



# The Social Science Perspective

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## Message from the Chancellor

Another year has gone by, and a new one has just begun. I take this moment to wish all the readers of The Social Science Perspective (TSSP) a happy new year. I laud the editorial team of TSSP at the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CeRSSE) for providing an outlet for dialogue and showcasing the university's research profile. And I firmly believe this newsletter will be paramount in unraveling the untapped potential of our scholars. The Centre's endeavors in reaching out to the academic community and the relevant members of the civil society at large as the distinguished contributors for the newsletter and exploring many more prospects at the crossroads of society and social sciences will take our university to great heights.

Year on year, our university continues to grow nationally and globally. And this is all possible due to the outstanding efforts of our faculty, students, alumni, and staff. I wish to compliment all the TSSP contributors, our Ph.D. scholars, and invitees alike, for their untiring effort and commitment to excellence and wish everyone all the best in taking this newsletter and their mission forward.



**Dr. Chenraj Roychand**

## Message from the Pro Chancellor

*"It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see", said Henry Thoreau.*

Perspective is all about what we see and how we see it. The past year, spent largely in pandemic-induced isolation inside our homes, has coerced each one of us to relook at the way we view the world and our relationship with it. Spilling from it today new areas are evolving in contemporary social science research with increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary and collaborated research, technology-aided empirical research and good qualitative research in a 'big data' era. The increasing dependence on technology in a virtual educational world demands that while scholars continue to explore processes for research advancement, they must minimise where possible by putting an end to vices such as falsification, plagiarism, inappropriate methodology, and wrong data analysis.

Thus, in the field of humanities and social sciences research the need of the hour is to strive for tools, process enhancement and a demonstration of integrity by all stakeholders in the field. I hope that all Faculty and Research Scholars engaging in research keep all these points in mind.

The Social Science Perspective (TSSP) is a space to highlight all the above issues. I commend the hard work done by the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CeRSSE) at our University in bringing out this newsletter. I wish it the very best. Happy New Year, 2022!



**Dr. N. Sundararajan**

## Message from the Vice Chancellor

I am happy that the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CeRSSE), JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) is bringing out the 4th issue of its quarterly newsletter 'The Social Science Perspective' (TSSP). This Special Issue rings in the new year 2022, bringing along with new hopes and challenges for the world. We hope that the new variant of COVID-19 will be the terminal one and the new normal post-COVID will help overcome some of the world's lingering problems, particularly making education become more aligned to needs of society and the industry. Learnings of past two years enable us to look at the world, life, society, industry, education and almost everything in a new way! The challenge is that the society will have higher expectations from educational institutions and therefore the way education is imparted will have to undergo unprecedented changes, which will need complete mindset change. As Artificial Intelligence takes over almost all mechanical and mundane repetitive tasks, human beings will have to undergo reskilling and upskilling – another challenge for the new year.

Humanities and social sciences will see an increasing and important role in education enabling it to serve the objectives of New National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of developing good, well-rounded, and creative individuals capable of personal accomplishment and enlightenment, constructive public engagement, and productive contribution to society. CeRSSE and JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) should anchor the changes in many ways during the new year!

I wish everyone a Happy, Positive and Healthy 2022!



**Dr. Raj Singh**

## Message from the Registrar

As we enter the New Year 2022, it becomes increasingly important for us to focus on research in Social Sciences and Humanities that looks back into the old institutional history of who we are. We must draw strength from the vastness of our presence as a human race, as we owe it to our future generations who are struggling to cope with issues of physical and emotional well-being. There is greater need for inter-disciplinary cooperation which overcomes any barriers that language may create. In an increasingly interdependent virtual world, human beings are never too far from one another. Thus even the urban rural divide can be bridged if we in urban settings adopt mentees in rural areas whom we can individually guide and train. Every drop of water after all makes the ocean.

I wish the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education and the readers of its newsletter The Social Sciences Perspective (TSSP) to imbue new vigour in engaging with such new thrust areas of research in humanities.

Happy New Year, 2022!



**Dr. N. V. H. Krishnan**

## Editors Desk

*“Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think” - Albert Einstein.*

In our New Year Special Issue of The Social Science Perspective (TSSP), we at CeRSSE, bring to our readers original pieces of writing that espouses our commitment to creative freedom, to be ingenious. It reflects our drive to make this newsletter a tool to engage with varied interests driving towards knowledge dissemination with a high standard of educational value. The purpose is tailored to dwell into interdisciplinary subjects and topics by encouraging contributions from scholars and students from diverse backgrounds. The opportunity not only forms a fantastic way to highlight their expertise in a specific field of interest, but also foster networks among educators, researchers and students.

We, therefore, bring to you the fourth edition of TSSP covering the period between October and December, 2021. Like, our previous editions, this too remains true to the principle of conducting responsible research, contributing to the greater causes for the society, and understanding contextual needs. Thus, this robust TSSP edition are thematically ordered to bring to notice the glaring happenings from across the globe as The World Perspective, to address emerging research approaches through Approaching Research, to highlight on Covid-19 Impacting Lives bringing in both the field and gender perspectives, and to promote environment-friendly solutions through Advocating Green Initiatives. Apart from that, the issue covers the Centre conducted Webinar on the theme of Sports and Unity and highlights the achievements of our scholars and faculty members.

**Wishing all our Readers a Happy New Year 2022, let each year bring you new strength, passion and serenity to find you a better person!**

*Happy New Year  
2022*



**Priyanca, Smitha and Debangana  
Editors, TSSP**

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## THE WORLD PERSPECTIVE

### A Fleeting Calm: Afghanistan under the Taliban

There is a sense of calm that has descended on Afghanistan in the aftermath of the chaos that followed the political desertion by the erstwhile Ashraf Ghani government and the Taliban takeover. However, the seeming political and strategic equanimity over Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover of Kabul in August this year has papered over the larger complexities specific not just to the country but the whole region. The political and military collapse of Kabul signaled three things: the American strategic fatigue with 'forever wars' was overbearing for Washington; the political, constitutional, democratic and economic gains made over the last two decades did not have deep roots inside the Afghan society; and finally, the imposition of one political system, over the other may not be an easy project even for the most power countries of the world.

Afghanistan today stands at the crossroads of a migrant rush, an impending humanitarian crisis, an indecisive political dispensation, a bleak economy, a crumbling health system and overall, an internationally unrecognized status. The fact that the Taliban has prioritized the de-freezing of international aid funds, which are currently under sanctions, over their political recognition and international stature reflects the kind of financial brinkmanship that Kabul today faces. The United Nations has predicted that the Afghan economy could contract by 20% within a year, delivering a fiscal blow to the country which will be difficult to recover from. From a political standpoint, Afghanistan remains in the lurch with little consensus over the cabinet formation, role of members and inclusion of representatives from other groups. There may have been a perception of a moderate Taliban in Afghanistan in comparison to the group's role between 1996 and 2001, when they ruled Afghanistan. However, facts point to contrary evidence. On most counts, including the international demand for an inclusive government, society and education system, the present Taliban dispensation in Kabul has failed to inspire confidence. Furthermore, internationally, there is a scramble to save the people of Afghanistan, especially young children who are dying of hunger and lack of medical attention; its women and its minorities who have been repressed the most under the brutal Taliban regime. As such, the return of Taliban in Afghanistan completed a political loop of the Taliban leadership which had ended under military mobilization and presence which had ended.

The American withdrawal from Afghanistan has left a strategic vacuum in the country for which there is a race to fill among world's great and middle powers. The ensuing competition between great and middle powers in Afghanistan and the broader region is likely to have its own set of complications for South Asia. The US' troop withdrawal from Afghanistan may have significantly dented the US' currency as an enforceable power globally, however, it does not mean a loss of strategic leverage in Asia. The strategic compulsions of the US in Asia, including in the Indo-Pacific, is likely to ensure America's continued competitive engagement with the region. The US remains formidably present in Asia, both in terms of strategic geography and military wherewithal. However, its penchant to use such force in the future may stand tested, even as Washington's reliance on offshore balancing and embrace of multilateralism are likely to grow. This is likely to increase the burden of expectations on the US' partners and friends in the region. The rapidly diminishing capability and resources gap and rising competition of China with the US have already forced the US Senate to pass the \$250 billion China competition Bill, called the US Innovation and Competition Act. Besides, China has looked at Afghanistan as an opportunity for long, especially for its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). As the US is likely to remain outside the set of countries seeking to gain early influence in Afghanistan, the regional competitive mix emerging out of the new political cohort comprising China, Russia, Turkey, Pakistan and Qatar will provide a new gauge for future US role in the region. Seeking to maintain an edge, America's focus on providing alternatives to investment, infrastructure and connectivity may increase, especially in the Indo-Pacific.

An additional challenge that lurks over Afghanistan and may impact the whole region could be the shadow of yet another great power rivalry, using proxies. Particularly, the region could see the emergence of two power axes competing for strategic rivalry, with the US and its friends/allies on one side and China-Russia along with other set of countries on the other, significantly changing the strategic landscape in South Asia. Different interests of regional countries in South Asia too, particularly the binaries of India-Pakistan and India-China, could add to the emerging competitive mix in the region, embroiling engagement, investments and relationships. One example, in this regard, is the possibility that the Chinese BRI could be extended to Afghanistan in the near future, geographically crisscrossing with other projects in the region like the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC). Another, is the pursuit of connectivity projects like the trilateral project between Iran, India and Afghanistan which seeks to build the critical Chabahar-Zahedan-Kabul corridor. These relatively distant problems are coupled with the possibility of some direct threats for most South Asian countries in the form of growth in instability and the possibility of rise in terrorism.

### India's Concerns and Interests

The Taliban's dramatic takeover of Afghanistan has caused deep concern in New Delhi. India worries that Afghanistan may turn into a hub for transnational terrorism once again, becoming a base from which Pakistan could leverage its deep influence with the Taliban to target India's security interests. New Delhi is also concerned that China, which is already looking into extending infrastructure funding to Afghanistan, might exploit its inroads with the Taliban to draw the country closer into its orbit. While this has caused some concerns in New Delhi, there is also an assessment that India may lose leverage on Afghanistan, especially in the midst of the international scramble for negotiating peace and ensuring a stable political order in Afghanistan. As such, there have been some attempts by India to restore its connection with Afghanistan politically as well as with the people of Afghanistan. Among some important steps towards these, India has called a National Security Advisors (NSA) meet of from South, West and Central Asia. Going forward, the meeting could cull out important consensus regarding Afghanistan.

In another step, India has accelerated its Middle East diplomacy. India's participation in talks with the United States, Israel, and the UAE fuelled speculation that a "new Quad" may be taking shape in South-West Asia. From India's perspective the new Quad meeting is an attempt to find new grounds in the West Asian region specially in the aftermath of the fall of Kabul in the hands of the Taliban.

Today, Afghanistan unfortunately represents a different world system than the one that exists on the outside. It is going to be extremely difficult to pare the two worlds vis-à-vis Afghanistan for international actors, given the contradictions between them at various levels. In the end, the return of Afghanistan to the Afghans may not have served the desired purpose and will continue to pose challenges to the whole world.



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# The Pursuit of Unreason: Populisms of Our Time

If any single feature characterises today's politics, not only in India, across the world, it is populism. When it comes to populism one is constrained to remember the original 19th and early 20th century definition of populism, as an ideology against industrialisation and the development of capitalism. While fully agreeing with today's definition of populism as authoritarian, one would refer to the contradictoriness of the discourse of populism of our times. On one hand, the populist discourse talks of 'people' in general, and when it comes to economic development promotes partisan interests. In our times, one populism is also pitched against another populism. Nationalist, religious populism is arranged against agrarian populism. One religious populism is ranged against another religious populism. It therefore, compels us, to consider the contradictions of this discourse. Populism of 'people as a whole' does not include agrarian agitators. The same discourse of people *in toto* cannot include minorities. In fact, there is a compulsion to speak in terms of 'people' against minorities. Totality has to be articulated, and the othering needs to be maintained. And finally, one populist discourse is arraigned against another populist discourse for example majoritarian populist discourse against the developmentalist populism. Therefore, what emphatically strikes one is the contradictory nature of populist discourse. With the same implies the logical impossibility of being consistent with the discourse. The result is a necessary breakdown of populist communication. This breakdown of communication is nowhere as clear as in the case of dealing with farmers' movement. Populist discourse, in as much as it is addressing a fictitious totality of 'people' necessarily ends in breakdown of communication and thus, the necessity of violence, replacing communicative practice. These are inherent contradictions of populist discourse, or communication in terms of 'people', who in their difference, and plurality, and hierarchical existence, defy the unitary totality of the populist discourse, which soon finds itself as inconsistent. What is important to be cautious is about the breakdown of the discourse and its replacement, by violence. Populist discourse when it runs up against its own inconsistency, may not find the reality acceptable.

This is what happened at Capitol Hill. The tolerance of Trump, when his discourse failed was clearly limited. This is what happens whenever a mirror is held to populist discourse. Its other side, violence comes to the fore. These two are inseparable. There are two ways this takes place. Either the state or its legal apparatus is used for silencing those who call the bluff; or, again the 'people' that populism patronises can be roused to a call to arms. The connection to violence and a totally antagonistic and at best indifferent attitude to established political institutions is the core feature of today's populism. Where old style liberalism turned to parliamentary debates, populism turns to people in the streets. And 'people' in the streets, and their pent-up frustrations, are the ready material for what populism wants and uses for its ends. Democracy thus is devoid of its institutional calling. 'The people' cannot wait for disciplined debates of parliaments and assemblies to solve their problems. No wonder, vigilantism is what another face that populism finds in its uncomfortable mirror. Dilution of representative institutions, painstakingly built to negotiate, discuss and solve the problems of society appear as hurdles in the path of popular and instant street justice. Righteousness of unlimited nature, and simplistic indignation is the feature of this street justice. Thus, what this renders is a society of bitterness towards the projected other, and a democracy that can never wait to settle its scores with the projected other. Thus, today's populism's connection to unhesitant violence should be considered and made clear.

The apparatus of the state itself, which is painstakingly built over time and is supposed to operate with its own autonomy and rationality, becomes docile, part and parcel of the instrumentality of populist discourse. It is long way to wind it back once populism is unleashed to its original state. The damage is to the democracy and representative institutions, for they cannot be built instantly, nor can they be maintained without restraint, in everyday life and in the institutional realm. The damage is also to the psyche of the people who get to think that their 'righteous' indignation is all there is to democracy. That representation and representative democracy with all its time-consuming procedures and formalities appear immaterial. No one has patience to wait. Communicative ethic and communicative action which is the central tenet of any liberal democracy is replaced by politics of instant justice and ordinance governance. Thus, in the name of demos we move far away from democracy. In the name of peace and prosperity we move towards impatience, intolerance and instant justice. The populist discourse thus is not just authoritarian; it is harmful wherever takes place, because in the vaneer of demos it hides the violent nature of the polity that it promotes. The more its inconsistency is exposed, the more impatient it becomes.

The only response there can be is to respond robustly in terms of institutional processes. Populist opposition cannot be a solution to authoritarian populism. The answer lies in stressing the representative institutions. In stressing on dialogue and institutionally organised negotiation. Populism thrives on communicative incompetence. The answer is in calling the agents provocateurs to the negotiating table and in re-establishing communicative ethics. Representative democracy with all its shortfalls should be guarded against becoming rule by impatient mobs. However, indignant they are made to be, and for whatever reasons of 'the people'.

*"I am indebted to Professor Gopal Guru for his editorial in EPW which provoked me to write this article"*



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## APPROACHING RESEARCH

### Importance of Social Science Research in Higher Education

The purpose of doing research in any field is mainly to create new knowledge. In the process of creating new knowledge, taking into consideration of the existing knowledge available in that field is the concern of every researcher. This is usually done in the name of review of literature. Research conducted in the areas of pure science and technology will be having immediate application. This is because, in scientific research cause – effect relationship is well established. Experimentation is the main focus here. That is how we can see so much of advancement in science and technology, and the findings are having universal application.

Whereas researches conducted in the areas of social sciences have got certain limitations. Because, these sciences change with time and circumstances. They offer theories to explain only phenomena that may or may not be true. Hence, it is very difficult to generalize the findings. That is why; it is the general observation that the quality of researches in social sciences is not very much satisfying. This can be attributed to many aspects such as; difficulty in the collection of the required sample size, no confidence with respect to the construction of tools which fits in to the expectations of the respondents, not good in selecting the appropriate research design/methodology, limitations with respect to the analysis of the data using the appropriate statistical techniques, difficulty in interpreting the findings within the frame work of objectivity which leads to overcome the issues in the existing problem or to improve the present situations for the better.

In this context, the researcher of social science should be more responsible in selecting the appropriate research topic. All topics/areas in social science are not suitable for worthy research. According to Dr. Susann V. Getsch, a psychologist, “Your research topic is the foundation on which everything else rests, so it’s crucial to choose carefully. You can’t do anything else until you figure out the basic focus of your topic”. In my opinion, the robustness of the research in social science depends mainly on the research methodology followed in the study. Dr. Linda Crawford, a faculty in Walden’s Ph.D. program suggested several tips to get into research methodology; “the methodology that’s used comes from the research question, not from your personal preferences for one design or another.” She recommends refraining from choosing between a qualitative or quantitative methodology until the researcher formulates the research questions”. The researcher should determine what kind of research design and the methodology that can best fit into the research questions. “If your questions include words such as “explore,” “understand,” and “generate,” it’s an indication that your study is qualitative. Whereas words such as “compare,” “relate,” or “correlate” indicate a quantitative study. The design comes out of the study, rather than being imposed on the study”.

Thus, the researchers of social science should have better mind set to select the suitable, challenging and need based topic and possess the technical knowledge about the research methodology followed by the suggestions from experts in the field to carry on the research. By referring to good books on research methodology, good research articles published in refereed journals and interaction with the subject experts will make them confident to produce quality research.

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# Significance of Computational Social Sciences: Benefits and Tools

The world of social sciences and international affairs is consistently evolving and is filled with uncertainty. There are various types of issues that social sciences deal with, which cannot be answered by a one size fits all model. For instance, a fiscal policy initiative that might work in a developed country might backfire if not adjusted for in a developing country, besieged by unique issues. Even within a diversified, multi-lingual, and multicultural country like India, region specific focus is essential for policymaking, which requires rigorous data collection, mapping, and multimethod analysis. Researchers working on India and World are persistently analyzing and investigating these dynamic issues, finding a trend in a geopolitical setup, assessing the risks and threats of new events, and contributing significantly to evidence-based policymaking. Their efforts are indeed honest and admirable, and innovative research methods and tools are essential to support them in their research endeavors.

In this light, it is essential for our students to learn and use some fundamental approaches of quantitative methodology. The article aims to identify some benefits of data backed mixed methods analysis and refer some tools that can be handy for interested scholars.

## Benefits

- Solving Wicked Problems through Design Thinking: Design theorists Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber introduced the term “wicked problems” in 1973 to address complex sociopolitical problems without an easy solution. Solutions to wicked problems are not true or false, only good, or bad. They cannot be studied through trial and error as solutions are irreversible. For instance, problems in education policy and public health, is a wicked problem. It avoids straightforward articulation and is impossible to solve in a way that is simple or final<sup>1</sup>. Design Thinking provides a non-linear solution-based approach to solving problems and is firmly based on generating a holistic and empathic understanding of the problems that people face. It is a way of thinking and operating as well as a collection of hands-on methods. This is exactly where the knowledge of descriptive statistics and pivot analysis comes in handy. In the stage two of design thinking, the researcher defines the stakeholders' needs and their problems. (S)he must have the clarity of research methodology and be able to identify the causal and outcome variables. It takes time to master this ability, hence, the social science students must be taught how to organize raw data, develop infographics, generate insights, and find a pattern to formulate the bigger picture from their college days itself.

- Evidence Based Policy Making: India is a vibrant country and despite being besieged with problems, is growing rapidly. And evidence-based policymaking is a key contributor in that pursuit. It has two goals: to use the already known facts from program evaluation to make policy decisions and to build more knowledge to better inform future decisions. The approach prioritizes rigorous research findings, data, analytics, and evaluation of new innovations. This approach builds evidence by employing a range of rigorous methodologies, monitors program delivery, and use impact evaluation to measure program effectiveness. For instance, the NITI Aayog published a baseline report on national multidimensional poverty index in November 2021 by employing the Alkire-Foster (AF) methodology, which is a general framework for measuring multidimensional poverty that identifies people as poor or not poor based on a dual-cutoff counting method. The report is based on 17 Social Development Goals (SDGs) of UN General Assembly. It is the responsibility of the academic field of social sciences to make our student adapt to the skills required to be stakeholders in these initiatives. Additionally, to contribute significantly to the society and make our research finding relevant in the changing scenario, we must provide solutions to wicked problems and indicate policy contributions through our papers as well. A structured approach of stating a research question, followed by theory, hypotheses, measurable variables, a section on proposed methodology, and finally, the findings and analysis would make our respective research uniform, linear, and universally acceptable. The criticism against social scientists that we interpret and do not infer, will be addressed too.
- Private Sector as stakeholders and Job Market: The private sector is a key stakeholder in both urban and economic development, being a major contributor to national income and the principal job creator and employer. The private sector provides around 90% of employment in the developing world (including formal and informal jobs), delivers critical goods and services and contributes to tax revenues and the efficient flow of capital. In my opinion, with the neoliberal approach of governance and wave(s)of privatization, private sector companies are ought to become indispensable in Indian policy making initiatives through corporate social responsibility in the near future. However, capitalism, even if benevolent, is rooted in cost benefit calculation. And a cost-benefit analysis ought to make the stakeholders assess the impact of programs and measure their effectivity through numbers. Given this, mixed methodology with quantifiable causal analysis would assist the development sector and social science academia to work in collaboration with private sector towards mutually common interests.

<sup>1</sup>What's a wicked problem? | wicked problem. (n.d.). Retrieved November 29, 2021, from <https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/wicked-problem/about/What-is-a-wicked-problem.php>



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### Tools and Approaches

Hard-core quantitative methodology often fails to explain the story behind numbers. Social scientists can address this gap since they understand the social dynamics better. I am a proponent of mixed methodology, that espouses causality through analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests and/or regression analysis and explains the story behind numerical findings through qualitative methods such as case study analysis and process tracing. While it is beyond the purview of this paper to explain this approach in detail, let me conclude by referring some tools that can be handy for these purposes. Of course, using these tools would need some training, but interested students and scholars can turn to internet for self-learning for basics.

- MS Excel – A powerful tool to organize data, create basic and advanced infographics through pivot analysis. With the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in excel, the operation is easier than before.
- NVivo for Text Analysis – If a researcher is conducting field interviews and interested in analyzing speeches for his/her research needs, NVivo is a solution for transcription and collaboration.
- STATA – STATA aids in exploring, visualizing, and modeling data to unearth the story behind it. A click and drag tool with basic coding, STATA assists researchers across the world interested in social science data analysis and beyond.
- Tableau – Tableau helps to see and analyze data through its unique visual analytics platform called Dashboard. It deploys in the cloud and has integrated AI/ML capabilities, that assists users from not so technical backgrounds to use Tableau with certain basic training.
- Microsoft PowerBI – Alike Tableau, PowerBI unifies data from many sources to create interactive, immersive dashboards and reports that provide actionable insights about the data being studied.

Social Science is a vibrant evolving field with its dedicated researchers, and social science graduates pursue a wide variety of careers. Knowledge of mixed methodology and fundamentals of computational social sciences is critical for their endeavors. The purpose of this piece was not to introduce the names of some statistical tools and software, rather to briefly put forward the benefits and approaches of computational social sciences to the readers.

<sup>2</sup> *The role of the private sector. (n.d.). GSDRC. Retrieved November 29, 2021, from <https://gsdrc.org/topic-guides/urban-governance/elements-of-effective-urban-governance/the-role-of-the-private-sector/>*

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## Passion & Perseverance: The Story of My Journey from Blogs to Books



This is a story of how passion and perseverance together shaped my journey marked by a humble start from a blog contribution and make it to an edited volume with one of the most sought-after publishers in the field of academia – Springer. To start with, I embarked on my new chapter of life as a university student and I knew had a passion, the spirit of perseverance, yet converting it into something visual, something like writing about it which even in the wildest of my imagination I could never think of it. It was in the heydays of my life as a student of Communication and Media Studies that I came across a blogger, a prominent blogging platform prompting me to start my blog focusing on railway policies. Then came along the government announcement of a new policy, which grabbed my attention and publishing it almost immediately. Gradually I moved onto writing for my university magazine for two years after much motivation from my friends.

The beginning of my career path left a little impact on me as I was just getting to writing articles while balancing factual accuracy and dissemination of perspectives in the years those passed by. Further, I continued to write for websites which added to my experience. Publications during my internship took me a notch higher with the core idea of research and approach to data collection slowly taking the centre stage before my first breakthrough that came in the year 2018 as I published a complete niche idea in collaboration with Railway Diplomacy for South Asian Voices by Stimson Think Tank. The publication garnered enough appreciation from my peers and faculty and I moved on to publish similar ones in Harvard Economics Review, London School of Economics, Oxford India Policy Forum, Down To Earth adding on to my list of publications. As I gradually progressed with my publications the process moved beyond just reading as to what is written. The publication marked my transition to becoming a public intellectual and making me accountable for every sentence I wrote, while also grabbing the further attention. The question of contextualising perseverance occupies the top spot and is valid as a reader for you to pose a question, asking me as to now that you have come so far into the article and the journey so far was never a smooth sail but faced challenges at different stages. As I crossed each hurdle, which will itself become an article, but the bottom line is as you write along, you blend your emotion with the article that you write and publication of your article is not just an outcome of the emotion that you attach to your interest area. When I started writing on railways, it attracted scepticism and fascination simultaneously. With scepticism sometimes taking the front seat, it was often my perseverance that brought forth the idea of railways as a prospective research topic expanding beyond the generic understanding with its own set of challenges.

Publications also become an important part of your academic networking, which is exactly how I gradually entered into collaborative projects with the first being a research article on Indian Assessment of High-Speed Rail Feasibility written jointly with a prominent expert in high-speed railway from Egypt. The first project involved chapter contribution to an edited volume entitled “Railway Transportation in South Asia” which is followed by a collaborative project with one of the editors. The process involved moving a step forward and then a step backwards before finally getting accepted for contribution.

The process took 1.5 years before its final publication. In the journey so far, I have learnt the following elements: Researching, Updating, Passion and Perseverance are critical to garnering a position for your research interest while accommodating allied interests enhancing your primary interest. Finally, my journey has taught me to be humble as I progress, yet continuously experiment with new approaches and invite wider perspectives. Stagnation is not an option if you wish to make yourself visible in your area. Rejection is a part of the journey, which just make you stronger with time. My journey has therefore been more than just transiting between formats, it also helped me build my taste for writing and research and the process goes on... without a pause.

### Chitresh Shrivastva

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## COVID IMPACTING LIVES

### Indian Performing Arts – An Insight from the Field

The outbreak of pandemic has other than impacting the society in an adverse manner has also resulted a civilizational evolution and the same holds true for the field of Indian Performing Arts. While the technology has played a great role in this evolution of Indian Performing Arts wherein, we are witnessing more and more of virtual events, a subconscious battle amongst many with reference to experiencing the performances live or in a virtual manner.

While, the virtual performances have enabled artistes and organizers to gain larger audience and hence potentially large fan base, many artistes and organizers still prefer the live performances over the virtual ones. This unwillingness cannot be termed as wrong, since virtual performances have its own drawbacks as well. The audience retention with respect to virtual performances for the entire real time streaming duration is very limited. Audiences have an option of VOD which would be mostly the case for ticketed performances as well as in case its livestreamed free of cost in platforms like YouTube, Facebook to name a few.

While the lack of any kind of interaction between the artistes and the spectators and amongst fellow spectators themselves is another important point for preferring live performance over the virtual ones. The pre-existing contractual obligation performers have, also been a reason for the proclivity. But whatever the reasons may be, the virtual performances have become a boon to many, since it has managed to provide some kind of financial support to performers amidst a situation wherein audience have two minds on attending performances virtually and physically. While it is true that a proclivity exists amongst the audience with respect to attending concerts physically, major chunk of them have also not made up their minds for larger congregations, however this trend is reducing and we are seeing full house performances in many places.

Though digitalization of Indian performing arts is not a by-product of the pandemic, it has definitely been a great beneficiary of it, and virtual performances in its current stage or in a hybrid avatar is here to stay. Just like the way while fans do enjoy cricket matches at the comforts of their home, broadcasting it has no way resulted in lesser crowd at the stadium. Anyway, cricket cannot be directly compared to the viewership of performing arts, the basic intent of a need to have a social interaction with fellow audience shall drive them to the venue.

These developments have also resulted in revival of a much older question, i.e., Should performing arts be ticketed or not? While performing arts should be available for all the spectrum of the society to enjoy and cherish it and it is equally important that its value amongst people's desire to support arts financially do not go down by offering it free each time. For the larger interest of promotion and sustainability of performing arts and artistes, supporting performers and organizations in a community-based approach is crucial and that could be through nominal tickets or donations.

Apart from the performer's perspective, there has been a great number of formal and informal organizations across the country recently established, hosting virtual performances along with the traditional forums. While it may be argued that a greater number of players in such a niche sector may ultimately bring about a shakeout stage, it can also be argued that having large players enhances the efficiency and vigour of the traditional bigwigs, which helps in providing platform and exposure to many budding performers. This expands the base of connoisseurs resulting in the sustainability and growth of Indian performing arts.

Another important take-away from the field, is the increase in number of children and elders having a desire to learn performing arts, recently and as a result, Institutes providing online coaching as well as offline ones have seen a rapid increase. Senior artistes have started their own master class sessions for fine tuning the students. All the students undergoing training may not end up becoming great artistes of tomorrow due to their own personal choice of profession, but for the survival of Indian performing arts it's important for them to develop a liking towards these arts and appreciate them. While all these developments look to be positive ones, the long-term sustainability of these initiatives is key for achievement of larger objective of enrichment and protection of Indian Performing Arts.

*Disclaimer: The field insights and views of the author are his personal opinions and does not necessarily be the opinion of the Organisation he is involved with.*

**Mr. Abhijith Varadaraj S**

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## The Field Perspective: Education in Focus

Samarpann is a non-for-profit organization working in the government schools in rural India towards providing equitable access to healthcare and education to the children in remote hinterland. Samarpann has created a positive impact in the lives of more than 12,000 children in 61 schools across the states of Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra and Arunachal Pradesh.

In these very remote locations where Samarpann operates, the socio-economic indicators are very low when compared to the national average. For example, in Rajasthan, as per UNDP, the sex ratio (females per thousand males) is 926 as compared to the national average of 940 calculated based on Census 2011. The female literacy rate is 52.66 as compared to the national average of 65.46. Poor household incomes, alcohol addiction, unemployment and low literacy rates are some of the challenges that the organization faces while working. Children often drop out of schools for the sake of employment. Poverty as well as child marriages increases dropout rates of the girls.

Covid-19 has further worsened the poor socio-economic conditions for these marginalized communities. The aftermath of COVID has hit the marginalized the hardest, where their incomes have dwindled due to the loss of jobs or the deaths of earning members of the family. As per the CMIE report, there was a net loss of 7 million jobs between February 2020 and February 2021. Households experienced an average of 12 per cent loss in income during the last fiscal year. Due to the pandemic, schools have remained shut for extended periods.

It is estimated that 64 per cent of kids in rural India fear they have to drop out if not given additional support. During the pandemic when schools had to be shut on account of the lockdown, private schools shifted to online mode of learning. However, government schools lacked the resources to make the transition. It has also been found that girls are discriminated against when it comes to online education. If a family has access to only one smartphone the male child is given access to it and not the girl child. Further, lack of access to smart-phones has not been the only detriment. Human interaction is of crucial importance for a child's overall learning and cognitive development and smart phones cannot be a replacement for it.

While the government has made tremendous progress in building new schools and getting children into classrooms over the past few decades, learning outcomes of the students have been disappointing and children in primary schools have failed to attain even the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. The pandemic has exacerbated this crisis. 82 per cent of children on average lost at least one specific mathematical skill, and 92 per cent of children lost a specific language skill, reports a field study conducted by the Azim Premji Foundation in rural India in January 2021. As the schools reopen, the teachers have to develop newer and more enriched pedagogical skills as the children will be at different levels of forgetting and remembering due to prolonged periods of school closures.

Through the Back-to-School campaign, Samarpann is reaching out to government schools in rural and tribal India in the states of Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Kota to ensure children do not drop out of schools. As per the Economic Survey of India, the second largest component of average expenditure on education is books, stationery, and uniform where an average student in the rural areas is spending more than 10 per cent points as compared to urban areas. With the loss of livelihoods due to Covid-19, the resources available with the family to support children education have been depleted. Samarpann is ensuring that the students are not pushed back in the learning curve. We are providing them with Adhyayan (Study) kits enough to take care of a child's one year of educational needs.

Evidence from the past suggest that any crisis has disproportionate impact on women. There is a high possibility that the girls would never return to the schools as they would have been absorbed in household chores, agriculture activities or got married. Covid-19 provides an opportunity to rethink and formulate policies with a gender sensitive lens addressing the already the already existing inequalities and gender gaps. With the collaboration of district administration, school teachers and Schools Management Committees (SMCs), Samarpann has been reaching out to the girls to ensure that none of them drops out of the schools.

According to a UNICEF report, 1,300 children under the age of 5 die each day due to diarrhea. Due to the lack of access to clean drinking water, many children fall sick by drinking contaminated water from unsafe sources like hand pumps and borewell pipes. This contaminated water can even transmit diseases like diarrhea, dysentery, cholera and typhoid. Samarpann has a dedicated program for making clean drinking water accessible. Water purifiers have been installed in 55 rural and tribal schools of Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttarakhand. Water treatment plants are also installed based on the water quality of the particular area. Samarpann also generates awareness among school children about maintaining proper hand hygiene and the importance of using toilets which more critical than ever in the pandemic times.

Samarpann has, thus, adopted a multi-pronged approach to tackle the challenges in ensuring inclusive education to the marginalized communities during the pandemic and making sure that no child drops out in the aftermath of the pandemic.



**Dr. Ruma Bhargava**  
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Deputy Commissioner Income Tax  
Chief Advisor, Samarpann



## Putting the Clock Backwards: COVID Pandemic & Reverse Trend in Child Marriage

Gender-based violence is undoubtedly a highly mutating virus that rapidly changes its structure and content at any given time and space. COVID has seriously impacted the life and livelihood of people globally. The 'shadow pandemic' of spiraling Gender-based violence also caught our attention. However, the least documented consequence of the COVID-19 Pandemic in India is a spurt in the early marriage of girls. Humanitarian crises due to natural disasters, civil wars, or pandemic situations often led to spike in child marriages. Its reflections have been observed among the Rohingya and Syrian refugees, in civil-war torn South Sudan and Yemen, during the Ebola outbreak in Liberia, and among the flood and drought-hit states of India, and so on.

According to the statistics provided by UNICEF, over 2011–2020, 110 million child marriages took place globally. Nevertheless, an estimated 25 million were averted too. Child marriage influences children's rights to education, mental and physical health conditions, autonomy, security, and protection. These consequences impact the girl directly and her family and community. After marriage, there is every likelihood that a child bride is more likely to drop out of school, often forced to work as child labor in disguise within the four walls, experience domestic violence, and beget a child while she is still a child herself. Child marriage enhances the risk of early and unplanned pregnancy manifold, thereby increasing the risk of both maternal and infant complications and mortality.

This social evil has been around in Indian society for a long time. One way to combat this was legislation. The British brought one of the first legislation on this issue, the Age of Consent Act, 1891. In 1889, the brutal death of an 11-year-old Bengali girl named Phulmoni Dasi after being mercilessly raped by her 35-year-old husband, Hari Mohan Maitee, culminated in legislation. The Age of Consent Act was enacted on March 19, 1891, and the age of consent for sexual intercourse for all girls, married or unmarried, was raised from ten to twelve years in all jurisdictions. Its violation was made subject to criminal prosecution as rape. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, brought in 1929, was purely criminal legislation. It dealt with the penal consequences of males below twenty-one years of age marrying a child, adult males above twenty-one years of age marrying a child, or any marriage to which either of the contracting parties is a child. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006 replaced the earlier child marriage legislation. For the first time, this law combined both criminal law provisions by encouraging increased punishment and allowing children to annul their marriages and be declared void. However, lag in law and popular cultural discourses often make effective implementation daunting.

Post-pandemic witnessed a reverse trend, where UNICEF projected that up to 10 million or more girls are at risk of being child brides in 2021–2030. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) estimated that the COVID-19 Pandemic would result in 13 million more child marriages globally over the 2020-2030 decade. A recent report by Save the Children has estimated that child marriages will significantly increase in South Asia. They have anticipated 191,200 in a single year and 956,000 in five years. India is no exception, leading to a 50% surge in child marriage cases in 2020. According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), in the pandemic year of 2020, a total number of 785 cases were registered under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act. Amongst the Indian States, Karnataka registered the highest number of cases amounting to 184, Assam at 198, West Bengal at 98, Tamil Nadu at 77, and Telangana at 62. In 2019, 523 child marriages were recorded, while in 2018, the data stood at 501, in 2017 was 395, in 2016 was 326 and in 2015 was 293. India undoubtedly is the home to the most significant number of child brides globally. According to the fourth National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4), in India, nearly 1 in 4 girls were married by 18 years (27 per cent). However, we have to keep in mind that a higher number often results from better vigilance and improved reporting as often surfaced and reported cases are just the tip of the iceberg.

The Pandemic-induced lockdown intensified the severe economic distress of the low-income families who wanted to get rid of their 'paraya dhan' at the earliest. Marriage at an early age demands lower dowry and dissipates the concern catering around the security of the girl child and restoration of family honor. School teachers and peers often play a catalysts' role in preventing child marriage; however, prolonged closure of educational institutions increased the vulnerabilities of the children. Often child marriage is a form of disguised trafficking, which increases manifold when the poor face death and despair grappled with job loss and economic insecurities. Pandemic led travel restrictions, and physical distancing made it impossible for girls to access health care, intervention services through State or NGO run institutions and community support that protect them from child marriage, unwanted pregnancy, and gender-based violence. Some child rights activists have drawn attention towards women's agency issues by distinguishing between child marriages and child-led marriages where young girls have conscious collaboration in their elopement.

As part of one of the Sustainable Development Goals, India, a member of the United Nations, aspires to eliminate the practice of child marriage by 2030. Pandemic has thrown significant challenges towards accomplishing this goal and pushed us somewhat backwards with a sudden spurt of cases. For reinventing the clock, the state and civil society must work in tandem to empower the girls and enhance their agencies through access to quality education, credible information, and economic independence through skill development. We need to build an effective and easily accessible support network and rehabilitation measures for survivors of child marriages. From the available data, identifying the trend in terms of caste, community, locality, community-based awareness drives at the grassroots need to be augmented to prevent such evil practices. Indeed, personal is political and considering the social cost involved in child marriages, India requires to work on war footing to reverse the trend.

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## Advocating Green Initiatives

### Market Based Solutions for Social Progress

*“Social entrepreneurs are not content just to give a fish or teach how to fish. They will not rest until they have revolutionized the fishing industry”- Bill Drayton*

Social entrepreneurship may be defined as an entrepreneurial approach to develop sustainable solutions to relevant socio-cultural and environmental issues. The domain of social entrepreneurship is gaining global attention and prominence owing to its flexibility and innovation.

But what makes social entrepreneurship different from for-profit entrepreneurship? It will be wrong to assume that for-profit entrepreneurs are motivated solely by money and altruism drives social entrepreneurs. Both the for-profit and social entrepreneurs are strongly motivated by the opportunity they identify regardless of whether they operate within a free market or a not-for-profit context, most entrepreneurs are never fully compensated for the time, risk, effort, and capital that they pour into their venture.

The difference between a for-profit enterprise and a social enterprise is the value proposition itself. The for-profit entrepreneur is motivated to serve the markets that can afford his/her product or service and create financial gain for him and his investors. However, the social entrepreneur aims to target an under-served, neglected, and highly disadvantaged population who lack the means to achieve the transformative benefit on its own. This does not mean that social entrepreneurs are not focused on profits and revenue generation, they do generate profits through market-based approaches.

Social enterprises use a market-based approach for achieving social progress using innovative business models to address societal challenges by generating revenue and not depending purely on grants. Engaging the markets for addressing social challenges can involve people at the bottom of the pyramid as business associates or as customers or by making products and services useful to them. Once the model becomes commercially viable, it attracts private investment increasing its sustainability and thereby, leading to a larger social impact.

Philanthropy contributes to addressing critical social problems to some extent, but long-term sustenance and scale require utilisation of market mechanism. In fact, collaboration between philanthropy and state is essential for market models to accelerate social progress; thereby, playing a vital role at the intersection of market opportunity, demand, and investment.

This approach is more suitable for third-world countries when private investment is routed to address market demands with customised and cost-effective products and services for achieving social results. Revenue driven cost-effective social business models to provide services such as health, finance, education, water, and housing for the base of the pyramid (BoP) can offer an opportunity for the private sector to look beyond short-term financial gains to ensure long-term sustainability.

A perfect market is an ideal, which does not exist due to several distortions in the society as the state alone cannot address the shortcomings of the market. Here, social entrepreneurship has begun to emerge as an alternative supplementary force to correct the markets. Social entrepreneurs may not be able to remove deep-rooted structural issues but are surely capable of triggering social progress and serve as a watchdog using a corrective force to enable markets to respond positively.

Few Indian centric examples of market-based approaches functioning effectively to achieve social progress are as below:

- Sankara Nethralaya – The organisation provides affordable eye care, today the hospital performs around 100 surgeries and serves 1200 patients daily.
- Grameen Bank – This grassroots organisation focuses on commercially viable affordable financial payments and services at the base of the economic pyramid.
- Indian School Finance company – This organisation provides loans exclusively to schools helping them to scale and impact.

Green entrepreneurship can be understood as a conscious activity of addressing environmental and social problems coupled with innovative entrepreneurial ideas not taken up with the sole intention of profit making but to address a larger environmental goal coupled with market interventions to achieve financial stability and business sustainability. These ideas have high levels of innovation as well as risk and delivers a positive effect on the natural environment and societal ecosystem.

Though the national and state governments and the non-governmental organisations have been doing their bit to address the concerns of climate change, still more needs to be done and complete remedy is only possible through collective and collaborative societal efforts. Green entrepreneurs are indeed taking the first step.

Green problems are complex as it involves multiple stakeholders and solving them requires flexible policies and when the entrepreneur applies market-based principles and instruments to design business models to address the green issue and at the same time strive to strike a balance to sustain his enterprise, the challenges only multiply and policy level changes will help the enterprise to sustain and scale.

Market-based mediations for environmental solutions motivate consumers to amend their consumption behaviour, engage producers towards sustainable use of raw materials by showing demand for green products leading to reduced negative environmental impacts. Enterprise will see more success with their green deliverables when these economic instruments are made more cost-effective and flexible and can yield better results compared to conventional regulations used for environmental protection. Few green entrepreneurship examples in India.

- Bamboo House India – Social enterprise focusing on building low-cost shelters using bamboo and plastic waste as a substitute for cement and hardwood and providing livelihood opportunities at the base of the economic pyramid.
- Holy Waste – Social enterprise recycling floral waste to convert them into marketable incense sticks and supporting flower sellers and municipal corporations addressing their floral waste concerns.
- Eco Boards – Organisation producing wall panels made of agricultural waste to address the issue of stubble burning and provide farmers with income opportunities for their waste.

For green entrepreneurship to be successful as a concept, more and more budget should be allocated both by the state and private investors leading to a series of positive developments both at the micro and macro levels creating a path for changing current policies for making the ecosystem more conducive for others to enter the sector.

Entering green entrepreneurship is now easier than ever. Keeping in mind, the current environmental problems the globe is facing and the inclination of people towards social and green causes, the potential of green entrepreneurship looks very promising but the entrepreneurs must gain the required knowledge about the issues and solutions possible and add their innovation and creativity to develop a scalable and sustainable long-term business model.

Green/social, market-based business models strive to change the unjust balance and the real impacts are visible only after a long time, often after decades. Green micro-business models, in some instances, might bring very strong winds of progress and at times might not show clear results of social change. Keeping the results aside, green entrepreneurship for addressing and solving social and environmental challenges represents a vision and an aspiration for society in the right direction for a better tomorrow.

**Prashant Lingam**  
Social Entrepreneur and Founder, Bamboo House India



## Event Report



**JGI JAIN**  
CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND EDUCATION



**VR1**  
WE ARE ONE

In collaboration with  
VR1 (We-Are-One)

Presents

**Virtual Panel Discussion**

To commemorate

**International Human Rights Day**

On

Sports Promoting  
**'UNITY IN DIVERSITY'  
IN INDIA**

Challenges and Possibilities

Date: December 10, 2021  
Time: 03:30 P.M. – 05:00 P.M.

**Panelists**



**Dr. A. Ravindra**  
IAS (Rank 1)  
Former Chief Secretary Govt. of Karnataka  
Chairperson, VR1



**Kaunian Abbas**  
Alumnus - JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)  
Karnataka State Rangli Director



**Leslie Xavier**  
Editor (Sports)  
Newsclick.in

**Moderator**



**Dr. Priyanka Mathur**  
Associate Professor  
JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)  
Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education

**Webinar Coordinator**



**Dr. K. C. Smitha**  
Assistant Professor  
JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)  
Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education

**Registration Link:** <https://zoom.us/join/join?join=1&meetingid=919110422020&pwd=6A650Cvq9I>

Participation confirmation and meeting details will be sent upon successful registration  
E-certificates will be issued to participants only after completing the feedback form shared at the end of the conference

## Panel Discussion in Collaboration with EKAM – SAT TRUST - VR1 Sports Promoting 'Unity in Diversity' in India: Challenges and Possibilities

On December 10, 2021 Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CeRSSE), JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) hosted a virtual panel discussion with eminent speakers from various walks of lives to speak on the topic titled as **Sports Promoting 'Unity in Diversity' in India: Challenges and Possibilities**. The event commemorated 'International Human Right Day' on December 10th. This event was conducted in collaboration with Ekam Sat Trust - VR1 (We-Are-One).

Sports are known to uphold the spirit of collectives. Sportspersons, at the international level, are also often earmarked for representing the team spirit of their respective countries. Thus, the medal tally in Olympics becomes as much a projection of the country's 'soft power' as it reflects the hierarchy among the sporting nations, tussling for the tally. As an invariable societal extension, therefore, a veritable association between sports and politics is established.

During the discussion, Dr. A. Ravindra, Former Chief Secretary, Karnataka and Chairperson, Ekam Sat Trust – VR1, emphasised upon the need to introduce sports education at the school level alongside highlighting the immense potential of sports as a unifying factor. Leslie Xavier who heads the sports desk at the news portal Newsclick.in, though acknowledged the strength that sports may inculcate in people, has also underlined the structural inequalities, including issues like gender and caste-based discrimination, within the sporting domain. Kaunian Abbas, a JAIN alumnus and Karnataka cricketer, on the other hand, presented the idea of 'sports as a way of life'.

Sports, by definition, carry both the components of 'unity' and 'diversity'. At the same time, India is hailed for her 'unity in diversity' ethos. Yet, with the changing times and political context the meaning associated with 'unity in diversity' vary drastically. Undoubtedly, amid the recent rise in divisive spurs along the religious-cultural lines, unity falls off the mark in the country at various levels. At an interface of sports and the Indianness, though essentially lies elements of 'unity' and 'diversity', how much the sporting system is nurturing the idea of 'unity' in contemporary India - remains at the heart of the question. Through the course of the panel discussion, the panelists addressed whether the Indian sports upholds the principle of 'unity in diversity'.

Dr. Ravindra spoke quoting the Olympic motto and ideals and how that it is important to look at sport as an engine for social change and upliftment. He also reiterated the important role sports stars can play in it, and the need for engaging with youngsters in schools and colleges inspiring them to not just take up sports as competition but promote larger cause beyond individual pursuits -- be it in career or in the playing field.

Specifically, when it comes to sports in India, the socio-economic background of the players, the demi-godliness of Indian male cricketers, role of market, valourisation of certain sports over others, infrastructural inadequacy- are all parts of the Indian sporting 'spirit'. This 'spirit' may be defined both as an attitudinal reflection and an invisible animating force, driven by emotions.

Abbas invoked the question of inculcating the spirit of sports as 'value system' which begins at home supported by parents and nurtured by educational institutions, besides the obvious fitness and lifestyle aspects. He strongly believes that sports equip each of one of us to deal with adversities as well as victories with equal ease, while also setting the base for fulfilling journey in life. He cited his journey as youngster and experiences he gathered as a part of cricket teams he has played. He opines that despite inherent societal ills, sports have the power to bypass all of those and mould individuals who in turn will build a sound society.

Having said that, it is the same 'spirit', often bearing contrasting connotations. For example, while the 2021 Olympics Gold Medalist Neeraj Chopra is lauded for his 'win', Indian women's hockey team member Vandana Katariya's family endures casteist slurs for their 'loss'. Though the Indian Cricket team is seen as a unified force against the Pakistan Cricket team and the boys are cheered, when on the losing end Mohammed Shami is targeted for his religious affiliation. At this point, glares at us the blatant dichotomy of reactions with a 'win' or a 'loss'.

Xavier presented the ground realities which block sport from fulfilling its true potential in our society. He explained the systemic ills in the set up that deflates the idea of diversity in Indian sport. He also explained how gender disparity, regional, political and religious biases, smudge a vibrant sports-scape into a grey and bleak picture, reflective of the prevalent weather in the country. "Sport has the power to change, but sport is just a part of the larger problem that needs immediate correction, he concluded"- he says. Overall, the webinar hinted at the mutual relationship between sports and society. The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Priyanca Mathur, Associate Professor, CeRSSE, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) and attended by over a hundred viewers.

## Academic Achievements

- Bitew Kassaw, Ph.D. Research Scholar in Cultural Studies, was interviewed by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Television Channel where he spoke on 'The Religious Organizations Causes of Conflict and their Solutions', November 28- December 3rd, 2021.
- Chitresh Srivastava, Ph.D. Research Scholar in Public Policy, published a chapter titled 'Railway Modernisation in India: A South Asian Case Study' in the book Railway Transportation in South Asia: Infrastructure, Planning, Regional Development and Economic Impact, (ed) Saptarshi Mitra, Sumana Bandyopadhyay, Stabak Roy, Tomaz Ponce Dentinho, Springer Publications.  
<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-3-030-76878-2>
- Nalin Rai, Ph.D. Scholar in Economics presented a paper titled "Role of NABARD & SFAC in Financing and supporting the Farmer Producer Organizations" at a Conference on Strengthening Agricultural Extension through participation of FPOs organized online by PAMETI, Ludhiana on November 22nd, 2021.
- Narayanan P. Iyer, Ph.D. Research Scholar in Performing Arts, published an article titled 'Sampradaya Bhajans and their Potential Influence on Human Values' in IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS), Volume 26, Issue 12, Series 2 (December. 2021) 01-08 e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845.
- Papiya Bhattacharya, Ph.D. Research Scholar in Public Policy's article titled "Pharmaceutical Waste Contaminates India's Main Rivers" was published an online magazine Scidev.Net on December 1st, 2021 <https://www.scidev.net/asia-pacific/news/pharmaceutical-waste-contaminates-indias-main-rivers/>
  - Her article titled "Homegrown COVID vaccines fill gap as UN Covax Scheme Misses Target" was also published in theguardian.com on October 13th, 2021. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/oct/13/local-covid-vaccines-fill-gap-as-un-covax-scheme-misses-target>
- Roshni Sharma, Ph.D. Research Scholar in Political Science was selected to participate in the 3rd International Certificate Course on 'Women, Peace and Security' organized by the Women's Regional Network (WRN) online from December 3rd – 18th, 2021
  - She was also selected to participate in the Sixth Annual Research & Orientation Workshop & Conference on Global Protection of Migrants and Refugees organized by Calcutta Research Group in collaboration with Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung (RLS-South Asia) and Institute for Human Sciences (IWM), Vienna and Other Universities and institutions in India, that was held in Kolkata, Hyatt Regency, November 15th – 20th, 2021
- Shukla Bose, Ph.D. Research Scholar in Public Policy delivered lectures on 'Preparing the Next Generation Education and Future School Leaders' at the IIM Udaipur Leadership series on October 21st, 2021
  - She was also a Resource Person and conducted a Session on 'Formulating Public Policy – The Process and Instruments: A Case Study of Policies for Education of Urban Poor' at the Certificate Course on Public Policy offered by the Centre for Research in Social Sciences and Education (CeRSSE) and Indian Institute for Public Administration, Karnataka Regional Branch (IIPA-KRB) from December 13th - 17th, 2021
- Sunil Kumar K, Ph.D. Research Scholar in Mass Communication cleared the Andhra Pradesh State Eligibility Test on October 31st, 2021.

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