

6th STUDY IN INDIA SHORT TERM 2019 PAN INDIA PROGRAM

INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY

Rapporteur: Hiteshree Dudani, Rhicha Tripathi, Hitesh Gangwani, Anushka Sharma

1-15 Feb. 2019: The School of Liberal Studies (SLS), Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University organised its 6th Study in India short term pan India program from 1st February, 2019 to 15th February, 2019. The aim of the programme focused on the module of Indian Psychology. Delegation comprising seventeen students from Psychology and two academicians of Psychology from Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia were a part of this programme. Prof. Nigam Dave, Director and Head of the Office of International Relations(OIR), Program chairs Dr. Ritu Sharma and Prof. Eyal Gringart from ECU with a team of student coordinators Ms. Hiteshree Dudani, Mr. Hitesh Ganwani and Ms. Rhicha Tripathi along with the OIR team including Mr. Martin Santhan, Project Coordinator weaved this three-credit course. The objective of this course was to provide a practical overview along with the close interaction with the Indian society to understand Indian Psychology. The program has been designed with intensive and rigorous training for 113 hours spread across two weeks and 8 cities of India.

The first day of their visit to India started with the Orientation Session with dinner in New Delhi. The students were provided with their orientation kits. The program chairs Dr. Ritu Sharma and Dr. Eyal Gringart along-with the student coordinator for the program Ms. Hiteshree Dudani, shared some brief details about the flow of the program, the culture of the cities they were about to visit along with some other important information.

On the second day, as a part of their academic visit, the delegation visited the Jawaharlal Nehru University. Firstly, they interacted with Prof. Heeraman Tiwari, Professor of Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). Prof. Tiwari introduced the delegation to the history of JNU and its position as a leading university in the country at the present. The students then attended the lecture of Prof. Kaushal Kumar Sharma, CSRD, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Honorary Director, NRC, ICSSR, Chief Proctor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, on Genetics of Intelligence and Socio-cultural development in India. Prof. Kumar discussed how religion and various religious teachings provided in the Hindu Vedic literature have impacted the culture of India. He also explained the correct Hindu way of living as suggested in Hindu scriptures and the scientific relevance of the various practices mentioned in it. This was followed by a visit to Rashtrapati Bhavan, the official residence of the President of India in New Delhi. The students explored various buildings that surrounded the main building of the Rashtrapati Bhavan and had a glimpse of the Indo-Saracenic architectural style popular during the British Raj in India. In evening they enjoyed their visit to one of the biggest local markets of the city, the Connaught Palace Market and shopped local items available in the area.

On the third day the delegation departed for Agra for Delhi in the morning. They visited the Taj Mahal and explored the various parts of the monument. They also learnt about the history of the monument and of the Mughal rule and their unique architectural style. In the evening, they shopped for some local goods in the markets of Agra. On 4th of February, they shopped in some malls in the morning time and then departed from Delhi for Varanasi in the afternoon.

On the 5th, they visited the Psychology Department of Banaras Hindu University and attended two lectures there. One was by Prof. R C Mishra, Professor Psychology, Banaras Hindu University, on the topic of Culture and Cognition where he talked about culture sensitive psychology and the various ways in which a country's culture can impact the psychology of its people. He also discussed about his work on cultural psychology with the Adivasi (tribal) community in various parts of Northern India. The second lecture was on Cognitive Psychology in India: Past, Present and Future by Dr. Tushar Singh, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Banaras Hindu University. Dr. Singh discussed how various aspects of society influence the cognition of people. He also discussed his study on MaghMela and how the findings have helped him understand the social aspect of cognition. After these two lectures, the delegation also interacted with the students of BHU. They also visited the Shiva temple situated on the BHU campus and learnt the religious proceedings that are carried out in a Hindu temple and their symbolisms and importance.

The team visited the *Mumukshu Bhavan* situated in Varanasi which is a place where people above 60 years of age live and dedicate their lives to spirituality. These people live there in order to wait for death as it is believed that dying in Varanasi helps a human to achieve salvation. The delegation interacted with the people living there and understood their perception of life, death and spirituality.

After that, they had an enriching and spiritual experience in the Ganga *Aarti* at the *Dashashwamedh Ghat* in the evening. They took a boat to the *Ghat* and experienced the *MahaAarti* (Hindu ceremony in which lights with wicks soaked in ghee are lit and offered to God), and learnt about its importance and practiced the rituals associated with it. They also witnessed the crowd that had come to bathe in the Ganga after visiting the *Kumbh Mela* (a Hindu festival where pilgrims bathe in the waters of the Ganges, Yamuna and Saraswati Rivers) in Prayagraj and the process of Hindu cremation being performed at the Ganga Ghat.

On the 6th day, they departed from Varanasi to Hyderabad. They visited the Osmania University for a distinguished lecture on Higher Education in India by Dr. Naveen Mittal, Commissioner, Collegiate Education & Technical Education at Government of Telangana and Prof. S. Ramachandran, Vice Chancellor, Osmania University. They both discussed about the history of Hyderabad and the current position of its education, industrialization and economy. Dr. Eyal Grignart, Prof. Nigam Dave and Dr. Ritu Sharma talked about Perspectives on Higher Education (India-Australia Relation) with respect to the relation between Edith Cowan University and Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University. Dr. Sharma and Dr. Grignart also talked about the 1st, 3rd and 6th Study in India Programs organized by

PDPU for delegation from ECU and its growing success. Session was coordinated with the support of Dr. Ram Reddy from SLS.

On their 7th day, they visited Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies (RCUES) to attend a workshop by Dr. Udaykumar Reddy, CEO of Stress Management Lab Pvt. Ltd. and President of International Stress Management Association, India on Stress Management. This one-day workshop focused on discussing the various aspects of stress management. Sir discussed various techniques used for stress management in India, including the Yogic practices for stress management. He also discussed the concept of Stress Safety Net which is a holistic stress management tool which includes stress audit, stress coaching and stress counselling for the members of an organization. The students were informed about the various technological tools developed and used by his stress management lab. The session was concluded by Dr. Reddy teaching some mindfulness activities to the students. This was followed by a certificate distribution ceremony where the students were provided a certificate for participating in Stress Management Workshop. Prof. Y. Pardhasaradhi, Director, RCUES Hyderabad and Prof. R Limbadri, Vice Chairman, State Council graced the valedictory event. After this session the delegation departed from Hyderabad for Bangalore.

On their 8th Day, delegation visited the National institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, Bangalore. There they had an expert guest lecture and interaction session by Dr. Jamuna Rajeswaran on EEG *Neurofeedback*: an Indian Perspective. Dr. Rajeswaran explained the meaning, significance and impact of *Neurofeedback* as a therapeutic intervention for various mental disorders including depression, autism, schizophrenia and addiction amongst others. The delegation also visited the *Neurofeedback* Lab of NIMHANS, headed by Dr. Rajeswaran and saw the equipment and the process of *Neurofeedback* training.

They then departed for the famous Bangalore Palace which was constructed by Maharaja Chamarajendra Wadiyar X, king of the Mysore in 1874. It is a grand palace built on an area of 454 acre using the Tudor Revival style architecture with fortified towers, battlements and turrets. After the sight-seeing the delegation went to the M. G. Road market of Bangalore and shopped some local goods.

Next morning, they visited the Christ University and attended two lectures there. The first one was on the topic of Psychology of Consciousness: Eastern Perspectives by Dr. H.S. Ashok, Department of Psychology, Bangalore University. Dr. Ashok discussed about the stark contrast between Indian and western perspectives of consciousness. He also talked about the *Upanishad* and *Vedic* perspectives of consciousness. This was followed by an expert guest lecture and interaction session on Neuropsychological Studies in Indian Perspective by Prof. Jayasankara Reddy K. Prof. Reddy talked about the neuropsychological etiology of epilepsy. He also discussed the various socio-cultural issues pertaining to the illness in the Indian context and also briefed the students about the various treatment methods used for treating epilepsy in India. After this session, the delegation headed for Ahmedabad from Bangalore.

On 10th of February, the delegation went for the Ahmedabad Heritage Walk in the old city of Ahmedabad. The walk started from the Jama Masjid built by Ahmed Shah in 1424. The group then went through the 'Pol' (housing cluster which comprises many families of a particular group) area of the old city while learning about the architectural layout of the houses and their social or religious significance. They also visited some Hindu temples and some Jain *Derasars* (Jain temple in Gujarat) on their way, understanding the rituals, symbolism and significance of Hinduism and Jainism respectively. The walk ended at the French Haveli which is a splendid heritage home in the old city built in 1869.

This was followed by a visit to Lothal, a city of the ancient Indus Valley Civilization. Here, they explored the remains of the Harappan civilization. They saw the remains of the various wells, sanitation system, dockyard, etc. They also visited the museum where they saw some smaller remains of the civilization in the form of pottery, seals, paintings, etc.

Next day, they visited the *Akshaya Patra* kitchen managed by the *International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)*. The delegation saw the process of cooking mid-day meals for thousands of socio-economically backward children studying in different schools of Ahmedabad, which is carried out on a daily basis. After this, they also visited the *Hare Krishna Mandir* and learnt briefly about the organization and Krishna consciousness. They also visited some of the school in which the mid-day meals are served and helped the volunteers of the organization in serving the food. This was followed by a guest lecture by a saint from *Hare Krishna Movement* on Positive Organisation Behaviour- Perspectives from *Bhagwad Gita*. He talked about the various teachings from *Bhagwad Gita* that can be adapted to today's life by people of all cultures.

After this, the delegation visited the *Sabarmati Ashram* built on the banks of the river Sabarmati and was one of the residences of Mahatma Gandhi. They visited the *Hriday Kunj*, the cottage in which Mahatma Gandhi lived. They also saw the museum which carries various quotes, messages, pictures, etc. of Mahatma Gandhi. They also saw the process of weaving yarns on a charkha, as done and promoted by Gandhi.

In the evening they visited the Ahmedabad One Mall for shopping along-with the student volunteers of PDPU after which they departed for their hotel.

On their 12th day, they visited Delhi Public School, Bopal, Ahmedabad as a part of their Academic Visit. The visit focused on mainstream Schooling in India and Special Education. The delegation then came to PDPU and attended the Indian Food Festival which was arranged by the PDPU Students. Arjun Hurra, an alumnus of School of Liberal Studies, PDPU, cooked some paranthas, paneer tikka and chicken tikka for the delegation while also teaching them the process of cooking. The delegation also interacted with the other international students studying in PDPU during the food fest.

Thereafter, they attended a guest lecture by Dr. S.L. Vaya, Director, R & D, Raksha Shakti University on '*Journey Back to the Roots: Psychology in India.*' During the lecture, Dr. Vaya talked about the internalising approach, emphasized upon in Indian Psychology. She also

discussed about Vipassana, an ancient Indian meditation technique that was rediscovered by Gautam Buddha.

After the lecture, there was a panel discussion on '*Mental Health and Youth*' by Dr. Madhu Singh, Director of B. M. Institute of Mental Health; Dr. Rajendra Anand, CEO, Medical Superintendent at Kanoria Hospital and Research Centre, Ms. Sangeeta Hinduja, Principal, PRERNA, Delhi Public School and Dr. Ritu Sharma, Associate Professor, Psychology, Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University. During the panel discussion, various aspects of mental health and youth including substance addiction, career expectations and parent-child relationship amongst others were discussed by the panelists.

On 13th February, the students attended a Yoga Session with the instructor Ms. Riri Trivedi, cofounder of Wellness Space in Ahmedabad. Ms. Trivedi taught the students the basic principles of Yoga in India and some of the basic postures followed during the practice of Yoga along-with their significance and impact on the body. This was followed by her lecture on Positive Psychology in Indian Context. She explained the system of *Pancha Kosha* and how various meditative and mindfulness practices can help balance this system.

The delegation also interacted with Dr. Bharat Vatwani, founder of Shraddha Rehabilitation Foundation and a recipients of the Ramon Magsaysay award. Sir talked about the work of his foundation in rehabilitating the mentally ill people who are living on the streets by first treating them and then sending them back to their families.

This was followed by an expert guest lecture and interaction session on Stress Management by Prof. D.M. Pestonjee, Chair Professor, Psychology, School of Petroleum Management, PDPU. Sir talked about the various loopholes and flaws in organization-employee interaction pattern that lead to organizational stress. He also discussed the various techniques that can be used to combat this stress.

Lastly, there was a concluding session on Indian Psychology by Dr. Ritu Sharma. Dr. Sharma and Dr. Eyal shared the inputs from the students deliberated upon various aspects of Psychology that were touched upon throughout the program. The students also talked about the learnings drawn through the course during this session. The same night the delegation had a special dinner at Barbeque Nation.

On the 14th, the Valedictory Ceremony for the program took place in PDPU. The program started with lighting of the lamp and formal welcome of the delegation from Edith Cowan University. This was followed by a cultural dance performance by students from PDPU and Cultural Music Performance by Mr. Nigel Healy from ECU. This was followed by experience sharing by Mr. Aaron Willis and Dr. Eyal Gringart from ECU. After this, Dr. Ritu Sharma shared the academic exposure details of the program which was followed by address by Prof. Nigam Dave. The chief guest for the program, Shri Pankaj Kumar, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Gujarat then gave his address which was followed by certificate distribution ceremony and group photograph. The program was concluded by the vote of thanks by Hiteshree Dudani, Student Coordinator of the program. The ceremony was

followed by a gala dinner for the delegation from ECU and faculty members, staff and students of PDPU.