

## Editorial Note

The conferences of the teachers and scholars of Political Science often fascinate me. I have long been associated with a few academic professional associations in my state, as well as, at national and international levels. In fact, these conferences of the associations are the only platforms we can have around us to put forward our views about society, academic community and polity in general and the subject in particular. The communitarian and interactive nature of these conferences is an essentially important aspect of the horizontal growth of the subjects. Though, we all know that sometimes these associations tend to get converted into stepping-stones of some of our anxiously enthusiastic friends for furthering their personal upward movement in the career. Even then, much academic value and significance can be easily derived from our get together. Sometimes, the lessening number of participants in these conferences becomes alarming but as usual there are always new entrants into the mainstream while some forget to recognize their erstwhile beloved jumping pad. We must take a serious note of the precariousness of the academic inertia in our subject teachers. May be the most part of the blame can be attributed to the necessary time bound promotion schemes but it is disheartening to learn that the academic community can largely be divided into two parts in this regard. On the one hand, there is a large group of University Professors and Readers in general and Central University Teachers in particular who do not find these conferences worth visiting unless they are invited to preside or present Keynote address. Though most of them have been closely associated with their professional associations in the early part of their career. They now ridicule the conferences as futile exercises, which only promote PR exercises of some brilliant campaigners for their vertical growth. Otherwise these conferences can at best become meeting places of those teachers who have much time to spend in travels rather than for sincere research activity at their work places.

Then, there is another section of persons who strongly believe that these associations and conferences are the actual fields of our academic interaction with the outside view. These conferences, they understand, have since long been responsible for producing innovative ideas about the curricula development and methodological aspects of teaching and research. These get-togethers bring forward the problems faced by the younger scholars and put our focus on area specific issues. These have not only presented before the fraternity of teachers some of the brightest scholars of our discipline but also promoted horizontal expansion of the subject at regional levels.

Unfortunately, the first group, though an apparent minority, holds the prime positions in the academic spheres. Even at the level of International Political Science Association, the participation of the teachers and scholars from India is minimal keeping into consideration the size of the community of Political Science scholars. In the last conference at Durban (South Africa) when there were more than two thousand delegates from all over the world, Indian contingent was quite small. Barring some regular visitors from Delhi, there were only two teachers from U.P. (the largest province of India which is smaller in population than only seven countries of the world), two from West Bengal, two from Karnataka, one from Bihar, five-six from Rajasthan and that's all. Again, most of them were teachers from mega cities of their respective provinces. The University Grants Commission, the Indian Council of Social Science Research and some other agencies make tall claims about providing financial assistance to teachers and scholars for attending International Conferences and Seminars yet it appears that these grants are available to only a handful of resourceful teachers.

Scholars from remote areas and townships of the country are actually not exposed to the facilities and schemes prevalent for their academic upliftment. I wish to request that these conferences must endeavour seriously in this direction. These conferences should

necessarily become the source of multifarious information for the fellow learners of the discipline.

The next area of our academic pursuit is seminar. The myth of National Seminar is deeply disturbing. Regional considerations, personal relationships, ideological orientations, repetitive deliberations and financial compulsions have all together made the nature and character of the seminars in our discipline to be discouraging. Sheer rhetoric and exhibitionism have greatly empowered our otherwise relevant exercises. We must sincerely introspect into our efforts. I request all the friends in the fraternity of Political Science to do some fruitful re-orientation in this regard.

The other most important and academically significant and necessarily manifest area of intellectual excellence is the periodicity and quality of our research journals. I may be forgiven to bring forward some hard realities before you. For the reason of long being associated with a couple of journals in my province, I have been in a position to witness the actually pathetic situation in this area. The extremely high financial requirements of subscribing to the foreign journals have largely debarred most of us by exposure to the leading and respectable journals of our subject. Only a few rich libraries of some of the universities can really afford to provide their teachers and scholars a look into the academic development in their subject far from the national boundaries. Therefore, we have been left with no other choice but to go through the pages of Indian journals only. Here also the participation level is extremely low and the editors of the journals in India have to depend upon the standard of the material they could gather after their consistent efforts. The financial assistance is also lackluster and this greatly hampers the periodicity of the journals. The printing costs and postage charges are looming large. Hence, we have only a couple of Indian journals, which can boast of both regularity and standardization. I, in my capacity of being the Editor of Indian Journal of Political Science, take this opportunity to request all my friends here to submit quality research papers to this prestigious journal published by Indian Political Science Association. I request all of you to kindly ensure that your active cooperation makes possible the regular publication of this journal. The journals of our subject are predominantly the most significant contributions to the field of knowledge.

I look forward to your active help, support and cooperation.

With best regards,

1st May, 2004

Yours Sincerely

**(Sanjeev Kumar Sharma)**

**Editor**