JGi JAIN
DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY

CENTRE FOR
RESEARCH IN
SOCIAL SCIENCES
AND EDUCATION

The Social Science Perspective

**VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2
APRIL 2022**

WHAT'S INSIDE

EDITORS DESK

"If we don't end war, war will end us."- H. G. Wells
&
"There can never be a good war, or a bad peace" – *Benjamin Franklin*

The Second Issue of The Social Science Perspective (TSSP), 2022, from CeRSSE arrives at a sombre time. The world is baffled and stands watching the unprecedented humanitarian crisis created as a result of the Russian-Ukrainian War. While millions of refugees flee and take refuge in neighbouring countries, it is time for us to introspect on the causes of war, the dynamics of power and geopolitics, and the consequent socio-economic impact on the future world. As far as the 21st century war is concerned, history is witness to the reiteration of the fact that there can never be a victorious or defeated. Nonetheless, it takes us back to the wars from before- some relics of the past, pushed into oblivion, and the ones that are still ongoing in the other parts of the world- scarring and shattering human lives like always. While the world is yet to fully recover from the effects of the COVID-pandemic, the politics of war raging across the world perhaps make us ponder- *what does it take to be 'humane'?*

This is the fifth edition of TSSP, covering the period between January and March 2022. We kick off with an introductory piece under Approaching Research on 'Research and New Education Policy'. We also present to you original articles covering a wide range of issues such as the ongoing war in The World Perspective; a unique insight into the recently concluded Uttar Pradesh State Elections in India Matters; insights on the lives of the 'indigenous sexual minorities' in The Field Perspective; A Book Review of 'The Elephant in the Room'; a satirical take on the International Women's Day under Gender Wise. Along with this, we also share with you an article by a student participant from our Certificate Course in Public Policy (CCPP), an Event Report of the National Environment Youth Parliament (NEYP) 2022, that we hosted at our University and other academic achievements of our scholars. We hope you enjoy reading this issue as much we take immense pleasure in bringing it together for you.

Priyanca, Smitha and Debangana
Editors, TSSP

Approaching Research

Research and the New Education Policy

Call for a Robust Eco-System

Taking cognisance of the need for expanding the knowledge and its application across a broad range of disciplines, the National Education Policy 2020 highlights the priority for shaping and strengthening a robust ecosystem of research in India. The policy also underlines the indispensability of such an ecosystem, considering the rapid changes occurring in the world and also the specific needs of India. As one of the three largest economies in the world, India has a huge magnitude of need to transform both the quality and quantity of research. Large talent pools need to be created for expanding the research capabilities as well as output. The key approaches suggested include the enhancement of the proportion of research investments as a share of GDP, on par with other nations that are leading in research and innovation across the globe. The policy also recognises the need for high-quality interdisciplinary research across diverse fields in order to effectively meet the challenges relevant to our vital needs such as clean drinking water, sanitation, quality education and healthcare, improved transportation, air quality, energy, infrastructure and so on.

National Research Foundation as a Driver

Even if one considers certain overriding needs for importing and adapting relevant research from abroad for timely solutions, the long term effectiveness and the benefit of such a strategy hinges on our abilities to conduct our research and gain freedom from a perpetual dependence in critical areas. As a game-changer, the National Education Policy proposes the establishment of a new mechanism called the National Research Foundation (NRF). NRF will be an overarching body promoting avoidance of duplication of efforts at a national level and serving as a national coordinating mechanism.

Addressing a long-standing gap, the policy also underscores the importance of enhancing the role of Higher Education Institutions in the fields of research and innovation. The share of funding for research in Higher Education Institutions out of the public funding for research in India had been far too low in comparison to that of many countries well known for their research impacts. Along with advocacy for greater funding of this sector, the policy proposes more discovery-based learning from the level of school education and the inclusion of research and internship in the undergraduate curriculum. Through its merit-based competitive funding process, the National Research Foundation is touted as an enabler for fostering and promoting research culture in universities.

Multi and Interdisciplinary Research

In the context of NEP, we address the question as to how we can intensify multi and interdisciplinary research in higher education. At the outset, in defining the scope of research problems, the multi or interdisciplinary nature of real-life issues and needs are to be recognised and integrated. A proven way then is to constitute research teams comprised of members specialising in diverse disciplines relevant to the research problem. For research leading to PhD too, it is necessary to transcend the traditional approach of uni-disciplinary orientation for research committees and administrative mechanisms that could inhibit multidisciplinary research. Encouraging multi or interdisciplinary research, there are abundant titles of journals that publish such research findings.

Further, an effective way in which research impacts can be improved is to involve the users as stakeholders, particularly in the field of applied research. Such involvement can take various forms including their strong contribution to the funding. This step would strengthen the accountability and focus of research efforts and can also promote a system of performance-based incentives to growth. Thus the connection between research and innovation can flourish. Turning to the potential that India holds for becoming an attractive destination for higher education, greater research collaborations at the international level can strengthen such prospects.

JAIN's Research Journey

As part of its programmes, JAIN had been offering a sizable number of multi or inter-disciplinary courses such as Gender Studies, Neuro-Psychology, Artificial Intelligence Applications and so on. An effective way in which we can develop further potential in this regard is to undertake the development and delivery of courses with a combined effort of faculty from different departments. The need centric or problem-centric basis for curricular designs will expand the multi-disciplinary content in academics. Thanks to the presence and vision of the interdisciplinary research centres such as the Centre for Nano and Material Sciences, Fire and Combustion Research Centre, the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education and the Centre for Ancient History and Culture, there is a natural potential to create further linkages with activities of other departments to strengthen their multi-disciplinary interactions.

Interdisciplinary Research involving Social Sciences

Multi or interdisciplinary research involving humanities and social sciences becomes extremely critical when advances in modern science and technology are to be applied in the societal context where the creation of economic or social value, understanding of human behaviour, collective actions, communications and ethics play a significant role. Experience in recent decades with systems dealing with market economies and consumerism, the highly skewed concentration of wealth in modern societies, the geopolitical dynamics and conflicts, and serious threats for environmental security have shown strains that could have far-reaching adverse impacts on the wellbeing of humanity at large. At the same time, in this modern era, there are many things right that need celebration and embracing on a larger scale. In the research that deals with these issues and seeks solutions, the need for insights from arts, humanities and social sciences hardly require emphasis.

Looking Forward

JAIN's endeavours in the coming years to accelerate research will encompass engaging students, right from the UG level by developing a research-oriented mind, and training them to carry out projects focussed on publications in peer-reviewed journals. It is also planned to create the pull effect for research through the strengthening of the links between the research and innovation, and, through the launch of some uniquely designed institutional schemes. In expanding the knowledge that meets the needs of contemporary society, new means are to be created for faculty members too for regular interaction across different disciplines. This would require a change in the organisational structure of the university in terms of creating or adding a matrix form of organisation, which will enable inter disciplinary interaction and team-based working across disciplines. Thematic centres on research will promote interdisciplinarity as they engage in addressing high priority demands of the society in areas such as water resources, health, energy, culture and ecology.

Finally, on a philosophical note, we can see the ultimate purpose of all research is to expand knowledge by a process of unfolding what is within. There is no existence of knowledge independent of the knower. All that is recorded into books or other forms of objective knowledge is but a lower manifestation of knowledge. The best representation of the knowledge is to be found in the depths of human experience and practice itself. It is in this perspective that we can perceive an intricate and lasting connection between the scope of humanities and social sciences and the field of research, which is a pathway in the quest for human knowledge.

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THE WORLD PERSPECTIVE

Russia-Ukraine Conflict: The Humanitarian Quandary Amidst Contested Sovereignty

The world was gradually recovering from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and moving towards normalcy with analysts predicting that a post-COVID era is coming into the view. However, in the course of these transitions, the international community found itself grappling with an acute humanitarian and security threat emerging out of Russia's invasion of Ukraine since the end of February 2022. The military intervention by Russian troops in Ukraine's soil has intensified the tensions between the West and Russia leading to a 're-envisioning' of the cold war-like scenario in the present times.

The source of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is multi-layered rooted in Ukraine's complex history of independence from the erstwhile Soviet Union. Russia's offensive posture emanates from its vulnerability towards the growing security concerns in the region due to Ukraine's ambitions of becoming a part of NATO and the EU. The membership not only guarantees to strengthen Ukraine's security structure in the region, but the tilt also implicates an expansion of the West, particularly the US, in the eastern part of Europe. It challenges the geopolitical space of control that previously belonged to the Soviet splendour- a fact that is despised by the current Russian President, Vladimir Putin.

Hence, in geopolitical terms, the cause of the intervention is President Putin's desperate attempt to regain the lost glory of Russia, by establishing control over the territories which earlier belonged to the Soviet's sphere of influence. In President Putin's mind, the Cold War division of the world order has lingered on (where the sphere of influence over the countries was divided into two zones belonging to the US and the Soviet Union respectively) as he has put forward his conditions to the West in his draft treaties to the US and NATO in December 2021- that NATO would restrict upon its eastward extension and not include any Eastern European country including Ukraine into the alliance. Russia also asked for a demilitarisation of the countries, such as Latvia, Estonia and other Balkan countries, which were a part of the Soviet Union and have entered into the NATO's alliance after 1997. So, the simultaneous functioning of the two-fold factors were largely responsible for Russia's military intervention in Ukraine- first, a geopolitical quest to get back its sphere of influence like the erstwhile Soviet Union and second, an urge to diminish security threat arising out of NATO's expanding horizon of influence in the Eastern European region.

As a result, this Russian venture has signalled two things – first, it has led to the contestation with the concept of sovereignty and second, inflicted upon a huge humanitarian crisis in the region posing a challenge to the international community as to how to respond to the emerging crisis.

Contested Sovereignty

Putin's idea of a geographical space belonging to Russia's reign of power; thereby, attempting to push the sovereign boundaries beyond Russia's terrain has severely underestimated Ukraine's sovereignty as an independent nation-state. Ukraine's separate identity as a democratic and sovereign country after gaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 has been consistently challenged by Russia under Putin's regime. In 2014, Russia has already annexed Crimea and fuelled separatism in the Donbas region of Ukraine. Putin has shown no sign of hesitancy in encroaching upon the sovereign borders of Ukraine's independent territory as it firmly discards Ukraine's historical journey of independence and considers that it rightfully belongs to Russia owing to its common heritage and culture with the former Soviet Union and fell under the Soviet's sphere of control. Putin makes that statement across in a 2021 article that considers Russians and Ukrainians as "one people, a single whole".

Therefore, the Ukrainian crisis speaks of contested histories and sovereignty- Ukraine visualises itself as a sovereign state of Europe, Putin considers Ukraine to be an extended part of Russia. It showcases how the concept of sovereignty and geographical boundaries are modified according to the whims and fancies of a bigger power at the cost of diminishing the territorial integrity of smaller countries. The question, therefore, arises whether sovereignty is meaningful only when it is valorised by the powerful nations? Ironically, Russia has been a supporter of non-interference, political autonomy and sovereignty of nation-states following the Westphalian system. But it was evident through the efforts of integrating Ukraine as an extended part of Russian territory, how Putin has violated the terms and conditions of the founding principles of sovereignty and defied the 'rules-based' international order. In this attempt to invade Ukraine, Russia has also breached the terms and conditions of the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances of 1994 which involved negotiations between the ruling Presidents of Russia, the US, Britain and Ukraine during that period. As per the memorandum, Ukraine gave up on its nuclear arsenals in return for security assurances of recognition of its independence and sovereignty. Putin's actions have been widely condemned by the international community as it threatens international peace and security- this has come particularly from the West comprising of the US and the EU countries who believes in the territorial sanctity and sovereign space of Ukraine and considers that being a democratic country, it can rightfully make its own geopolitical decisions.

Ukraine, therefore, finds itself caught between the West and Russia debating over its independent sovereign identity as an autonomous nation-state. However, the contestation of sovereignty is not a new phenomenon- as we have seen in the case of Israel and Palestine over centuries. Further, history has also witnessed how the majority community has defied the sovereign boundaries of countries according to their 'ultra-nationalistic' lineage leading to state-sponsored violence against the minority community or the 'outsiders' – as in the case of the Armenian genocide in the Ottoman Empire during World War-I or the Rohingya massacres in Myanmar in South Asia.

The Unfolding Humanitarian Crisis

The aggression against Ukraine by Russian military troops have turned the balance of the European region topsy-turvy. The war threatens to destabilise the region with millions of Ukrainian civilians getting displaced and neighbouring countries dealing with a huge influx of refugees, such as Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Moldova, Romania and Russia itself. Although Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 steered the mass exodus of Ukrainian people, the former 2014 war in Donbas has also generated a large refugee crisis in the region. Presently, according to UN reports, almost around three million people have fled Ukraine due to the war. The military escalation has resulted in the loss of life, injuries and demolition of civilian buildings and infrastructure. As of March 14, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) reports that there have been at least 1,834 casualties including 691 getting killed. Moreover, the increasing flow of refugees in the bordering states has also triggered massive economic pressure on the EU's growth. The cost of the war brings with it the possibility of a recession and mounting inflation pushing the EU's economy to the brink- with sanctions being imposed on Russia's gas and oil by the Western world, the situation in the region is likely to deteriorate further.

As the future of the conflict remains uncertain, the difficult question arises as to how to bring parity between the demands of the two countries, by striking a balance between Putin's security concerns and protection of Ukraine's sovereignty. This is also necessitated by the present world order which is already facing the consequences of the war. Therefore, a quicker ground of negotiation needs to be created by the international community before the situation completely goes out of hand and Ukraine falls into pieces trying to combat the Russian military might. So far, the international community's approach to the crisis, despite being responsive, has been quite slow as compared to Russia's fast-paced scale of annexing Ukraine into its territorial ambit.
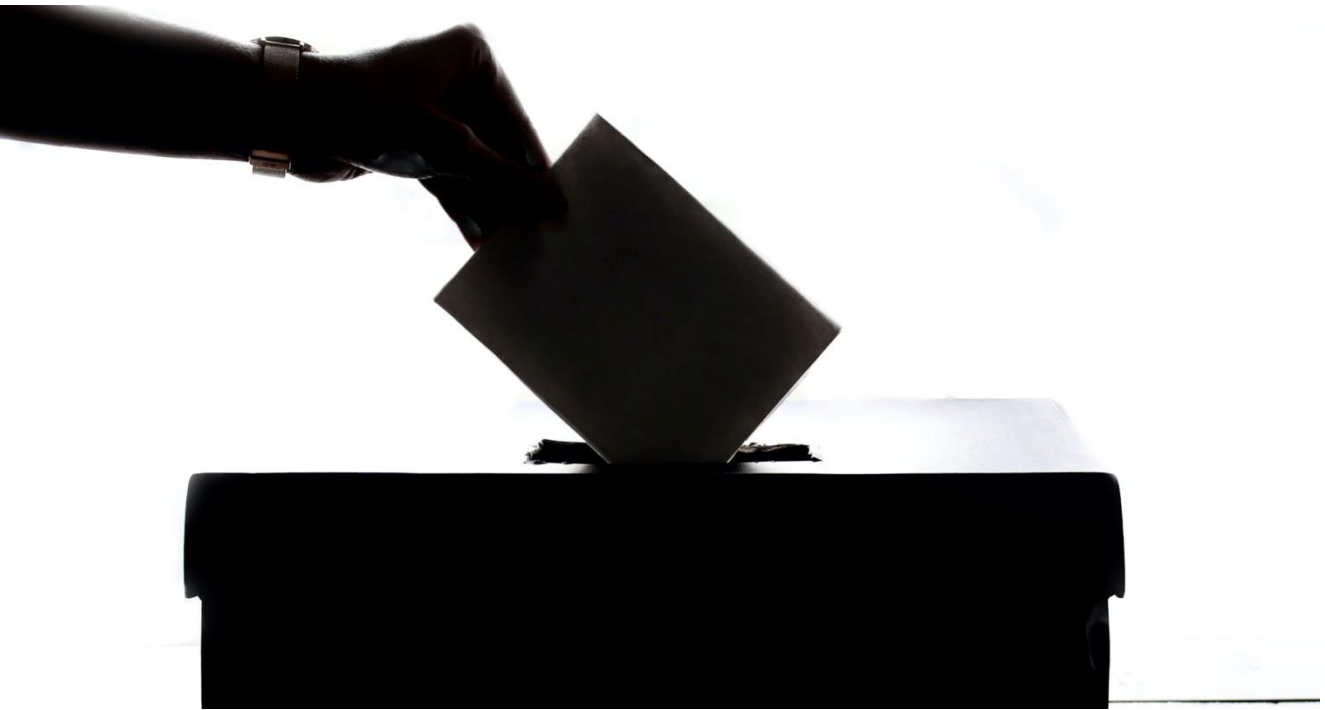
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INDIA MATTERS

Uttar Pradesh Elections 2022: Samajwadi Party's Struggles with its Social Image

Social identification theory notes that the social image of political parties is a relevant indicator of how individuals perceive political formations. Developed in the context of American scholarship, scholars noted that individuals identify political parties with different social groups, and if they can associate themselves with these groups, an enduring attachment is developed with these parties. This approach explains how self-perceived membership in social groups affects social perceptions and attitudes. Scholars argue that individuals attempt to project greater differences between the in-group of which they are part and the relevant out-group. Such differences may be perceived, more than what exists in reality. In the context of politics, this may lead to perceiving strong social differences between the party you are attached to and the party, which is the opponent.

Social Images allow political parties to have a durable social base, that can act as a cushion even in adversarial circumstances. One reason for the explosion that Congress has faced in recent times is the lack of a social anchoring of the party, leading to no electoral cushion, and heavy electoral defeats. However, an enduring social image can also act as an obstacle to widening the support base. The obstacles faced by the Samajwadi Party (SP) are an example in that direction. Formed in the 1990s, in the wake of Mandal agitation and Ram Janmabhoomi agitation, as a successor of Bhartiya Lok Dal and the socialist parties in Uttar Pradesh (UP), the SP could easily cultivate its association with two prominent communities in Uttar Pradesh- the Yadavs and Muslims. Apart from the KHAM (Kshatriya, Harijan, Adivasi, Muslim) formula associated with the Congress in Gujarat during the 1980s, it is doubtful if any social imagery has been widely discussed in Indian politics. The alignment of these two prominent communities with the SP meant that the SP always had an electoral cushion to fall back upon. Precisely for this reason, the party continues to be relevant in the politics of UP, unlike the Congress and the BSP. However, the party has also failed to mobilize voters beyond these two categories, because of this very close association of Muslims and Yadavs with the party. In the fragmentary political space of the 1990s, this was not a hindrance for the SP to capture power. With no political formation able to garner more than 35 per cent of the votes, durable support from these two categories was sufficient for SP to intermittently hold power in UP. During the only instance when the party won a single majority in UP in 2012, it got only 29 per cent of the total vote share, yet again propelled by the support received from the Muslim-Yadav (MY) combination. In fact, it would also seem that the party was not interested to cultivate a support base beyond these categories. For example, Mulayam Singh would be one of the few politicians to speak against the promotion of Dalit bureaucrats in Lok Sabha. This and similar rhetorical outbursts cemented the social image of the SP.

However, the rise of the BJP and consolidation of non-Yadav OBCS and upper castes behind BJP meant that the social image of the SP, although still providing for an electoral cushion, is no more sufficient to win elections. It would seem that non-attempts by the SP in the 1990s to become a true Mandal party, and thereby catering to the interests of all OBCs, has come back to bite it. Even after the debacle in 2014, the party did not wake up to this reality. Rather, it relied on alliances, which also proved insufficient. Unlike the MY combination of SP, the BJP cultivated multiple social imageries. For the upper-castes, the BJP was the traditional choice, closely supportive of their symbolism and ideology. For someone who is closely identified as a Hindu, the BJP is the automatic electoral choice. For lower OBCs and lower SCs, their exclusion from the mainstream was partially addressed by the BJP, resulting in the manifestation of yet another social image for the BJP. Moreover, for any Hindu harbouring antagonistic feelings towards the Muslim 'other', the BJP becomes an obvious choice. For the SP, there has been nothing apart from the MY combination. However, the sheer strength of these two categories would also mean that the SP remained as the principal opposition against the BJP in UP.

In the run-up to UP elections 2022, it would seem that finally, after years of slothful approach, the SP was about to address its social image problem. It is not accidental that almost all the BJP leaders who shifted to SP in the run-up to the election were from the non-Yadav OBC communities. Considering the ideological adherence of the upper-castes towards the BJP, it is understandable that the SP attempted to poach the non-Yadav OBC base of the BJP. However, despite conscious attempts at altering the social imagery, social images that are the culmination of a long-drawn political articulation, would take time to dwindle. This becomes evident if one analyses the social alignment of the 2022 UP elections. According to the CSDS (Centre for Study of Developing Societies) post-poll data, while there has been increasing support for SP among non-OBC voters, it has rarely crossed 25 per cent of the community votes. The vast majority, therefore, continued to vote for the BJP. This along with the near-total consolidation of upper castes behind the BJP resulted in yet another Saffron victory. One can only imagine how the results would have been if the SP was pro-active since 2017 in addressing its social image problem, rather than waking up to it six months before the election. Maybe a closer fight? One can only speculate.

Nevertheless, since attempts to broaden its social image have been initiated, it is possible that in the future the SP would pose greater electoral challenges against the BJP. However, it is difficult to cultivate social images merely through macro-level rhetoric. Complimentary initiatives have to be taken at the grassroots. The perception of the Yadav community, a dominant agrarian community, among other communities will also have to change through conscious attempts. Moreover, political articulation would also have to go beyond caste rhetoric and address material issues considering the class background of lower OBCs. If such efforts are made, not only can the SP shed its social image problem, it can also potentially bear electoral fruits in the future.

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The Field Perspective

The Dancing Boys in 'Launda Naach' – The Politics of Identity

Kothis, the 'indigenous sexual minorities' have always been rendered invisible as a gender category, by virtue of their overlapping identity. They are often described as 'passive homosexuals, effeminate, lower-class, non-English-speaking vulnerable group' (Pushpesh Kumar, 2016). They inhabit both the heterosexual and homosexual spaces to suit the demand of the situation. In other words, they impersonate their psychic gender within their homogeneous community and act straight in a homophobic society. Unlike the hijras who have a cultural and hierarchical ancestry and have occupied a specific social space as 'third gender', the kothis occupy a fluid space and usually remain ambiguous in identarian caging and straight jacketing. Usually, the kothis stick to their hetero-normative family while keeping away from cross-dressing, unlike the hijras who forsake their biological homes to join the community. But in spite of the differences, when the family space becomes judgemental with their effeminacy and shuns their incapability to conform to the masculine performativity, these kothis draw strength, moral support, and camaraderie by joining the hijra community; thereby, becoming one with them. The article explores the kothi/launda dancers, their identity, and desires as evident in the performing art. In the pandemic, when dancing had taken a back seat and the kothis had to go back to their home spaces, they felt cut off from their community which used to be a space of comradeship and bonding. I would also like to examine the discourse of politics of identity that have shaped their (kothis) social image within the larger unit of the queer community.

The kothis in urban and rural India are engaged in diversified professions that range from street begging to prostitution to entertaining viewers during 'lagan' (ceremonies and functions mostly held in Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh). These entertainers are also known as launda dancers who earn their living by dancing in the ceremonious functions mostly held in the Bhojpur region of Bihar. For those looking down upon such performances by males, guised as females (laundas), with indignation, it is imperative to know that such performances existed much before in folk art forms in different parts of rural India by the name of 'nautanki' (Bihar) and 'alkaap' (Murshidabad), 'jatra' (Bengali open theatre) where in spite of the availability of females in some cases, the charm lied in making the males perform the female roles. As Jianendra Kumar Dost writes in his article, Naach, Launda Naach or Bidesiya, "…over the years, while other forms have allowed women to perform female roles, Naach continues to work with Launda performers only.' Such is the vivacity and aura of the dancing boys, that biological women failed to replace them in this popular musical theater form.

On the ideological platform, the illusion or 'maya' that the dancers create with their charismatic aura on the viewers gets ruptured when practicality creeps in. The life-halting COVID-pandemic that has been a severe blow to mankind in general, has impacted the dancers too; dancers who often remain uncounted in the census as they are rendered invisible due to their non-normative gender orientation. These artists are well off in their community where they bond on similar desires and identities and are mostly othered in their own family spaces. The familiar home spaces turn out to be correctional spaces, as gender orientation is modelled only on hetero-normative binary structure and these artists do not fit into the created moulds of identity and hence othered. The COVID situation has captured many queer-identified bodies into the closeted home spaces where their liberating 'self' that otherwise breathes in queer affirmative spaces, gets throttled. With the 'New Normal' being the existing norm of life, this community is continuously in the process of yielding to the normative patterns of life sometimes in the form of resistance (suicides), acceptance ('straight- acting'), and remaining stigmatised. The marginalised communities had taken the utmost beatings of the consequences of the pandemic that no other section of the society had encountered. The class, caste, and gender minorities had always been at the centrifugal sphere in terms of equality and justice. On the contrary, they had always occupied the centre in moments of crisis and suffrages, be it economic, social, emotional, or physical. The sexual minorities bore the severe brunt of it on their mental and psychic state; not to mention their financial disability. Cut off from their community which was not only a space of bonding and belongingness but also of comradeship and activism that made them aware of their rights and prerogatives, the community members felt completely shattered and homeless. This feeling of homelessness even in their home spaces is what took away the vitality within them that was needed for sustenance and survival. A US-based charitable initiative, 'The Trevor project' reported an insurmountable surge in SOS calls from the community people across the country with proliferation in cases of shelterlessness, unemployment, depression, and suicides.

The situation for the launda dance artists was far worse. These artists sustained their livelihood through dancing and the theatre form of Naach, practised in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. It has enabled them to appropriate their femininity to the fullest as they impersonated lucrative females through make-up, costumes, and inherent coquetry. As Amrita (the female name of a biologically male dancer) mentions that she used to be at the top of the world when the crowd cheered her during her performance on stage and applauded her feminine grace. She considered that acknowledgement as a major reward over monetary returns. Now, Amrita has to dress up like a man and act straight because of his homophobic family members. Another dancer (who preferred to be called anonymous) expressed her willingness to stay with her same-sex partner in Bihar instead of returning home but finally was compelled to return to his biological family as the co-existence of homosexual couples is not socially sanctioned. Hence, the internalised fear prevented them to stay together and drove them back to their normative family spaces. Amal (name changed), a launda dancer and sex worker, is facing acute financial stringency as the pandemic has left indelible fear on the minds of the people to afford luxury and sexual gratification at the cost of health. His world centred around his dance community and his professional friends who sustained him emotionally and financially. With the disruption in the order, he wandered without anybody to fall upon and finally, chose the path to ultimate liberation from the unbearable burden of a socially 'unwanted' life. Unable to sustain the intensity of stress and anxiety, he attempted suicide but was fortunately saved by another friend from his community. All these respondents had one thing in common- during the pandemic, they realized the toxicity of their family spaces and society in general. These female impersonators and transvestites had always been victims of exclusion and othering. They doubly encountered segregation when forced into the hetero-normative spaces. The reason behind this intense stigma is, in fact, their 'too-transgressive' nature. The hyper-femininity of the launda dancers is the necessary cause of the stigma attached to them that puts them at an added disadvantage to the other members of the community. As Dasgupta writes- "Effeminate men, both on cyberspace and in physical space, threaten to unmask the normativity that many gay men build around themselves". The same applies to the launda dancers who impersonate women and hence, are considered a stigma even within the community spaces.

During the fieldwork, I have conducted interviews with four insiders and am thankful to them for the factual information on the consequences of the pandemic on the artists. The predicament of the artists during the pandemic outside their closed community has opened up several analytical discussions on the issues of socio-cultural stigma borne by them. The discourse on the dichotomy between the radical and the assimilative thinkers will probably help in understanding the politics of identity that have shaped the performativity of the kothis, in general, and the laundas, in particular.

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THE BOOK REVIEW

The Elephant in the Room: Evaluation of Taste and Value of Contemporary Women's Narratives
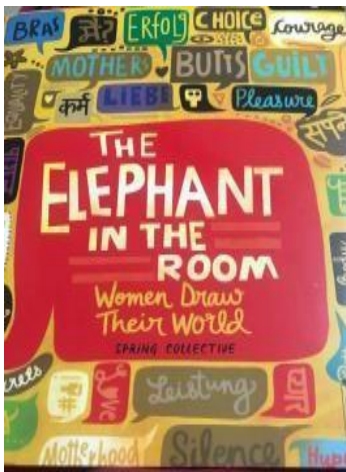
"What do women want?"

Answering this question would mean navigating through the labyrinth of women's experiences and approaching those answers akin to revolutionary and iconoclastic. Women's narratives have changed. Women no more accept a unified identity, instead, individual experiences now hold more importance. We have come far ahead of the caveman's narrative of women's position in society. The literary evaluation of women's narratives in the past was from the perspective of the male gaze. Feminism has been viewed either from the elitist perspective or with disdain. The literary academia has assigned a set of values to the entire narrative of women and that has led the general readers to have a distorted view of feminist ideology in particular and women's narrative in general. This review explores the culture of dissent concerning conversations around women's narrative in the 21st century and contingency of value through the graphic narrative The Elephant in the Room by Zubaan books and spring collectives.

The graphic narrative The Elephant in the Room is an anthology by women artists from India and Germany. It is about their experience of coping with gendered expectations in the 21st century and deconstructing the ideology behind modern women. This graphic novel attempts to subvert the singular narrative that women are stereotyped into even in the contemporary world driven by the patriarchal society.

In the past, the entire concept of graphic narratives was not valued as literature but with the popularity of narratives like *Persepolis*, graphic narratives have found their way into the taste of literary critics. While individual experiences of women were taken into account in artistic expressions, the taste for an idiosyncratic and personalised narration of these experiences has found its way into art only in recent times. But one should observe that the 21st-century consumers of art are not born with this sensibility but have acquired it. As Bourdieu states, judgements about art are cultivated and derived from; it produces 'cultural capital' that is tied to economic and social advantages. The conversations around women's narratives gained further ground, as giving 'voice to the voiceless' became a necessary part of the intellectual and academic discourse.

The graphic narrative The Elephant in the Room addresses this 'elephant in the room'- that of women's stories of legitimising their existence, identity, and their susceptibility to the male gaze. One observes that the illustrators leave their narratives to their readers. Each narrative merely remains a story about women. An illustration by Archana Sreenivasan named 'Otherly Urges' presents motherhood as a choice than a necessity. This graphic narrative shows that society expects the protagonist to bear children but the protagonist takes a stand and firmly abides by her decision of not having children. Such a narrative is progressive in the world where everyone explored motherhood as a necessity that completes women's identity. Through this narrative, one can also see that the protagonist also does not respond to questions like, 'when will you have children', but at the same time she is held back by her conditioned mindset and begins exploring her options of adoption.

Aesthetic judgement is a kind of sorting process through which modern societies produce and legitimise social inequalities. Through Sreenivasan's graphic representation, we can use our aesthetic judgement in understanding that though women in the 21st   century have the privilege of seeing motherhood as an option, the normative understanding of motherhood as a necessity is so deeply ingrained that one cannot separate it from one's consciousness. Another graphic story named Temples by Nina Pagalies brings an outburst of perspectives related to the female body and subverts stereotypes about the vagina. As even Lucy Irigaray says that female sexuality is always conceptualised based on masculine parameters. This work of art through various perceptions of the vagina presents vivid imagery of vaginas and their power for women and how society perceives the vagina. Through the satirical representation of the vagina, the readers are made to connect with their own experiences of epitomising the vagina as a symbol of female sexuality. Bum Power, another narrative by Larissa Bertonasc explores motherhood in the manner that it helped her character reclaim her body as she struggled with body image because she did not conform to the limiting ideas of beauty standards.

These narratives constantly dismantle women's need to conform to androcentric worldviews. It tries to fight notions around women as objects without agency and women who have no control over their bodies. These narratives reflect an aesthetic taste that contemporary readers have acquired. With the upsurge of the 'Me too' movement, social media, and awareness, the readers are now willing to explore the flip side of the dominant narrative. Through the consumption of art, therefore, one tries to unravel and decipher meanings with their education and judgements. Readers, short of this cultural competence to unpack the signified meaning of the ordinary, will be unable to gauge the polysemy of women's experiences presented in this book.

The encounter with a work of art is not 'love at first sight', it is acquired with time. The mode of representation is more important than the object of art but when the same object of art is handed over to the common people, they are unconsciously drawn into observing what their education has taught them of the context of the object of art. Popular taste functions on a scheme of popular ideologies created by literary elites that dominate any work of art. One can refer to the example of the Amazon Prime show, Four More Shots Please where it shows the popular narrative about how they take charge of their lives and reclaim their narrative and their identity but it is still the projection of upper-class, privileged women. The problematic aspect of this web series and the book lies in not acknowledging the fact that the portrayal of women as subversive, rebellious, and rule-breakers does not guarantee women's equal status in society. Likewise, just by recognizing the elephant's existence in the room does not mean resolving and addressing the problem of its existence in the room.

Nevertheless, there has been a periodic shift in the understanding of feminist theory and women's position. To recall Terry Eagleton, culture is on the side of dissent and not of harmonious resolution. In today's world, these values related to narratives of women in society are contingent- they are constantly changing, evolving, and challenging patriarchal norms. The narratives presented in contemporary times look for a dialogue with the dynamic self and the 'other'.

Notably, the value associated with a particular text will change according to the meaning the readers attach to it based on their contexts. Hence, the value associated with any literary text is contingent as the reader's interpretations are not natural but acquired with practice and training. Every graphic narrative in The Elephant in the Room is not just a product of the illustrator/artist's imagination but more so about the interpretation of the reader and the reader's engagement with the narrative.

We can compare the book The Elephant in the Room with the Bollywood movie *Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga*. This movie, just like the book attempts to de-stigmatizing conversations around gender issues and merge them into the mainstream narrative. It makes a point that values and tastes are contingent and breaks apart the notion of normative. One cannot shelter art and its reception from worldly concerns. Contrary to Kant's evaluation, art cannot be perceived as disinterested engagement; rather, sensibility is cultivated with the influence of culture and training of the mind. The book and the Bollywood movie come from a particular sensibility of the writer or the illustrator but the reader's engagement with the art form, his/her experience, and training is also crucial in developing an understanding of art.

The judgement about women's narratives cannot be restricted to either submissive and oppressed or victimised. Neither can we say that women's narratives are bold, empowered, and free from bonds. One cannot compartmentalise narratives and see them as a whole. It should be a self-evaluation of individual experiences and be focused on the reader's evaluation of the text. One cannot provide a definite answer to 'what women want', as it is completely subjective to individual experience and is contingent just like the reader's engagement with any work of art. The 21st century poses a culture of dissent and exposes individuals to multiple narratives. Theory, in that sense, is no more within its boundaries. It accepts intersectionality and has blurred the line between art and pleasure; gender and sexuality; normative and abnormal.

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JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)
Bengaluru

GENDER-WISE

International Women's Day: CHECK

The stage is decked. The women are dressed in festive colours. The institutional head tells them how deep the commitment to women empowerment runs in the organisation and its promoters. Awards are distributed to women who have served the organisation well. Prettily wrapped packages are distributed to all the women present with a single red rose and a smile. An older woman sits on stage, a smile plastered to her face, waiting to be introduced and invited to speak. She is a woman achiever who will deliver an inspiring speech shortly. She too receives a parcel and a bouquet of several roses. She has done this so many times that no one guesses that her heart is sinking: another plaque or curio? The smile stays put.
***

How do I inspire people when my own heart is filled with despair? I have done this for forty years. In the last ten years, there is so much more awareness about gender, gender equality and gender violence. Since the awful night that young girl was gang-raped in Delhi. That awareness has taken the strangest forms.
Ritual observance of International Women's Day, which has journeyed from socialist advocacy to capitalist marketing. Summits on women empowerment with all male-panels (that perfect neologism, 'manels'!). Ditto, "Women Achiever" awards, judged by manel juries. TV soaps that reflect some change (old relationships, new ways) but where the modern girl is always aggressive till love tames her. And filial piety still rules, although now oppressive elders might sometimes reform. But everyone still meets somewhere in the middle to hold up patriarchal structures. This far, no further.
I wonder if my old friend gets to watch television sometimes in prison. Stop, stop. Go no further.

More roses, more speeches, this time in honour of the institutional head and promoters. As I write this, it is just about two years since the first COVID-19 lockdown. The anger and shame I felt when we saw the images of migrant workers walking home in the cruel Indian sun rise once more. I shove them back. Yes, I keep them alive because we should not forget. Gendered consequences. All those men, abandoned, forlorn, walking back to complete uncertainty, possible starvation. And in their midst, young girls and women. Parents dropping dead. What happened to those girls? When I go home, I should Google. Someone must have investigated. The organisation that works on trafficking perhaps.
The shadow pandemic. Why the rise in gender-based violence during a crisis came as a surprise to anyone is what surprises me, or anyone like me who has worked… in the real world, not just on violence and inequality. This is the way of the world. Not a shadow, but a mirror. To everything we have failed to do. Forty years for me, many more for others, centuries for the women's movement. And still, we do not have enough shelters or support services. Our help lines are largely ineffective or inaccessible. Few organisations help with recovery and re-building survivor lives. And we are unable to focus on more than one form of violence at a time. So after the Delhi gang-rape, it was rape and sexual assault. Now, it is domestic violence.

But gender-based violence takes a hundred forms, and like Raktabeeja's ability to self-propagate, new forms are innovated all the time. During the pandemic, not just domestic violence, but child marriage, forced marriage, incest rape, child sexual abuse and elder abuse have also become more common. We have been so ineffective. The work of our lives rarely adds up.

I must not cry. I must not let my eyes moisten. "Our chief guest is so moved by your words, Sir." I force a smile to my face. "Your support for women empowerment will go down in history."
***

I am the missing apostrophe-s. You have forgotten about me. "Women empowerment" makes no sense. Yes, I know you know and have written articles about this, but really, without me, the apostrophe, "women" and "empowerment" are two unrelated nouns placed inelegantly next to each other. Women'S empowerment, if you must. The empowerment of women. Without me, the apostrophe-s, you make no sense.
Oho, do you think this is a pesky, irrelevant, irreverent intervention in your consideration of serious matters? What will you next lose—the 'e' in 'mpowerment'? Or the 't', which will actually allow you to speak the truth— 'empower men'?
Alright, I will shut up. After all, I am just an apostrophe-s.
***

"Madam Chief Guest is now smiling. I will now introduce her."
What I worry about is a retreat of women from public spaces. The lockdown meant thousands of women who work in public spaces—construction, street vendors, small business owners—were forced inside and their precarious livelihoods collapsed. They had also kept safe, through their watchful presence on pavements and in markets, the young girls who walked back from school and the young women who got off buses and rode their motor-cycles to work. Together, they had made the streets a safe place for women to come out in protest. And from these protests, emerged our women leaders. We have recoiled, been made to recoil, like snails and tortoises, into our unsafe shells. How long before we reclaim our right to public life? Those massive women's protests seem a distant and hazy memory as we quickly backspace and rewrite history. My heart is so full of grief and despair that my head is blank. But now, it is my turn to rise and inspire. Where's that cache filled with a lifetime of Women's Day clichés?
***

"Friends and sisters, the observance of International Women's Day was intended to create solidarity for better working conditions for women labourers, for the right to vote, and for peace. I say to you, one day is not enough. No, no, not the way you mean. Not for roses or attention. But the work we are meant to do must be done all year long."

Swarna Rajagopalan
Founder, Prajnya

STUDENT SPEAK

Food Security and Mid-Day Meal Program: A Comparison Between Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka

Food security has put the entire planet, hundreds of nations, and millions of societies at risk. It has also cemented the status of living and established "serious" standards instead in several states. Food security is a critical issue that now affects more than half of the world's population. Currently, food insecurity affects over 54 IDA member countries. Identifying global food insecurity and risk factors for food insecurity can aid in this process. Governments and aid organizations concentrate their efforts on the neediest populations and consequently develop more effective support programs. Researchers discovered that 27 per cent of people globally were food insecure in 2014; approximately half of those in low-income countries face the problem of food insecurity, compared to 10 per cent in high-income ones.

This study examined the implementation and effectiveness of food security policies through mid-day meal programs between two south Indian states, namely Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka (basically Southern India). Additionally, resource persons were interviewed to grasp the MDM Scheme better. India has grown significantly over the last two decades due to technological and infrastructure advancements. However, when the problem of food security is brought up, it signals a grave threat to its netizens. According to studies, children are the most malnourished and require adequate nutrition and a balanced diet. The states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh considered this and implemented MDM schemes in 2002-03 and 2007-08, respectively, following the central government's lead in 1995.

The state of Karnataka's rate of hunger alleviation is "alarming," while the state of Andhra Pradesh's rate is "severe." The study aimed to make comparisons on the efficacy of implementing these MDM Schemes in both States using regulated data, statistics, viable information, other resources, and certain resource persons. The study compared the system's involvement, foundation, growth, and development to the real world.

The AP Mid-Day Meal Scheme is implemented as the Andhra Pradesh government's school meal program. The program provides free lunches to kids in elementary and upper primary classes at public and government-aided schools on working days. They seek to improve school-aged children's nutritional status. The Jagananna Gorumudda (MDM) Scheme dates back to ancient times. The Government of India established the Jaganna Gorumudda (MDM) Scheme to aid disadvantaged youngsters in rural and urban areas with nutrition, food security, and school access. On school working days, this project gives a free lunch to children in Primary and Upper Primary Classes who attend Government, Government-Aided, Local Body STC, Madarsas, and Maqtabs sponsored by the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). The Jagananna Gorumudda Scheme was launched in January 2003 for primary school children (Classes I to V). Then in October 2008, it was expanded to include 100 per cent state funding for children in Upper Primary Schools (Classes VI to VIII) and High Schools (Classes IX and X). This was extended to children enrolled in Special Schools under the NCLP in 2010-11.

In Karnataka, the government launched the mid-day meal program in 2002-03 in seven districts in the state's north-eastern regions, identified as the most educationally and economically disadvantaged. This number increased to accommodate the remaining 23 districts.

Students in the first through eighth grades receive free rice through the MDM program, while those in the ninth and tenth grades receive rice at L-1 pricing from registered suppliers via the NCDEX EAuction system. Since 2011, the following products have been available: Toordhal, RBD Palmolien, Channagram, and Double Fortified Vitamin A and D. NCDEX E-Auction is used to purchase food grains, and edible oil NAFED will be utilized to buy Toordhal beginning in June 2018.

The NCML- Hyderabad, a third party, evaluates the quality of Common Rice and Channagram. The Corporation owns five go-downs located around the state. In some areas, 42 distinct go-downs perform MDM transactions. There are 207 PDS godowns, several of which are connected to MDM food grain godowns.

In 1997, the Karnataka-based Children's Love-Castles Trust began providing free lunches to children in need. Both the food bank and the Anganwadi milk programme were introduced, and the eight schools that had been chosen. The Midday Meal Program of the State Government has taken the place of the food-bank program.

It was discovered that the effectiveness and implementation of the scheme were nearly identical in both States, with very little growth observed in Karnataka as compared to Andhra Pradesh. Additionally, it was discovered that Andhra Pradesh MDM followed a single sort of system till the recent emergence of a new administration in Andhra. Regular dinners ceased to exist following the election of a new government.

Both states implemented a well-planned food program and guaranteed that children received a nutritious and balanced meal. Instead of that, unique meals were created each week. Taking a balanced meal and diet into consideration, the MDM scheme provided new food that significantly and efficiently increased the quality in terms of proteins, nutrients, carbs, and other indicators for a specified meal plan. Not only that, but student attendance has increased, resulting in improved school admissions and an overall improvement in education policy. This stated that the need for Self Help Groups (SHGs) that prepared food had increased, so their salary must be included in the check.

However, in Andhra Pradesh, harsh administrative consequences resulted in the non-payment of bills, resulting in pending expenses for government schools and self-help groups. This almost certainly resulted in some deviance from the MDM Scheme's success. However, it is worth noting that the State of Karnataka has not encountered this problem and so operates its program with a self-driven motivation to feed the pupils with high regard.

Taking these into account, some of the key policy recommendations include: certain flexibility should be involved as far as self-help groups those who prepare the food, students' opinions must be elicited on type of food they require, there must be constant up-gradation of the scheme, and lookout for improvement factors. It was discovered that MDM programs must be changed every two years to ensure optimal resource utilization and nutrition quality plans. States must contribute cash to the MDM program's administration and office to assure the program's efficiency and further advance the scheme's objectives. The budget must be given in a stipulated time for effective implementation of the program by the schools. The scheme should abide by the main goal and try to improve the ISHI (Indian State Hunger State Index) ratios collectively.

M S Chandana Rajapantula
Student at Mount Carmel College, Bengaluru and Participant at the Certificate Course in Public Policy organised by CeRSSE & IIPS-KRB

EVENT REPORT

National Environment Youth Parliament (NEYP) 2022
University and Regional Level

JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) was bestowed with the responsibility of being the regional host of the National Environment Youth Parliament (NEYP) 2022. Organised under the aegis of Parvayaran Sanrakshan Gatividhi (PSG) on the theme of 'Environment and Sustainability', NEYP 2022 becomes a first-of-its-kind initiative. The Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CeRSSE) bore the flag of the event in the University.

> As the event came to us, I delegated its responsibility to CeRSSE. I knew that the event was in able hands- but I did not know that they would surpass my expectations the way they did. The whole event at both levels was meticulously planned, carefully executed, and diligently managed. I commend CeRSSE for all the efforts and congratulate the team for its success.
>
> *--Dr. (Prof.) Raj Singh, Vice-Chancellor, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)*

Parvayaran Sanrakshan Gatividhi (PSG), an all-India group dedicated to protecting, analysing, and monitoring the Environment against misuse by human forces, is committed to building, preserving, and sustaining an eco-friendly society and generating awareness among people. Two other leading universities from the region RV University and M. S. Ramaiah Institute of Applied Sciences have been the regional co-hosts partnering with JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) to make the event successful and ensure its greater reach. Green Assocham extended its warm support as the Sustainability Partner. The region comprises the vast geography of Southern India including the states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana.

The event, designed to be conducted in three levels, had the first two at the University and Regional Levels- in which CeRSSE took prominent efforts. Dr. Debangana Chatterjee, Assistant Professor at CeRSSE, shouldered the responsibility of the Principal Regional Coordinator ensuring the smooth sailing of both these levels. While JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) conducted the University Level event online on 12 January 2022, the University hosted the Regional Event on 23 January 2022. Both these dates coincided with and commemorated the birth anniversaries of Swami Vivekananda (also, celebrated as the National Youth Day) and of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, respectively.

Crafted exclusively for the Students of Higher Education Institutions from all parts of the country, the event harped on potential actions in tackling serious Environmental Crises. Students engaged actively with the theme of Environment and Sustainability during the event, shared their perspectives on the matter, and reflected upon the emerging best practices and solutions around it. At this platform, the deliberations, made through the mode of group discussion, were focused on the role of youth as facilitators of change for understanding the environment and thereby, paving the way for national prosperity.

These events at both levels on virtual Zoom platforms in two rounds- which were further split into break-out rooms to allow better rooms for dialogic engagement. The University Level hosted a total number of 41 participants and was assessed by the JAIN Faculty Members from across the Schools and Centres. At the end of the final round, 8 participants were selected for the regional level. An online felicitation programme was held to celebrate the efforts taken at the University Level by the stakeholders on 21st January 2022 (Friday) and the event was chaired by the honourable Vice-Chancellor of JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) Dr. Raj Singh.

At the Regional Level, a total number of 61 participants took part from across 11 participating Universities in the region. Apart from the host and partnering universities, prominent private universities from the region, viz., Woxsen University (Telangana), KL University (Andhra Pradesh), Mother Teresa Women's University (Tamil Nadu), Dayananda Sagar University (Karnataka), Vels Institute of Science Technology and Advanced Studies (Tamil Nadu), REVA University (Karnataka), and CMR University (Karnataka) were enthusiastically participating in the Regional Event. The participants largely deliberated on the issue of Alternative and Renewable Energy. 22-judges from across the country, comprising of a bunch of distinguished academicians, entrepreneurs, management experts, and distinguished working professionals graced the occasion with their presence.

Winners from JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) with the JAIN
Principal Officers and other faculty members

On 28 January, a virtual felicitation programme (via Zoom) was held. The felicitation event, presided by the honourable Vice-Chancellor of JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) Dr. Raj Singh, was graced by dignitaries like Dr. HD Charan (Founder Vice-Chancellor, Bikaner Technical University Rajasthan & Chairman, National Committee on Universal human values AICTE Delhi), Dr. N. C. Wadhwa (Director General, Manav Rachna Educational Institutions), Dr YSR Murthy (Vice-Chancellor, RV University), Dr Raul Rodriguez (Vice-President, Woxsen University), Dr. KS Jagannadha Rao (Pro-Chancellor, KLU) to name a few. While everyone emphasised the need for deliberating upon the pressing environmental concerns of the day, they ushered their accolades on JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) for taking sincere efforts in materialising the event. Dr. Raj Singh on the occasion not only expressed his delight at the enthusiastic participation by the students but also pinned this initiative under the broad framework of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020- inculcating innovative instincts among the students. Dr. H D Charan underlined the need to take more such efforts in the future.
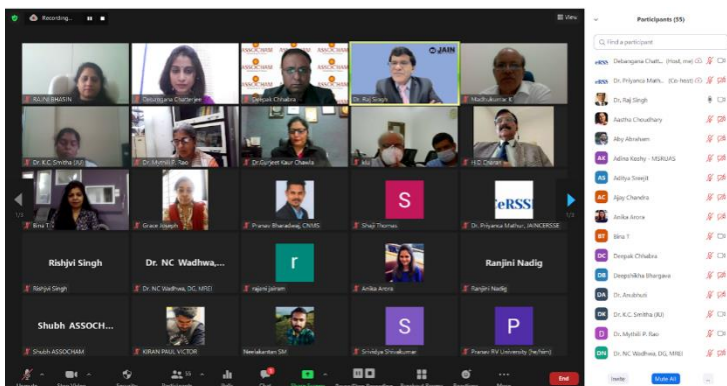
Dr. Raj Singh addressing the Felicitation Event on 28th January, 2022

All participants on both levels are given e-certificates and winners were given trophies. Ten-selected participants from the Region, of which three are from JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), are to represent Southern India at the National Level, to be held on 15 and 16 April 2022 at the Parliament house premises. The best speakers from both levels are given special cash prizes.

Overall, NEYP 2022 has given JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) an opportunity at expanding its wings by touching the national horizons. We hope the winners at the Regional Level Event bring the laurels back to the Region.

8 Selected Participants from JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)			
1	CNMS	M.Sc	Aditya Sreejit
2	School of Sciences (CPGS)	MSBT	Chirag G Pradeep
3	School of Sciences	BcGBt A	M.P.Dechamma
4	School of Sciences	CMBt	Pranav Bharadwaj
5	School of Sciences (CPGS)	M.Sc Biotechnology	Pratiksha Raman
6	School of Sciences (CPGS)	M.Sc Biotechnology	Sathwik C Jain
7	SHSS	Commerce	Sooraj Shivakumar
8	School of Management	BBA	Suhas Prakash Srivatsa
Best Speakers from JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)			
1	CNMS	M.Sc	Pranav Bharadwaj
2	School of Sciences (CPGS)	MSBT	Chirag G Pradeep
3	School of Sciences	BcGBt A	Sooraj Shivakumar
4	School of Sciences	CMBt	Sathwik C Jain

List of Selected Participants from the Region		
CMR University	Karnataka	Rishjvi Singh
CMR University	Karnataka	Mansi Kaveramma
CMR University	Karnataka	Priyanka Raja Reddy
JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)	Karnataka	Pranav Bharadwaj
JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)	Karnataka	Sooraj Shivakumar
JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)	Karnataka	Suhas Prakash Srivatsa
RV University	Karnataka	Pranav Prasanna Devatha
RV University	Karnataka	Sumanth S. Kumar
MS Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences	Karnataka	Adina Koshy
MS Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences	Karnataka	Ranjini S Nadig

Academic Achievements

- **Anand Vishwanathan** (Research Associate at the Centre for Ancient History and Culture and Ph.D Scholar, 2018 Batch) was awarded the INSA Indian National Science Academy Young Historian of Science Award (2021)

- **Anjali Sanker** (Ph.D Research Scholar in Economics) published –
  - Sankar, Anjali and Niveditasri N. 2022. 'Responsible Tourism as a Game Changer in Tourism Industry to Tackle the Problem of Climate Change: Evidence from Kerala'. *Journal of Education: Rabindra Bharati University*. 24: 1 (II): 19- 27
  - Sankar, Anjali and V. K. Xavier. 2022. 'Sustainable Tourism Opportunities in Thenmala and Kumbalangi Villages of Kerala'. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Mumbai*. 95:3: 33-37

- **Anil Dhale** (Ph.D Research Scholar in Buddhist Studies) presented a paper titled "Holistic Competency of Individual for Society observed in Dhammapada" on the occasion of Centenary Celebration of Acharya Buddharakkhita organised by Mahabodhi Society Bangalore on 17th March, 2022.

- **B Gokul Krishnan** (Ph.D Research Scholar in Mass Communication) published an article –
  - 'Effectiveness of Community Radio as a Grassroot Media for Participatory Democracy and Its Impact, *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR)*, Volume 9, Issue 1, January 2022, E-ISSN: 2348-1269 https://ijrar.org/papers/IJRAR22A1366.pdf

- **Chitresh Srivastava** (Ph.D Research Scholar in Public Policy)
  - was invited by the Indian Forum for Public Diplomacy for delivering a lecture on the topic "Track to Diplomacy: Opportunities, Perspectives and Challenges on Railway Diplomacy" on March 4, 2022

- **Sona Kumari HR** (Ph.D Research Scholar in Economics) participated in a 5-Day National Level Webinar on "Prospects of Indigenous Defence Manufacturing in India's Quest for Atma-Nirbharta", held during January 24-29, 2022 at JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), Seshadri Road Campus, Bengaluru.

- **Jagan Mohan** (Ph.D Research Scholar in Visual Arts)
  - received a research grant in the Area of Visual Arts Research from Karnataka Lalithakala Academy
  - published a research paper - "Programmers' Perspectives on the Use of Previsualization in the Design Process of Three.js Web Animation", *American Journal of Art and Design*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2022, pp. 1-10.

- **Merkuriaw Chanie** (Ph.D Research Scholar in Public Policy)
  - presented a paper online titled "The Role of the Diaspora in Post-War Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Efforts" at a conference by Teach and Serve for Africa - Ethiopian Diaspora Service Initiative (TASFA-EDSI)-Ethiopia on 10th January, 2022.
  - attended International Entrepreneurship Summit "AVLOKAN 2.0" 2022, International Entrepreneurship Summit organised by the Center for Management Studies, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) on 19th January, 2022.

- **Roshni Sharma** (Ph.D Research Scholar in Political Science) published an article
  - Sharma. R. and Priyanca Mathur (2021). 'Encountering 'Identity': Refugee Women and the Partition of the Subcontinent'. *Journal of Migration Affairs*. IV(1), 95-109. DOI: 10.36931/jma.2021.4.1.95-109

- **Sunil Kumar K.** (Ph.D Research Scholar in Mass Communication)
  - attended a Workshop on Research Project writing & Data Analysis organised by Amity University, Noida, February 21 – 28, 202
  - participated online in an International conference on Multidisciplinary Research for Sustainable Innovation (ICMRSI) organised by Persada Indonesia University, Jakarta, February 14 – 15, 2022

- **Tania Sengupta** (Ph.D Research Scholar in Public Policy) published –
  - Mathur, P. and Sengupta, T. 2022."Bridging the Gap-Response of Civil Society Organisations Towards the Stranded Migrant Labourers in COVID-19 Lockdown: A Study of Bengaluru, India". *Refugee Review*. ESPMI Network. Volume 5. PP-123-142. ISSN 2371-9001.

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