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Emergence of Sustainability Reporting and Assurance: A Global Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the factors and consequences of sustainability reporting and assurance (SRA) worldwide using the Global Reporting Initiative database from 2005-2016. Sustainability factors are both the quality and quantity of SRA. We construct several variables pertaining to the consequences of SRA, such as environmental, social, and governance (ESG) sustainability performance disclosures, indices, ratings, and the use of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We find (1) a significant worldwide increase in both the quantity and quality of SRA in the past decade; (2) a positive association between the quality and quantity of SRA and sustainability disclosure and many of the SDGs and (3) a significant association between the quantity, quality of SRA and the legal, social, ethical, and environmental attributes. Our findings are relevant to current debates among global policymakers, regulators, standard setters, the business community, and the accounting profession in improving the quantity and quality of SRA and the move toward mandatory and standardized integrated sustainability reporting.

Key words: Business Sustainability, Sustainability Reporting, Sustainability Assurance, Sustainability Disclosure, Corporate Social Responsibility

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What is Education?¹

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ABSTRACT

The gaining of knowledge formed the building blocks of early civilization. The early forms of knowledge created the wonders of the world and these lessons from education form the basis of human society even today. With the passage of time, education also became essential for the earning of livelihoods and in today's competitive world, the focus of education has shifted to making students career ready. Unfortunately, even this purpose of education is not being achieved in India because of the poor quality of education. It is necessary to rediscover the roots of education which taught children the what, how and why of everything. This move to bring back into today's education the original purpose of kindling curiosity and liberating the human mind is gaining traction but we are a long way from the ideal concept of education which will create survival skills as well as liberate the mind. Also, let there be some quotes of many legendary persons in different walks of life over time which would be helpful for understanding the real meaning of education.

"Only The Educated Are Free" --- *Epictetus*

"Education is The Kindling of A Flame Not The Filling of A Vessel" --- *Socrates*

"Educating The Mind Without Educating The Heart Is No Education At All" --- *Aristotle*

"Education Is The Manifestation Of Perfection Present Already In Man" --- *Swami Vivekananda*

¹The paper is the revised version of the author's address on Education at the International Seminar on Education held at Shivananda Hall, RKMC, Golpark, on 25th March, 2023.

Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Inland Waterway : A Comparative Cost Analysis with Railways and Roadways¹

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ABSTRACT

Inland waterways are generally fuel efficient, sustainable, environment friendly and economical. In spite of ample scope of development, huge potentiality of inland waterways in India has remained untapped owing to inadequate attention towards its development especially during the post-independent period. Since 2016 Government of India has been undertaking several initiatives to revive country's inland waterways system. Revival of *Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Agreement* is one such landmark developments that came into effect from 31 March 2020. Route – 1 of 'Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) inland waterway' is the most important as it establishes waterway connectivity between Haldia (West Bengal) to Pandu (Assam) via Bangladesh and in the process connects NW-1, NW-97 and NW-2. It is an alternative route of connectivity between Assam and rest of India to the Siliguri Corridor. The present study attempts to compare all-round viability of freight movement between *Haldia* and *Pandu* (Assam) through 'IBP Route-1' with Railway and Roadway in terms of commercial, environmental and social dimensions. Non-financial factors are also analysed through SWOT analysis.

Keywords: Inland Waterways, IBP, Environmental Cost, Sustainability, Navigation, Implicit Economic Cost, and Surface Occupation Cost.

The Trajectory of Consumer Buying Behaviour in Kolkata during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

At the end of 2019, a pandemic broke out in Wuhan, China due to which the entire globe turned out to be a victim. The occurrence was first noted on December 31, 2019, which was later declared as a worldwide pandemic on March 11, 2020 (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32191675/>) which led to a medical and financial emergency across the world with a spillover effect on different sectors having an economic impact over a long-run time horizon. This encouraged governments around the globe to inspire their citizens to exercise social distancing and undertake quarantine as greatly as probable to limit the spreading of the disease and contact (CDC, 2020). The leaders of the nations most affected by the sickness, including those in the European Union and the UN, have acknowledged their helplessness in the face of this natural disaster and stated that they are unsure of when this abomination will come to an end. Leading journals and publishers have therefore issued an urgent plea for further research and pertinent information for individuals dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. In-depth research on the social, behavioral, and contextual aspects of the communities, societies, and populations affected by the COVID-19 outbreak has been requested by social science experts (WHO, 2020). Previous research has shown that the dread of an unidentified deadly contagious illness can have a profound psychological impact on people, increasing their worry and tension (Arumugam, 2020; Hyams *et al.*, 2002).

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Revisiting the Ancient Accounting Education: Was Pacioli really ‘Father of Accounting’?¹

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ABSTRACT

The scepticism about the value of historical accounting research and publication may stem from beliefs that accounting history is a restricted, highly specialised topic that is not part of the “main stream accounting literature” or the part of “anecdote” of human’s earliest stimuli of civilization. But history stands current as always and therefore, unavoidable. So is the case of accounting history. It has a personal influence on all of us. Even in this global, technological post-modern period, it is the “accounts” of resources that matters in daily life in every sphere. Hence it becomes inevitable for all to understand accounting and its use in some form or the other. This paper attempts to present a comparative analysis of major contributors to the development of double-entry bookkeeping – Datini, Cotrugli, Raphaeli, and Pacioli. It was found that Cotrugli had written an accounting treatise several years before publication by Pacioli. The work of all contributors has been critically analysed and reasons have been identified why Pacioli is considered as ‘Father of Accounting’ when knowledge of double-entry bookkeeping was already existing several years before him. After reviewing the work of these authors, a list of topics that might have been included in the accounting course curriculum in those times have identified and discussed.

Keywords: Accounting History, Raphaeli, Cotrugli, Datini, Pacioli

¹This paper was presented in the 44th All India Accounting Conference in Gwalior, M.P., but not published anywhere, as declared by the author.

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