

## Seminar Report (2016-17)

A National Seminar was organized on the basic theme of “Social Concerns of Social Psychology” during November 28-29, 2016 by Department of Psychology. Prof. R. C. Tripathi, University of Allahabad, U. P. was keynote speaker who spoke about ‘Towards unothering of the Muslim other. Other invited speakers Prof. Girishwar Mishra, Vice Chancellor, Mahatma Gandhi anttrashtriya Vhishwavidyalaya, Wardha, Maharashtra (Topic: समाज मनोविज्ञान कितना सामाजिक? सामाजिक सरोकार के सन्दर्भ में कुछ जिज्ञासाएं), Prof. Lilawati Krishan, IIT, Kanpur, U. P. (Topic: Contributions of Social Psychology as a Profession: Some Possibilities) and Prof. Uday Jain, Honorary Professor, Department of Psychology, Dr. H. S. Gour University, Sagar, M. P. (Topic: Ongoing Efforts to Social Change in India and Social Psychology). More than 60 papers were presented in 10 scientific committees in the seminar. Prof. P. K. Rai was the Chairman and Dr. Sanjay Kumar was the convener of the seminar.

### Concept note of the Seminar

Before emerging the field of Social Psychology, social nature of human beings was discussed in philosophy, religion and conventional wisdom. Observation and experience served as the foundation for traditional perspectives of social behaviour. The emergence of social psychology during early to 19th Century scientifically explores the social phenomena, however, to the outsider (non-psychologist) the field of social psychology landed in disparate situations. It is perhaps, because of the presence of many approaches to understand social behavior ranges from behaviouristic, evolutionary, phemonological and cognitive. The cultural psychology and social constructionists in recent years have also joined the field to add the diverse understanding of social behaviors.

The subject matter of social psychology is very broad and can be found in just about everything that we do every day. Social psychologists study why we are often helpful to other people and why at other times to be unfriendly or aggressive. Social psychologists study both the benefits of having good relationships with other people and the costs of being lonely. Social psychologists study what factors

lead people to purchase one product rather than another, how men and women behave differently in social settings, how juries work together to make important group decisions, and what makes some people more likely to recycle and engage in other environmental friendly behaviors than others. Modern Social Psychology in its applied form claims that social psychology has been applied to improve employee productivity and satisfaction, build customer relationships and influence internal and external environment; the public health, industries, education, court room, technology and environment are also the area where social psychology could help.

In the recent times, Social Psychology is a popular area of research in general and in India particular. Social Psychology is a basic science aimed at understanding human social behaviour. It also addresses the questions like why people become aggressive. Why people often seem insensitive to the needs of others? Why people do not participate in the Welfare Programmes? So on and so forth Social Psychology tries to build knowledge primarily through experiments in the laboratory and therefore, theories and findings may often seem remote from the actual problems in Society. One of the reasons for this problem is its focus on the individual or at the best small groups, which is clear from the definitions of social Psychology given in the textbooks. The term 'Social' has been used in different ways by the experts of social psychology following different theoretical models such as Behaviouristic, Gestalt, Cognitive, Cultural and others.

The evidence of unreliable methods, unethical research procedures and ideological biases including artifacts of experimental procedure landed social psychology in a crisis during 1960s and 1970s. We feel the crisis is still prevailing. Right from the beginning in 1928, two strands of Social Psychology: Social Psychology and Psychological Social Psychology brought the differences in the form, content and methods in the field. Because of dominance of American Psychology, Social Psychology remained in the court of experimental science. However, European Social Psychology focused on more group and Community level Phenomena, where as American Philosophy of individualism is carried over as Individual Social Psychology. The Social, henceforth is reduced to the level of individual.

American dominance also designated “their” psychology as Universal however; cross-cultural psychology accepted the cultural differences in human behaviour. Recent emergence of critical social psychology, social constructionism, cultural psychology, social representations have challenged the main stream social psychology for its individualism and methods of inquiry. Even Applied Social Psychology as an experimental science could not address the ‘Social Problems’. It seems to remain concerned with attitude change, value change, motivations and cognition – all at Individual level.

Social Psychology suggested interventions strategies in Applied Social Psychology, which by and large are still in infancy state as one of the leading problem violence and aggression is still flourishing in Indian situations. Social psychology seems entirely absent in providing unswerving solution to such threatening problems. Antisocial characters of the society are well equipped to escalate violence among the members of the society to run their shops of divide and rule. Other problems such as riots among different communities, problem of dowry and existence of Khap panchayats are still prevailing in Indian situations. It is also the failure of social psychologists to make the society vigilant from the poor politics based on the caste, region and religion for the benefits of the few politicians. In short, social psychology has failed to address the larger social problems.

India and other Asian countries have realized the limitations of American Social Psychology as their cultures are different from Euro-American countries main stream Social Psychology could not address social reality. For example, Indian Social Psychologists have drawn relevant social psychology concept from ancient philosophies. It has also been suggested that social Psychology has to contribute directly to development efforts of third world countries. It also noted that building systematic and structural variables into the research design so that the social reality under study does not lose its vital character (Sinha, 1998). Keeping the above concerns in mind, the National Seminar was organized addressing following themes and subthemes;

1. The possibility of developing Social Psychology as professional.
2. Social Psychology’s concerns in health promotion.

3. The role of Social Psychology in rural development.
4. Social Psychology and resolution of social conflicts.
5. Role of Social Psychology and control of Violence and Aggression.
6. Social Psychology and Development of Interpersonal Relations.
7. Social Psychology in promoting cooperation among the community member.
8. Social Psychology and political behavior.
9. Role of Social Psychology in women empowerment.
10. Critique of mainstream Social Psychology and future direction.
11. The possibility of interdisciplinary research of social problems.
12. State of research in social psychology in India.
13. Indian traditional concepts related to social behavior and their relevance.
14. Inaugural Session and Delegates

The seminar Social Concerns of Social Psychology was inaugurated by then Vice-Chancellor, Prof. S. P. Vyas who highlighted the fact that being a dynamic science, Psychological has immense potential to contribute for the society and nation. The occasion was graced by eminent Psychologists including Prof. R. C. Tripathi, Ex. Head, Department of Psychology, Prof. Girishwar Mishra, Vice-Chancellor, Mahatma Gandhi International University, Wardha, Prof. Lilawati Krishnan, Ex. Dean, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT Kanpur, UP, Prof. Uday Jain, Ex. Vice-Chancellor, APS University, Rewa, M. P., Prof. Y.S. Vaghrecha, Ex. Head, Department of Psychology, Doctor Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya, Sagar, M. P., Prof. K. N. Tripathi, B. U. Bhopal, Prof. Neena Kohli, University of Allahabad, and Prof. Purnima Awasthi, Banaras Hindu University.

### **Invited Lectures**

The seminar hosted four lectures delivered. The first invited address delivered by Prof. R. C. Tripathi, on the theme titled “Towards unothering of the Muslim other”. The Second invited talk was delivered by Girishwar Mishra on the pertinent theme “How Social, Social Psychology Is: Some Curiosity with Reference to Some Social Concerns”. Contributions of Social Psychology as a Profession: Some Possibilities” was delivered by eminent Social Psychologist Prof. Lilawati Krishnan. Fourth invited address was delivered Prof. Uday Jain on the theme titled “Ongoing Efforts to Social Change in India and Social Psychology”.

## **Scientific Sessions**

In addition to invited talks, 34 faculties representing different fields of Psychology actively participated in the Seminar. In addition, 106 young and enthusiastic participants participated and presented their research paper in six scientific sessions held during the seminar. The seminar succeeded to provide stimulating environment to discuss the nuances of Social Psychology among the participants participated from different part of the country like Allahabad, Varanasi, Delhi, Pune, Indore, Bhopal, Gwalior etc.

## **Valedictory Session**

This session sparked off with the presentation of seminar report by Dr. Sanjay Kumar which was presided by the Honorable Vice-Chancellor, Prof. R. P. Tiwari. The report heightened that 40 research articles and 04 invited talks was presented in six scientific sessions and through discussions on every aspect was also held during the seminar. On this occasion, two distinguished alumni of the Department Prof. R. C. Tripathi and Prof Uday Jain for their incredible contribution in the field of Social Psychology. While addressing to the participants of the seminar, Honorable Vice-Chancellor, Prof. R. P. Tiwari congratulated the whole organizing committee and expressed full faith that Department of Psychology, Doctor Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya, has immense potential to contribute for the welfare of the Society.

A Workshop on Self-development and career opportunities in psychology was organized on 27.03.2017 in which Dr. Avnindra Kaushik, Chief Consultatnt, Career initiative, Pune, Maharashtra was a resource person.

A Workshop on Learning Disability was organized on 25.03.2017 in which Dr. Sandeep Kumar Jain, Joint Director, CBSE, New Delhi was a resource person.

A workshop on Cognitive Behaviour therapy (CBT) during 06-10 October, 2017

A National Seminar on Social Concerns of Social Psychology, 29-30, November 2016.

(Prof. A. D. Sharma)

Head, Department of Psychology