



THIRD EYE

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MBA Class of 2009

Globalization, Poverty and NGOs

Recently IIT K played hosts to its alumni from the batches of '73 and '83. The campus was bustling with activity and even the chilly winds could not keep one captivated into rooms. Alumni members were seen roaming about the campus with a mix of nostalgia and excitement. Coming back to one's alma mater after 25-35 years must have been one delightful experience for the alumni and their families. Some of them were kind to share their views on matters of expertise with the student fraternity. Even the students left no stones unturned to satiate their curiosity and kept the alumni occupied with queries, plans, strategies and simply talks about the wonderful IIT Kanpur.

Amongst the distinguished guests present during the alumni meet was Prof. Sushil Vachani who spoke to the students on "Globalization, Poverty and NGO's".

Sushil Vachani is a Professor of Strategy and Policy at Boston University. He did his BTech at IITK, Post Graduate Diploma in Management at IIM Ahmedabad and Doctorate in International Business at Harvard Business School. He worked as an R&D engineer with Philips, as a manager with the Tata Administrative Service and Tata Motors, and as a consultant with Boston Consulting Group. He has published 3 books, one of which is on Multinationals and Global Poverty Reduction. His administrative assignments at Boston University have included serving as Director of the Management School's Japan program and its doctoral program.

Prof. Vachani started the presentation by listing out the three major components that constitute the world today.

- 1) Governments
- 2) Companies
- 3) People and NGOs

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His opinion was that the category “People and NGOs” which is listed at the end should be the first one to be talked about. People constitute society which make companies a success and who lay their trust in the government for effective execution of policies.

Globalization is the buzz word in today’s world. Prof. Vachani expressed that Globalization occurs when there is a flow and exchange of

- 1) Trade
- 2) Ideas and Technology (Cultures)
- 3) People- by means of immigration

Globalization that is happening today is not a new phenomenon. It started the day man ventured out to look out for newer avenues of business and places of habitat. This took a matured and professional form after the two world wars; with the erstwhile GATT and now the WTO. Technology always played a major role in Globalization and the advent of Internet has given new dimension to it.

But at the same time globalization has been ignorant (deliberately sometimes) of some problems of the developing and under developed nations. For instance the price of drugs used as a life saver against diseases like AIDS have been unethically reserved for the usage of the rich as they carry a heavy price tag. Companies have to face a trade off between profits and lives saved when deciding the prices at which they sell these drugs. In cases like these NGOs come into picture. Cries of “Don’t kill babies in Africa” which rose when the Clinton administration was addressing campaigns, aroused a sense of responsibility and compassion for the poor in world leaders. If it wasn’t for NGOs companies and governments would have had their way risking the innocent lives of thousand in the under privileged nations.

India is a poor country in terms of the population living below poverty line. At a local level we see NGOs like Gyan Shala, SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association), SGFI (Sports Goods Foundation of India) which work towards alleviating this poverty. NGOs started by visionaries offer a working ground to young professionals like you and me to explore CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) and ESR (Enterprise Social Responsibility) as career options. It is for us to see whether we get attracted to big bucks or to the larger causes that affect our nation and this planet.