



Connecting Thinkers.. Editors' Message



Dear Researchers,

As we enter the month of March, we thought at THINKLET, it may be appropriate to trace the origins of this word. The word 'March' comes from the Roman 'Martius'. This was originally the first month of the Roman calendar and was named after Mars, the god of war. March was considered the beginning of the calendar year till 1752 when the 'New Style' or 'Gregorian calendar' was accepted and it is only since then that the year began on 1st January. The Anglo-Saxons called the month 'Hlydmonath' meaning Stormy month or 'Hraedmonath' meaning rugged month. And then there is the only too well known, 'ides of March' falling on the 15th of March which gained importance because that was the day Julius Ceaser was killed and it marked a turning point in the history of the Roman Republic. It is also a holy day for Romans when they celebrate festivals. In India too, March is eagerly awaited as across the country, we celebrate Holi, the festival of colours!! This is one of those festivals which is not bound by any religion, caste or community and celebrated by one and all. For the Christians, it is the Holy Week and Easter which gives them a reason for celebration with spirituality. Poetically speaking, it's that time of the year, again, when the trees turn bare, shrivelled due to the cold winds of December and January. They are waiting for the soothing and wet breeze of spring which will bring new life and vigour. In the world of academics, this is the season of examinations when students prepare and faculty also prepare (both their students and their assessment framework)!! There is often a lull in social activity especially in homes with children going to schools and colleges as the focus is often on the coming examinations. For some of our doctoral students and M.Phil scholars at Jain University, March is a month for examinations, as they do their pre-Ph.D. and M.Phil course work examinations. Let's wish them all the best! In this auspicious mood and moment, all ye scholars!! Put your thinking caps on and resolve to move ahead vigorously in this journey of research. 'March' ahead with renewed vitality!

The great Kannada poet and thinker D.V. Gundappa says in 'Mankuthimmanakagga' -

The aged roots, the leaves just born, helps the tree bloom gracefully!

Eternal philosophies, New ideas lead to a new path for righteousness.

Wisdom of the sages blending with new knowledge, life illustrious. -(stanza 522)

Achievements

We are proud to announce that the Central Hindi Directorate of the Union Ministry of Human Resources Development has appointed **Dr. Mythili P Rao**, Dean of Languages, as a member of the High-Level Committee to select scholars for educational awards in languages. Many congratulations to Dr. Mythili P Rao on this recognition .

It is an honor for Jain University that **Dr. Sowmya Puttaraju**, Assistant Professor of Psychology, has received a special financial grant from the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) for presenting a paper at the British Dyslexia Association International Conference. We wish her all the best.

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GUIDE'S COLUMN

Journeying the road to Research

When I was an undergraduate student, I thought of research much like a novice cook thinks of cooking—a process wherein you think of what you wish to cook, then look up an apt recipe for that dish, follow the recipe in a step-wise manner, with precision, and wait (sometimes anxiously) for the results. If you achieve the desired outcome, you feel happy and content. But if you don't, you feel like maybe you had made an error, maybe there was a mistake in following a particular step, and you try again to 'get it right'.

However, over the years, I have realized that research is anything but following a standard recipe. I now like to think of research like an adventure. It involves taking risks, journeying uncharted territories, and interfacing with the unknown. It entails becoming comfortable with uncertainties and negotiating un-defined boundaries. It makes you leave the zone of comfort and enter the chaos of reality.

My understanding of research has thus evolved from a *mechanical* 'what-statistical-method-to-apply-to-achieve-a-particular-result to a *creative* what-will-I-find?' process. I now enjoy the course of researching much as I enjoy the outcome of research. And if the outcome is unexpected, even better!

This change of stance has not been without its challenges and upheavals. As part of my Masters degree, I took up researching a novel therapeutic modality called play therapy in a sexually abused orphaned street child. With an issue like child sexual abuse it is not only naïve but also misleading to pretend that the researcher undertakes her study as a tabula rasa or an uncontaminated "instrument", totally free of bias or preconception. In the process of working on this research, what troubled me enormously when I began was precisely the lack of what is known as objectivity in my work. There was no way I could deny how perturbed I was by this issue; no way I could pretend that there wasn't an emotional entanglement; no way I could wipe out my politics. It took me some time to get comfortable with this fact. However, it was this very entanglement that helped me form linkages and arrive at avenues and critical apertures which ultimately lead to opening up of crucial themes in the therapy. I learnt that the subjective and objective exist in a dialectical relationship to each other. I learnt also that the process of meaning making is arrived at by an exploration of Self of what the Other provokes in the researcher's subjectivity.

If the outcome is unexpected, even better!

I now don't shy away from the diffuse, chaotic, and unclear terrain that meets the eye when beginning research. When the road ahead is littered with uncertainties and entanglements, I embrace them—they bring research alive and help the researcher reach depth. They hold the promise of passionate engagement and empathic immersion.

Research, then, becomes truly adventurous!

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Autobiographies: By whom and why?

Every human being has an inherent desire and tendency to express one's feelings and emotions. Autobiographies are a medium for such expressions. In the Indian context, penning down one's life-incidents was considered as an inappropriate sign of self-praise, and hence was looked down upon. With the change of time, some male Hindi writers overcame this obstacle and penned down their autobiographies with their achievements and power as major themes. Women were hesitant to write about themselves and their life experiences as there was invariably a cultural bias that ostracized women when they went out of the standard duties expected out of them. In the modern era, many women writers have overcome this fear and are writing their autobiographical accounts for the purpose of self-expression.

In the modern era, many women writers have overcome this fear and are writing their autobiographical accounts for the purpose of self-expression.

In India, there is another section of the society which for a very long time was on the receiving end of caste-discrimination. This section of society was brought to the forefront of discourses during the freedom movement. Mahatma Gandhi called them the 'Harijan' but today they are called as the Dalits. Women from this oppressed class faced gender and caste discrimination along with sexual exploitation by men of all castes. It is indeed a matter of great courage for these men and women to come up with their autobiographies and share their experiences with the larger sections of the society. Beyond just being an interesting read, autobiographies are commentaries on the social, political, and cultural environment in which the author lived. This leads to a clearer understanding of people and society. However, objectivity and truthfulness are the most important aspects of any trustworthy and comprehensible autobiography.

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'Being Odysseus'

Whenever I think of the word research, I think of the first remark Dr. Sandeep Shastri said in his research methodology class which is "RE-search". Research since then has been an act of recovering areas and issues that have been ignored and transferred across time. My broad area of research was on armed conflicts and the perspectives of armed conflicts that literature narrates through many genres. 'Re-searching' this oldest facet of human civilization I realized that there existed a large amount of knowledge recorded since wars, ethnic violence, communal tensions, genocides are a continuing reality from the Mahabharata to the present day world. One of the early lessons I learnt, thanks to my guide, was to know when to stop further research extraction to concentrate on filtering my ideas for data analyses. This process also taught me how to balance between being passionately involved with your research while still being the objective to you own research interpretations. Doctoral research has been an important platform to develop qualities with the challenge and excitement of finding and exploring new ideas and possibilities. My callousness in handling research has sometimes resulted in casualties, and I have become wiser with every mistake.

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It has been a meaningful journey and I have a doctoral degree but like the English poet Robert Browning states "A man's reach should exceed his grasp or else what's a heaven for"... while I have found what I set out to search- a doctoral degree; the actual joy lies in aspiring to pursue research in new terrains and undiscovered domains.

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My M.Phil Research Experience

With a great passion for research, I started pursuing my masters' degree in research in the field of biotechnology. I knew this would be an important step to further apply for Ph.D. programs. At CPGS, my peers and professors pushed me to improve my skills as well as learn from others. At first I thought the course focused on the typical rote learning, but to my surprise and pleasure, it encompassed much more than that. The classes were an integration of lectures, interactive sessions and pre-synopsis presentations which provided an excellent frame to form my research design. I believe the course ensures that the students are fully prepared to engage very well in their respective knowledge domains.

At first I thought the course focused on the typical rote learning, but to my surprise and pleasure, it encompassed much more than that.

Jain University is a university that has been built on the idea of trying to bring the best out of you – my professors rarely said 'no' to something, they always said 'try and let's see if it makes sense'. In addition to participating in the numerous class presentations, we received constructive criticism that helped me improve my skills. I think it's best to say that this journey changed everything, and was definitely a turning point in my postgraduate career that has motivated me to pursue a Doctoral degree in Cancer biology.

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Voltage Stability of Smart Distribution Networks

Distribution networks experience distinct changes from a low to high load level every day. Hence, a major concern in power distribution networks that has surfaced recently is a result caused by problems in voltage stability. Voltage stability index is a numerical solution which helps the operator to monitor how close the system is to collapse or to initiate automatic remedial action schemes; in order to prevent voltage collapses. Voltage instability would lead to power system voltage collapse which could cause a failure of components or complete network blackout. Voltage collapses typically occur on power systems which are heavily loaded, faulted or have reactive power shortages. Smart-grid aims to modernize operation and components of existing systems. The basic building blocks of a smart-grid include assets, sensors used to monitor those assets, control logic that realizes the desired operational status and finally communication among those blocks. A smart grid uses digital technology to improve reliability, security, and efficiency of the electric system. For the stability of a system with a smart grid, there are two criteria: first, the generation has to match the demand at any time and has to hold a reserve for immediate outages; second, the grid has to provide sufficient capacity for the voltage stability at each node.

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Research experience at Jain University

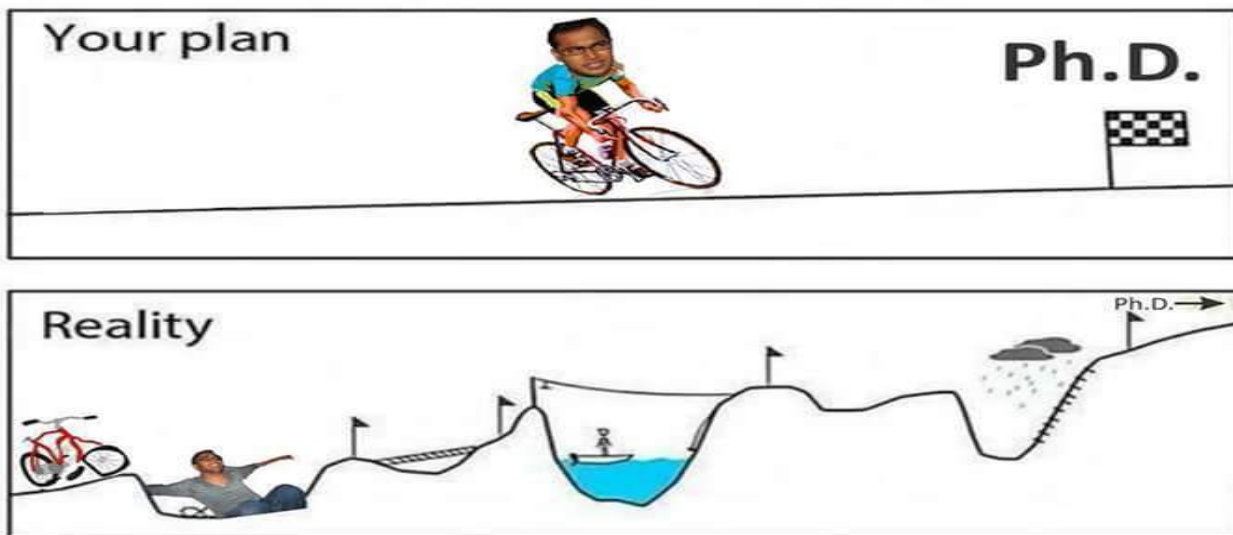
My Research interests lay in the area of High voltage engineering where I am currently pursuing Fast rise time High voltage Marx generators which are applied in pulsed power applications.

The course work was very beneficial to pursue my work on high voltage. I got lots of inputs to begin my research work from the Research methodology classes. The class assignments helped me develop writing skills. This has facilitated me to write and organize my thesis. Skill development program was conducted to enrich communication skills, team building and build self-confidence. Access to IEEE journals made literature survey easy. With the support of good research facilities at Jain University, BARC, Mumbai, sanctioned a funded project and I received an opportunity to work with BARC scientists. The work was carried out on a 700kV Marx generator, and the inductance from estimation and experimental were in close agreement. A suitable configuration with practical feasibility of achieving the required parameters and insulation design requirements were successfully worked out. Generation of ultra-fast pulses using peaking circuit along with Marx was analyzed.

Inputs from the domain experts were taken during my pre-Ph.D. synopsis presentation and research retreat. These platforms created for research scholars to exhibit their research work were very beneficial and helped be focus better. I have received constant support and encouragement from my research supervisor Dr G.R.Nagabhushana to carry out work on topic. I had a satisfactory experience during these years of my research.

Skill development program was conducted to enrich communication skills, team building and build self-confidence.

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Report on the International Conference on ‘Demographics-Dividend or Disaster on 29th & 30th January 2016

The School of Commerce, Jain University hosted a two-day international conference on “*DEMOGRAPHICS – DIVIDEND OR DISASTER*” on 29th and 30th January 2016. The conference witnessed a gathering of learned speakers, aspiring scholars and academicians from across the country to deliberate on challenges and opportunities offered by the main theme through 50 paper presentations.

Some intellectual insights from this event were:

- Education and Learning are different. Vocational Education and Higher Education are different. Experiential learning is very important. Psychological safety decides the quality of life masses lead.
- You can't develop a nation without women. Youth need to gain global and international cross cultural exposure. Inclusivity means people need to be a part of planning and implementing future
- Education is a collaborative process and as such there should be a Shift from Teaching to Learning, from One-Way communication to dialogue, from Memory fun to Knowing to doing and learn the Theory of Application. 3P's of education should be Passion, Persistence and Professionalism.
- Shallow belief in luck and strong belief in cause and effect leads to success. The focus should be on unorganized sector as we are creating people who manage jobs but not creating entrepreneurs.
- Demographics have two fold benefits – Productivity and Consumption. Both contribute to GDP.



Inauguration: The eminent dignitaries of Jain University Dr. N. Sundararajan (Vice Chancellor), Dr. Sandeep Shastri (Pro Vice Chancellor), Key note speaker Dr. A. Ravindra (Former Chief Secretary, Govt. of Karnataka & Chairman, Smart Cities India Foundation), Mr. Ganagi (NABARD), Dr. JayagopalUchil, Prof. S. Subramaniam Sr. Ex RBI Executive, Dr. N Usha Devi (Conference Director), Prof. R Lakshminarayanan (Co-Founder & Chief Learning Officer, iNurture Education Solutions Pvt. Ltd.)

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A Dialogue with Dr. Mythili P Rao on her Selection as a Member of the High – Level Committee for Educational Awards in Languages

The Central Hindi Directorate of the Union Ministry of Human Resources Development has appointed Dr. Mythili P Rao, Dean of Languages, as a member of the High-Level Committee to select scholars for educational awards in languages. Dr. Mythili P Rao is one among the three academicians appointed and the only one from South India.

Ma'am could you tell us the principal function of the committee?

“The role of this committee is to choose from a short-listed record of people who have made significant contributions in bringing out subject related text-books in Hindi. The works should be original and not just translations of books which have been brought out in English. Since they contribute to the teaching-learning component of subjects in Hindi medium the awards are called ‘Shiksha Puraskar’”.

What does this position mean to you and to the university?

“It is definitely an honor and privilege to be chosen for this role. Since I am passionate about Hindi and everything that it stands for, I feel that this responsibility will be a good opportunity for me to study up close the process of creating subject specific books in Hindi. In view of the fact that I belong to Jain University, such recognition also brings the Institution under the spotlight”.

Why is such a committee important and how it will help the students?

“To promote the use of Hindi as a language and also develop its acceptance as the national language, the Government of India has launched many schemes under Organizations created for this purpose. It is a known fact that unless language is used on a day-to-day basis, it will be able to retain its relevance. In the post-colonial context, India has not been able to free itself from English as the medium of instruction. Unlike countries like China, Japan and many European countries, the basic knowledge input is not available in our mother tongue. Another challenge which we face is the diversity in languages that makes it almost impossible to bring out books and study material in native languages. This has led to a gradual decline in our use of native languages and also Hindi as the national language. This prospect will lend itself to building a sense of pride both for the students and for the country too. When Chinese or French speak in their mother tongue even on technical subjects, we express an awe and respect towards them but somehow we are not able to accept and implement the same for ourselves. I am hoping that such paradoxes will be resolved through such attempts”.

Thank you for your time ma'am. We hope a lot more achievements and happiness come your way.

“Research is to see what everybody else has seen, and to think what nobody else has thought” -Albert Szent-Gyorgyi

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