

Webinar

Speaker: Dr. Arup Varma, Distinguished University Research Professor of Management at the Quinlan School of Business, Loyola University Chicago

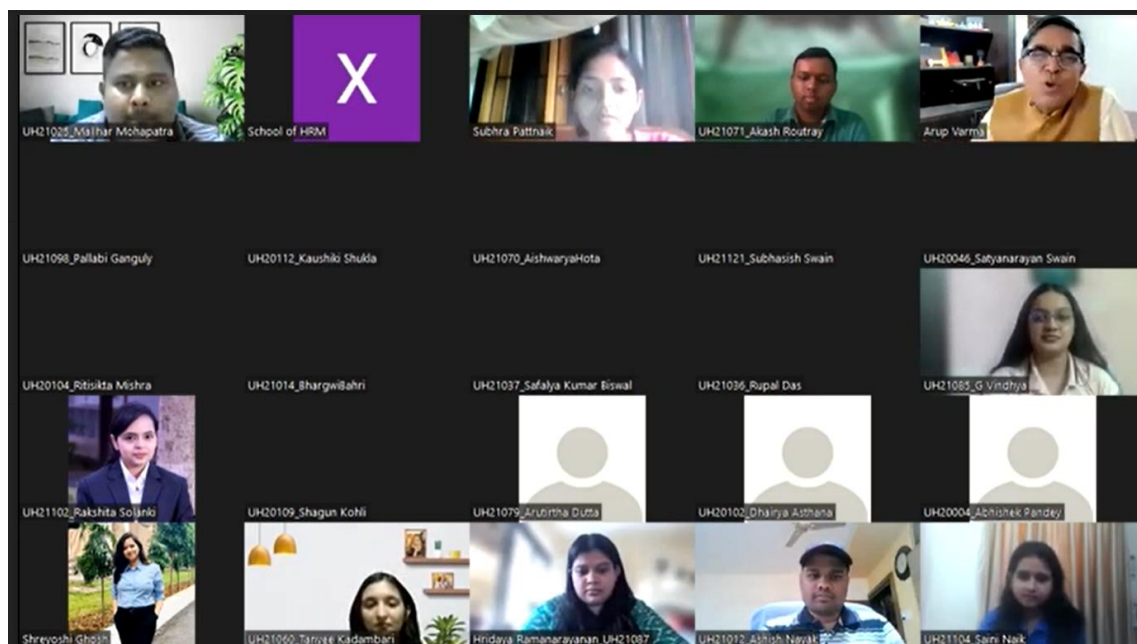
Date: 9 February 2022

Theme: Enhancing employee productivity while managing a remote workforce

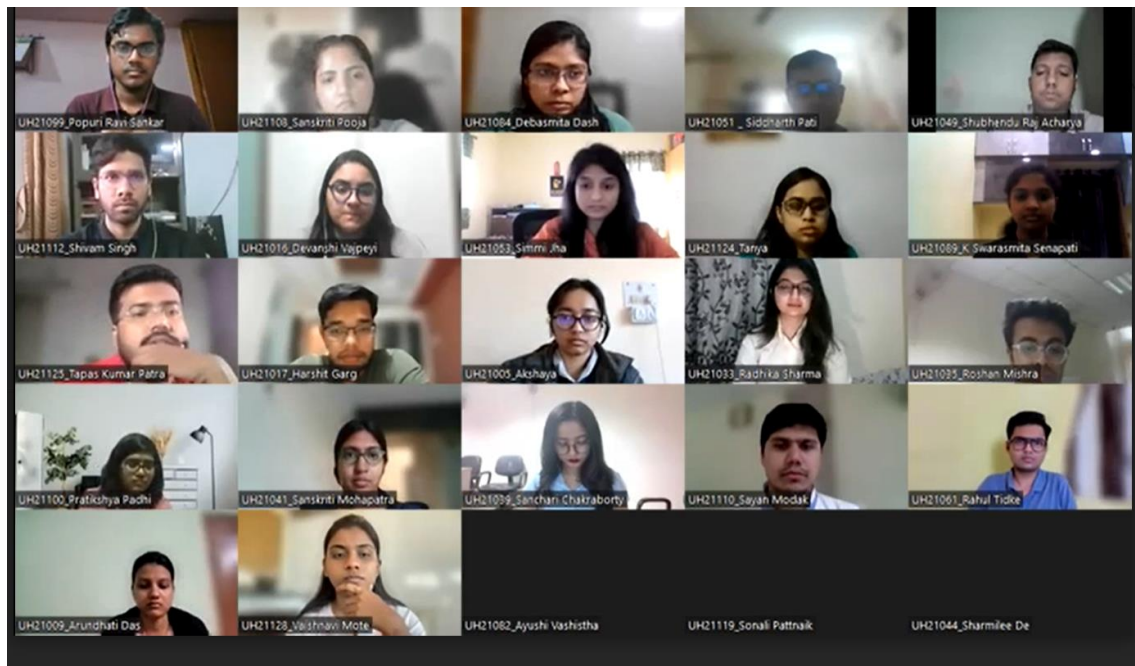
The first and second year students of School of Human Resource Management, XIM University, Bhubaneswar, attended a Webinar on the theme – **Enhancing employee productivity while managing a remote workforce** on February 9, 2022, delivered by our esteemed speaker – Dr Arup Varma, Distinguished University Research Professor of Management at the Quinlan School of Business, Loyola University Chicago. The webinar revolved around Leadership, Culture and Value systems of the organisation.

Webinar Summary

Dr Varma explained that all organisations are now moving towards a new workplace. The Hybrid workplace, we are seeing a shift from a brick-and-mortar workplace to a virtual or hybrid setting.

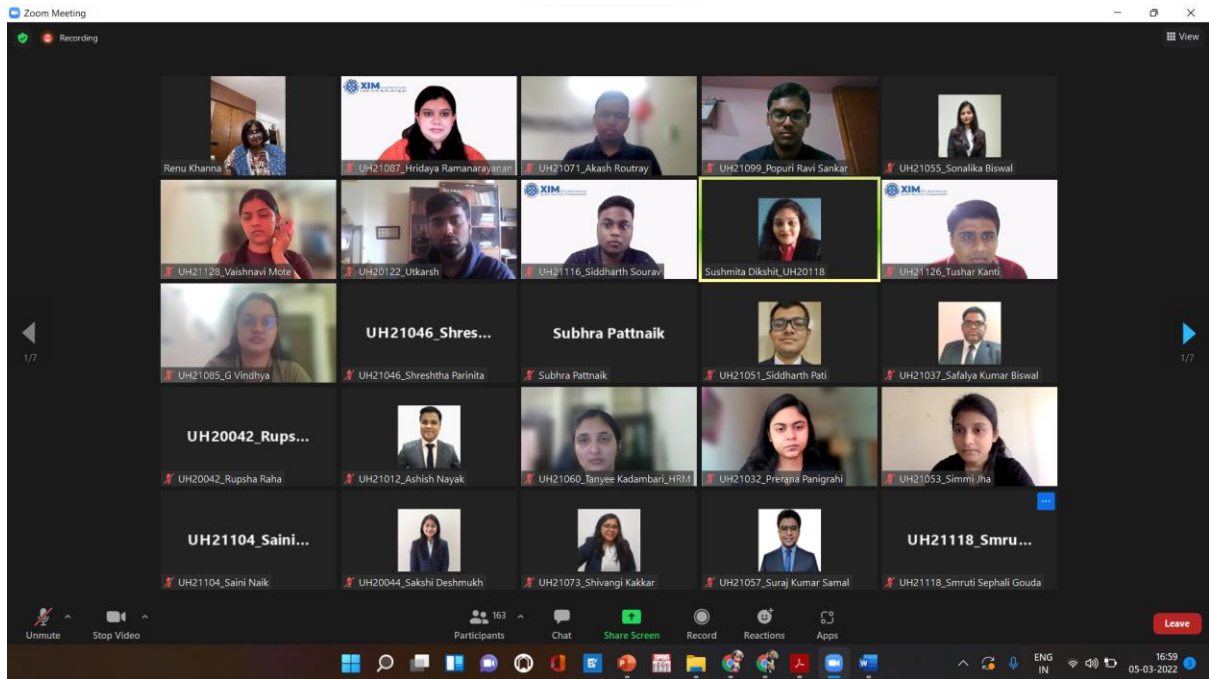


He talked about how employee engagement has not been optimal in the pre-Covid time and how HR managers should strive to improve employee engagement in the post-Covid times. He further explained that employee engagement would look drastically different in the current context than it was in the pre-pandemic times.



Further, Dr. Varma also explained how social interactions have changed in the hybrid workplace, giving rise to the need for change in the way we approach engagement. Sir added an example that while interactions were happening face to face in the brick-and-mortar workplaces, where one could interact with other people when meeting them in the premises, interactions are now heavily dependent on online media such as Zoom.

He talked about how there is a need to be more caring and empathetic in the current times. He emphasized on how little things like addressing someone by the correct pronunciation of their name can make a difference.



Key Takeaways

- ✓ Show people that you care during crisis times. Put in genuine effort to acknowledge people and the work that they do.
- ✓ Experiment. Challenge people to try new things and push them to do better.
- ✓ Respect the commonalities and differences of the global world.
- ✓ The worst managers are micro-managers. So, do not micro-manage.

Q&A session

1. How do we maintain the balance between sensitivity and personalization when communicating?

The whole idea here is to show genuine and sincere effort. Taking up the example of pronouncing someone's name right, there will be times when you have difficulty with it or just cannot get it right. In such a scenario, you can simply and politely ask that person to help you out with the pronunciation. Small gestures like these show that you genuinely care about the person enough to put in the effort to make them feel acknowledged. Additionally, one must be respectful towards the cultural differences that exist between the different parts of the world.

2. When should we challenge the employees? How can we keep the employees motivated through these challenges?

As a manager, one should know the readiness level of his team members. Different members in a team will have different levels of readiness and the manager must keep this in mind when assigning tasks and subsequently challenges to these employees. Additionally, one should also keep in mind the skills and knowledge possessed by the individual when assigning tasks.

About the speaker

Dr. Arup Varma is Distinguished University Research Professor of Management at the Quinlan School of Business, Loyola University Chicago. He holds a PhD from Rutgers University, New Jersey (USA), an M.S. in Personnel Management & Industrial Relations from XLRI, Jamshedpur (India), and a BSc (Hons) from St. Xavier's College, Kolkata (India). Dr. Varma's research interests include performance appraisal, expatriate issues, and HRM issues in India. He has published over 100 articles (and book chapters) in leading journals, such as the Academy of Management Journal, the Journal of Applied Psychology, and the International Journal of HRM, and presented over 150 research papers at conferences such as the Academy of Management, the Academy of International Business, and the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology. In recognition of his research, he has recently been awarded an endowed professorship -- the Frank W. Conidine Chair in Applied Ethics for the period July 2022-June 2027.

Dr. Varma joined Loyola in August of 1996, and has taught numerous different courses, including Research Methods, Performance Management, Human Resources and social media, etc. He has won multiple awards for teaching, research, and service, including the 2017 Alumnus Award for Academics from his alma mater, XLRI. In 2018, he spent 6 months in India, as a Fulbright Scholar.

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