where major part of the country constitutes of adolescent and young adults. They are coming up with creative and innovative ideas towards business and marketing and hence contributing towards the rise in Indian economy. Because of these young minds and their innovations technology has gained a lot of prominence. It is been used in every sector of life such as paying bills, shopping clothes and groceries, booking tickets that life has become easy in this busy world. But however certain other group such as children, elderly people and technically unskilled people find it challenging due to the advancements of technology. Most children are getting involved into gadgets and social networks which is reducing the number of kids playing in the play grounds.

Young adults apart from being creative are also becoming aware about different streams of work. Therefore most people are not blindly getting into medicine and engineering which was once the prestigious field, but are exploring their passion and getting into art and other

fields. These days' educated adults are also pursuing to be a driver and do not consider such jobs with low profile.

Although there is advancement in various fields it is happening in pocket levels, only in the metropolitan cities. However in other parts of the country poverty, eve teasing violence still exists. Kashmir attack was being mentioned by one of the members but was left undiscussed. The group remained silent for a while and continued talking about the impact technology has on the society.

After a long period one of the members thought that the group had been speaking a lot about technology and wanted to now talk about cleanliness. She expressed her frustration towards how Bangalore has turned from a garden city to a garbage city. Every street's not only in Bangalore but around the country is littered and polluted. However initiatives are taken by young groups such as ugly Indians and so on to clean the city and build something productive such as a bench or a park for the citizens to use. But sadly there is no consistency and is not maintained well by the citizens. There were many awareness programs by the government and the others, one of which was the 'Swacha Bharath' to motivate the citizen to make their country Clean Indian

Some of the members in the group also expressed their anger towards the government for implementing new rules without considering the practicality. Some members were not happy with the rule that was passed saying that the pillions are supposed to wear the helmet too. While some members thought that it was a brilliant idea as the government was concerned about the safety of the citizens. One of the members did not agree with this as she thought it was of no use to wear the helmet in Bangalore roads as it is impossible to over speed and meet with an accident due to the heavy traffic. While the group was in the midst of this discussion it had to be stopped abruptly as we were out of time. After the allotted time was past one of the members wanted to talk about the Chennai flood and constantly kept asking for an opportunity to discuss about the same.

Part 2: IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR THEMES

In Part 2 the aim is to collectively identify the major themes emerging from Part 1.

In the second part of the discussion we tried to derive themes from the open discussion we had in the first part. Some of the major themes we obtained are as follows:
* Pros and cons of technology
* Creativity
* Awareness programs
* Increased awareness about safety

- Cleanliness
- Lack of communication with those at proximity
- Increase in traffic and pollutions
- Effect of technology on child's play
- Decrease in visiting stores
- Invasion of technology monster
- New career opportunities
- Garden city to garbage city
- Government's initiative for safety
- Change in perspective
- Young India
- Need for responsible way of technology for children
- Difficulty in accepting and implementing new policies
- Initiatives of measure taken for various issues faced
- Cultural similarities
- Corruptions
- The shrinking world because of technology
- Challenges in parenting styles
- Increase in disease and disorders related to technology
- Independency due to the knowledge received from technology

Part 3: ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESIS FORMATION

In this part of the Listening Post the members are working with the information resulting from Parts 1 and 2, with a view to collectively identifying the underlying dynamics both conscious and unconscious that may be predominant at the time; and, developing hypotheses as to why they might be occurring at that moment. Here the members are working more with what might be called their 'psycho' or 'internal' world. Their collective ideas and ways of thinking that both determine how they perceive the external realities and shape their actions towards them.

In this part we tried and analyzed the information obtained from the first two part of the discussion and find the deepest layer of the social system. All the themes were interconnected and led from one theme to another it was hard to derive at certain hypothesis. But however the group worked together in forming hypotheses based on their commonalities.

1. Because of the preoccupation of technology the members of the society tend to engage in it more often resulting in communication breakdown.
2. Because of anxiety members of the society engage in technology resulting in lack of social contact.
3. Because of fear and anxiety members of the society are not ready to talk about social issues resulting in ignore of social issues.

The above three hypotheses are interconnected where we see that the members of the society find it very threatening to speak about natural disasters and any issues involving fear and anxiety. Hence they find it safe to talk about issues involving low levels of fear. Therefore the group was preoccupied talking about the negative effects technology has on the society. The group also spoke about the positive influence of technology on society and following are the hypothesis formed based on it.

1. Because of the advancement in technology the members of the society are able to strengthen the connection between people across the world resulting in shrinking of the world.
2. Because of technology there is increase of connectedness among the members resulting in shrinking of cultural differences.
3. Because of technology there is increased awareness amongst members of the society resulting in more imitativeness and change in perspectives
4. Because of innovations of technology members of the society are being employed resulting in increase in the economy of the nation.

Some of the other hypotheses that were formed from the discussion are listed below:

1. Because of corruption that exists in the society the younger members of the society are taking charge resulting in the betterment of the society.
2. Because of young India the members of the society are becoming more competitive resulting in creativity.
3. Because of increased awareness the members of the society are taking initiatives resulting in change.

India consists of many young people who are no more abiding to their adults but are taking imitativeness in spreading awareness and bringing about change hence resulting in the betterment of the society.

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