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Neeraj Saxena

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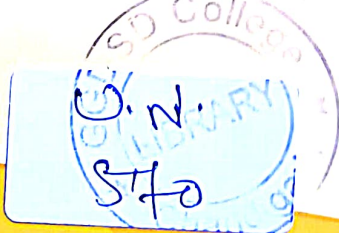
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The Human Future of Education: Nurturing the Affective Domain in an AI-driven World Building

Neeraj Saxena*

In an era increasingly shaped by technological advancement and digital disruption, the affective domain of learning — encompassing values, empathy, ethical reasoning, and emotional intelligence — has emerged as a critical frontier in higher education. This article argues that nurturing the affective domain is no longer optional but essential for shaping socially responsible, emotionally resilient, and ethically conscious graduates. It explores the integration of the affective domain across curricula, highlights the need for reimagined teacher training focused on affective facilitation and assessment, and proposes innovative approaches to evaluating affective outcomes. Furthermore, it emphasizes the strategic use of AI and digital platforms to support affective learning without compromising human connection. Anchored in India's vision of *Viksit Bharat@2047*, the article asserts that higher education institutions must move beyond producing employable graduates to cultivating ethical citizens capable of leading with compassion, integrity, and social responsibility. Ultimately, it positions the affective domain as the human future of education — vital for realizing India's aspiration to become a developed and humane society by 2047.

The Missing Piece in Higher Education: Why the Affective Domain Can't Be Ignored

In the rapidly evolving landscape of higher education, dominant discourses often orbit around employability enhancement, digital transformation, and the accelerated acquisition of technical skills. Yet, amid these sweeping reforms and technologically-driven pedagogies, a critical dimension of human development continues to elude structured curricular frameworks — the Affective Domain.

This domain — encompassing emotional intelligence, attitudes, empathy, values, intrinsic motivation, and ethical reasoning — forms the bedrock of holistic education. Ironically, it is precisely these human-centric attributes that employers, policymakers, and civil society identify as most urgently required in the contemporary world. In a scenario where industries are relentlessly automating technical processes, what remains irreplaceable is trust, empathy, integrity, collaboration, and leadership — quintessential hallmarks of a robust affective foundation.

The Disconnect Between Industry Needs and Academic Outputs

There is a well-documented and widening gap between industry expectations and higher education outcomes. The World Economic

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