

Revamping perspectives: revolutionizing sustainable growth, technology and entrepreneurship.

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Albert Einstein once said, “I never think of the future - it comes soon enough.” And surely enough, it is here. The future is every day. It is not a notion, it is not an ideology and it is not a time frame. It is a reality. A reality that has been undermined by our ancestors in the caves when they first discovered fire and didn’t once stop and think to consider the implications it may have in the future. It was undermined by the first men who put together the first wheel setting in motion an unstoppable, unforgiving force we now call technology. And it was undermined by the civilization that reverted to Obsidian as a possible currency replacing the barter system of old. The lethal concoction of our myopic proclivities and our tendencies to not learn a thing from the past have brought us to an age where growth and advancements seems to be the most satisfying, lustful temptations that we so gleefully succumb to without realizing when or how to stop.

Mankind’s greatest challenge now is having to whet the appetite of the monster it has created in the form of growth and development while ethically and morally sustaining the implications and effects it has on our modern day societies. In the past we have time and time again fallen prey to our own follies. We have fought global wars, regretted the bursting of a multitude of economic bubbles and overpromised and over delivered in mammoth proportions, but never on an equal or justifiable scale. A time has now come upon us where we really cannot afford to repeat our mistakes nor do we have the liberty to make new ones. The future is here, it is now and it is us who have to change the rules of the game we have so blindly gambled and lost in

Where we have fallen short in the past is not in what we did or how we did it. But in the fact that we have never been able to answer the why’s. Justifying an action after it has been performed is a hypocritical approach to life in general. The real candor lies in justifying rationales with true innovation and understanding before hammering the first stone into place. If we are to be the ones to bring about a positive change not only

for ourselves but also for our future generations, a change in the gaming rules is most timely in order. Defining a mode of sustainable growth and development with the appropriate and fair use of technology which empowers the masses with the help of the privileged few, requires a pragmatic and holistic set of solutions backed by powerful hyperopic reasoning's and justifications. Only understanding the ramifications of our actions has never been enough, the only way forward is to draw out frameworks that bypass the implications and deliver the masses to the promise land. The fundamental fact is that our society never fully understood the concept of 'opportunity cost'. Not in terms of buyer decision behavior but in understanding the price that we and our future generations have to pay for all our advancements and developments while forsaking alternatives.

It has to be understood that in modern technological times where innovation exceeds imagination and profitability takes precedence over prudery and morality, it is practically impossible to 'sustain' growth and development. It is no more than an idealistic scenario where we believe that infinite growth with finite resources may pave the way for a global frontier where our environment remains stable and is not susceptible to our fallacies. Such a forlorn and myopic approach cannot be deemed as optimism but is an impractical scheme that everyday increases our ecological footprint and consumes our only environment and ecosystem right before us.

Sustainability in the economic and environmental arena requires well thought out processes. Dasgupta and Heal proved that after the optimal level because benefits in the far future are outweighed by those in the near future. The Solow Swan growth model thus, focuses on the search for alternative sources especially in the case of non-renewable resources where sustainable growth is not an option. Changing the rules of the game here would require a transformation in perspective. Since we have tried time and again and haplessly failed in sustaining our environment with our growth and development. We need to alter our approach and instead look to channelize our resources, our technological advancements, curtail our demand for natural resources, curb our emissions and adapt greener initiatives on a global scale. Where we have essentially lacked is in empowering developing and underdeveloped countries in helping them establish 'greener economies'. Quoting a Pakistani perspective itself, the political turmoil and the deteriorating security situation steals the show time and again. Environmental concerns in Pakistan have been disconcerting the equilibrium between economic development and ecological protection. As a great quandary for the nature and nation of Pakistan and as Pakistan is a major importer of both exhaustible and renewable

natural resources and a large consumer of natural fossil fuels, the efforts made by the Ministry of Environment of Government of Pakistan seem only minimal. Air pollution has also developed into a major predicament in most major cities. There are no controls on vehicular emanations, which constitute about 90 percent of pollutants. The National Conservation Strategy Report claims that the standard Pakistani vehicle emits twenty-five times as much carbon monoxide, twenty times as many hydrocarbons, and more than three and one-half times as much nitrous oxide in grams per kilometer as the average vehicle in the United States. Realizing and harnessing Pakistan's potential as a goldmine for renewable energy sources is just an example of the multitude of African, Asian and Middle Eastern states that could resort to such green methods. Pakistan boasts a channel of perennial strong wind flow through the Kirthar and Sulaiman mountain ranges in the province of Baluchistan that if harnessed using windmills could resolve the tormenting energy crises of the country. The country also experiences up to 7-8 months on average of tropical climate with heavy rainfall and extreme heat waves in different areas. Both of which could be used to manufacture energy. These are just certain examples of just a particular country out of magnanimous number where if a proper channel is given to perspective, sustainable growth can be achieved, if not entirely but in a proportion enough to help our generations to come. Like the great Mahatma Gandhi said "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed."

Towards the political arena, again there is a need for a change or a change that has already been observed by human beings in the past decade; technology taking over the power of the state and creating horizons that are beyond the control of an entity alone. The impact of technology on the government is vast, even greater than any other force around them. Technology connects everything beyond the government's control and if that freedom of choice is tampered with by the state, it is considered an infringement of democracy. Thus, the situation for the government is difficult yet necessary for taking a stance. In fact, technology is strong enough to attack the stature of a government. With their confidential data always at stake, technology is a threat to saving certain information from the rest of the world. To control piracy, to protect their information and to prevent the misuse of the internet, a system within the government updated with technology and some rules regarding it may suffice to help protect the rights of its people. However, in the case of electoral processes, technology might actually suffice as a medium for healthy awareness for the country's growth and development. To formulate proper measures against technology may seem an idea protective of human rights, however, to extend it to prevent media from showcasing the truth should

never be a factor. Thus, the government may direct its course yet to define a clear destination may not be a feasible solution. The same great man, Albert Einstein also said “It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity.” It just goes to show that it is imperative to understand and realize that technologically advanced sates may hold the upper hand globally in the economical and developmental forums however it is this reliance on technology that might just turn out to be their most deadly asset. Empowering themselves and the people through technological advancements may seem perpetually beneficial for now. However, changing the rules requires an alteration in perspective here as well and understanding that not all that we sow will we have to reap. Our future generations might just have to bear the blunt of it and be susceptible to not understating the ‘whys’ behind it all.

The best solution and the fresh alternative to creating resources is entrepreneurship. To overcome unemployment and change the traditional path of looking for jobs, this decade has taken a turn towards creating jobs. Thomas Edison was an example of an innovator and an entrepreneur who invested his profits to further research and development. By creating a new market, they venture to transform the economic growth of a country towards a new and better direction. Universities are also encouraging business graduates to take risks and go via the difficult path of entrepreneurship due to its long term benefits. This entire scenario where unemployment maybe a cause of demotivation for several, entrepreneurs have ventured to change the rules of the game, they create a platform rather than looking for an existing one. Change is accelerating and entrepreneurship is a way to change the system. In fact, social entrepreneurs achieve a balance. They start with a set aim in collaboration with profits and purpose. After all, when you pass on a torch, it lights many others; and entrepreneurs are going towards a track that does just that. Establishing the fact that innovation, imagination and flexible rationales together constitute a sustainable plan for entrepreneurs also involves a holistically approach will be the first step to reviving economies around the world.

Moreover, if change isn’t constant, why should methods be the same? This is the new thought of this decade, an idea if flourishes will bring in flexibility and diversity into the picture. Today we have to plan for tomorrow to not land up unprepared and lost in a world and to create ample opportunities for our future generation to survive in a healthy environment. The forward looking approach is the new rule whereby merely surviving the present isn’t enough. Chuck Palahniuk said “When did the future switch from being a promise to being a threat?” However, it has and the new rule is to change it back to a promise.