Editorial

In the last two decades, the significance of an academic journal has increased considerably. We should take into account not only the fact that the practitioners of academics have embarked on an era of publishing or perish but also the technological transitions and the conceptual canvass of our everyday lives. Almost three decades back Dennis Turner had asked this question whether the assumption that "publication is an unquestioned good and … the failure to publish is an unmitigated evil" is fully justified (1980). Despite what response it elicits from different locations across the globe it is definitely true that publications carry their own weight, if not fully justifiable, for career-related reasons – as Turner observed in the 1980s US legal academic context – but at least in the context of the rising demands of criticality and new forms of knowledge production. Post globalisation, it seems, that we have literally entered into a knowledge regime where, nonetheless, there are as many certainties as there are uncertainties. The era of knowledge production thus demands knowledge dissemination as well whether they contribute to certainties or uncertainties. Also, the rapid transitions that mark the everyday lives of post-global human beings make it necessary that we don't miss out the conceptual paradigms of such transitions. In other words, the movement/s is/are from which point to the other is a conceptual question that can be answered both empirically and in a language of abstracts.

Given the fact that such questions impinge on the issue of the publication, what we as editors find most pressing is the issue of publishing for its instrumentality, that is to say for recruitment, promotion and other related purposes. This has literally unleashed a spree among the members of the academic community to publish. What such a scenario has resulted in is that most journals' offices are often piled up with so-called academic articles many of which are in semi-baked condition and without any guarantee of quality. While this makes the situation very difficult for editors to screen from the huge submissions they receive, it also raises questions about the quality of those articles that are being published. The

question of what can be defined as knowledge and a critical intervention have also been consistently brainstormed while making the selection.

The current edition of AJHSS consists of papers from a wider range of disciplines including Sociology, History, Social Work and Malayalam literature. The article by Prajwal Nagesh on inter-caste marriages pitches the phenomenon against the backdrop of discussions vis-à-vis caste as a pre-modern system followed widely in the Indian cultural geographies. Caste as an ideology has a much deeper existence in the Indian cultural contexts and operates vividly and subtly. Its dynamics are also determined by the inter-caste relations that are specific to the regions where they operate. The article maps the discourses that permeate inter-caste relations within and outside the space of families. It also broadly lays out the varied negotiations undertaken in this respect and observes how the traditional caste hierarchies are, most often, not only reproduced but also renegotiated within the space of conjugality. The situation is further complicated as patriarchy makes its inroads into different platforms and, as the author observes, "negotiations … were seen to be on an equal level on the surface, but casteist-patriarchal forces operated beneath. The wife and children latently were inheriting [sic] the caste affiliations of the husband."

On a different note, Anupama Sadasivan points towards the need to properly strategise the skill enhancement programmes adopted by the Indian government to transform the current "population trend into a demographic dividend." Her paper draws readers' attention towards the existing skill gaps in the larger Indian scenario, and the role played by private and public sectors to address the same. That "India currently suffers from … an insufficient supply of highly trained workforce … and the non-employability of large sections of educated but unskilled youth" is an indicator of that skill gap. While corporate sector, with its ever-increasing influence on Indian society, has its own promises in this regard, she observes that it "cannot do anything in isolation", though Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has been made mandatory through law. She argues that a solution lies in developing a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model in the area of

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) that will work towards skill enhancements among the Indian youth. The author makes an important observation that PPP looks promising not just for the government and the corporate sector establishments but also for the individuals involved - both at the employee level as well as the unskilled and the underskilled youth.

The history of any language script is very complex and in all likelihood shall escape straight narratives. In her paper on "A Comparative study of Malayalam literature and Paintings," Sindhu Antharjanam draws a map of the evolution of Malayalam scripts from pre-historic and ancient times to the modern period. Pitched against a rather larger time frame, the paper nevertheless focuses on the specificities attached to such evolution not only from the old artworks that spanned across the region but also to the modern ones crafted by such evergreen artists and painters as Raja Ravi Varma, K. Madhava Menon, K.C.S. Paniker and so on. Thus the paper invokes such conceptual maps as invoked by linguists who drew the links between cave arts and lingual scripts. This is specifically true in the context of the south Indian language of Malayalam where the evolution coincides with the ancient Dravidian language of Tamil and its older forms. The paper also hints at the subtleties in its evolution in multiple forms where the old formats of *Kolezhuthu* (long writing), *Vattezhuthu* (round writing) and the early modern form of *Malayanma* which was widely used in the colonial documents.

In their study of parents with two intellectually disabled children, Francina et al., enquires into the socio-economic and psychological difficulties associated with such parents. The study was conducted in the Mangalapuram panchayat in Thiruvananthapuram district in Kerala and involves parents of 5 such cases. The authors observe that despite all the campaigning initiated by the state and a very effective public health programme implemented in Kerala the parents often fail to take precautions. Starkly enough this continues to be the case even when the first child has already been identified with an intellectual disability. The authors also find multiple factors responsible for intellectual disability among children. For instance, the role of genetic factors and consanguineous marriages

needs to be studied further, as the authors suggest in their paper. They also propose to relook into the economic assistance provided in such cases as having two children with intellectual disability is, more often than not, catastrophic to the whole economic structure of the family. Also, there is a serious shortage of efforts to provide counseling assistance to such parents as they undergo an enormous amount of pressures from all sides.

Pramod Pandurangrao Lonarkar in his article titled "Demographic Scenario of India: Opportunities and Challenges" analyses the demograohic changes that India has undergone. The study has taken a long time series data of around 150 years to derive conclusions and create supportive background for policy formulation. The study takes the approach that the present change in demographics could be tapped for the development of the nation if right policy measures are put in place. The researcher observes that the population transition that is taking place right now will continue till 2065 to 2070 and will see an increase in the number of old female dependents.

The last two articles of the issue present meticulous research on the subject of History. History as a discourse has not always been bound by disciplinary constraints. From early times, it was always considered as a narrative of the experiences of the communities and societies. Hence, it was a chronicling of humankind's events, conflicts and destinies. The scholarship of these writings rested not with a professional body of 'historians,' but rather with theologians, jurists, philosophers, practitioners of medicine, travellers and others. From Pliny to Edward Gibbon, they were not historians in the strict sense of the term. But thoughtful intellects, whose sensibilities were responding to the crisis of the period. Thus, History has a history of interdisciplinary approaches.

Vijayalakshmi's article explores the nuances of Psychohistorical writings on Gandhi. Though much research has focused on the philosophy and life of Gandhi, the psychohistorians approach Gandhi through a psychological perspective. The researcher analyses Erikson's, "Gandhi's Truth: On the Origins of Militant Nonviolence," and identifies it as an attempt at understanding

Gandhi through a Psycho-biographical study. Psychohistory analyses the incidents that left a deep impression on Gandhi and examines these experiences that Gandhi used in his techniques such as fasting, Ahimsa and Satyagraha later on. While most traditional historians portray Gandhi as an infallible Mahatma, the psychohistorians present a very human picture of Gandhi with all his frailties.

Jamuna Reddy explores the relationship and the responses of the British Colonial state towards prostitution and prostitutes. The article uses annual reports, newspaper articles, and official communication between the officials of the British Empire as documentary evidence to analyze the position of prostitutes in the colonial state.

Thus the current edition incorporates papers from a wider range of disciplinary areas. As mentioned in the beginning, publishing in the current era takes place amidst a range of complicated events that includes questions of knowledge production and dissemination. We anticipate our readers to initiate more conceptual level discussions on the various issues that the edition addresses.

References

Turner, D. J. (1982). Publish or be Damned, *Journal of Legal Education, 31* (3/5): 550-561.

Rajeev Kumaramkandath and Vagishwari S P
Issue Editors

x