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Editorial

Nearly two months have passed since the ghastly earthquake in Nepal. The world watched in horror and helplessness at the gaping crevices and disembowelled edifices even as death spread its dreaded tentacles across Kathmandu and beyond, snuffing out life and hope. Those who faced the brunt of nature's wrath lost not only their material possessions but also their near and dear ones. All they now have is memories. Memories... very often that is all one is left with. As one of our recently retired staffers realized after having served IRMA for three-and-a-half decades. Even as she was winding up her duties she decided to pen a moving account of her sojourn at the institute, her last article while in service.

Memories of IRMA stirred the pen (or should I say mouse?) of another entity, a first batch FPRM from IRMA who walked down memory lane, literally, on her last visit to the institute.

While writing might appear to be an effortless and spontaneous exercise it requires discipline and patience. This is because the brains fires up all the time. Bhavi Patel, an IRMA alumna, explores the latest marketing technique as it relates to the brain and buying behaviour patterns.

Undoubtedly, one's inner life has an enormous bearing on one's personality and behaviour. That is why a book like Silent Messages for Soul Searching by Dr. CN Narayana, ace management thinker and research scientist, is so relevant in today's world with its unwieldy external complexities. An introspective and exploratory review by a former academic associate, Rachana Sharma, is worth a read for that reason alone.

While our ever-enthusiastic alumni have been busy contributing to Network IRMA's faculty hasn't been sitting idle either. HS Shylendra's article highlighting the success and failure of the Joint Forest Management programme floated by the Government delineates his impartial and insightful perspective on the issue.

The panoply stretches to include a report by Hitesh Bhatt on IRMA's participation in a unique dairy management programme besides poetry, both in Hindi and English. Before signing off, I wish to thank all our readers and contributors for their unstinted support and encouragement.

Indrani Talukdar

(Editor)

It is all in the brain

Marketing research enters an exciting new field as consumers' affective and cognitive responses to stimuli get assessed



Neuromarketing gives us an inside scoop into the way the brain reacts to outside stimuli. For once, marketers can use a brain-related technique to reach out to the heart.

Ever thought about how people's brains respond to advertising and brand-related messages? Undoubtedly, businesses have faced little difficulty keeping track of their consumer' buying patterns. What they failed to understand, however, was the *raison d'être* of the buying behaviour. Putting it simply, nobody in the corporate sector quite understood 'why' we buy certain products.

The clouds may be clearing thanks to a (as yet) nascent marketing tool marketing experts have dubbed 'neuromarketing', the latest marketing buzzword doing the rounds in the corporate circuit. Currently practised by top-layer

companies like Frito-Lay, PepsiCo, Google, Motorola, Coca-cola, Microsoft, Nestle, Unilever, P&G, L'Oreal and Fox, the phenomenon of neuromarketing mainly utilizes five types of technology including the fMRI, which is a 32-ton high field circular magnetic bore the size of an SUV, costing about \$1 million and involving an operating cost of \$100,000 to \$300,000 per annum.

Fast to catch up is the electroencephalography or EEG – also known as the functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) technology that measures changes in the electrical field aided by a series of electrodes attached to the scalp. Not too far behind is the technique known as electrooculography (EOG) that measures eye movements by recording electric potential in each side of the eyeball and comparing the difference. Then there are the lesser known techniques including the facial electromyograph that detects



Neuromarketing can prove an effective tool in villages



Even as marketing gurus and bio scientists tap into brain data the question is: can we employ this vibrant though nascent technique for rural settings?

electrical signals generated by the (facial) muscle and the IM index, which uses a 200 questionnaire to assess perceptions, attention, unconscious impacts, and emotions.

Even as marketing gurus, in conjunction with bio scientists, are bent upon tapping into brain data in the context of consumer choices, filmmakers have been quick to delve into the subject.

A documentary known as 'The Persuaders' that deals with the ubiquity of advertisements, gives a magnificent yet concise description of how a product serves to represent a particular emotion and how purchasing that product becomes a substitute for feeling that emotion.

With the help of neuromarketing and consumer neuroscience the influence exerted by stimuli such as advertisements, visuals, verbal inputs, voices, and placebos on a consumer's emotions and buying

behaviour may be assessed appropriately.

Now the question is: can we employ this vibrant though nascent technique for rural settings?

Even as I write this, I can see a lot of doomsayers and doubting Thomases shaking their heads in denial and disbelief. "Does she even understand the kind of costs that investing in neuroscience and neuromarketing brings with it?" That's what they are saying, don't I know it?

Yet... I can already spot some optimists in the horizon saying "Whoa, there's an idea! Why not give it a shot?"

So, what can neuromarketing offer in the rural context? I have a few ideas, beginning with wall paintings.

To be sure, wall paintings form an important part of advertising in rural areas. How about installing wall paintings along village lanes with subjects walking over them wearing EEG gear? An analysis of the brain areas that fire up as a reaction to those paintings could throw up some valuable insights.



Visuals form an essential part of life in the villages

Another idea has to do with the phenomenon of blind testing, i.e. the blind testing of a normal product versus a fortified product mimicking the technique employed by *McClure's*, the flagship muckraking magazine that established consumers' preference for Coke over Pepsi. The publication threw up some interesting revelations as well including the fact that selecting Pepsi stimulated brain centres responsible for the reward system, the ventromedial prefrontal cortex in particular, while selecting Coke fired up regions demarcated for self-esteem.

Taking a cue from *McClure's* marketers could deploy neuromarketing techniques with the aim of launching new products in the market and allied communication patterns. To conclude, neuromarketing is not just a cool marketing trick but also one of the most objective ones. It gives us an inside scoop into the way the brain reacts to outside stimuli. For once, marketers can use a brain-related technique to reach out to the heart.

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Research Grants to IRMA

IRMA is the recipient of a research grant from The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR). The grant is in lieu of a research project entitled "Gendered Impacts of NREGS in Rural India: Evidence and implications for policy".

The project has been approved for funding under ICSSR's 'Sponsored Research Programmes' by the Indian Council for Social Science Research and is spread over a period of two years starting April, 2015. Additional funding for this project comes from the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD, Hyderabad), the German Development Institute (DIE, Bonn), and Brown University (USA).

The project is significant in the light of well-intentioned policies having failed to close glaring gender gaps despite attempts relevant to the economic empowerment of women through major livelihood security programmes like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

The project will utilize unique individual-level panel data from eight states (including ones considered the best and worst pertinent to MGNREGS implementation) and assess the programme's impact on men and women from different socio-economic groups via three channels: (i) labour market participation and risk diversification, (ii) investment and productive resource use, and (iii) social and political empowerment.

The research will be led by Prof. Hari K. Nagarajan, RBI Chair Professor at IRMA, in partnership with Prof. G. Palanithurai, Rajiv Gandhi Chair Professor at Gandhigram Rural Institute, Dindigul, and Prof. Hans P. Binswanger-Mkhize, Visiting Faculty at the University of Pretoria and China.

A village of substance

A PRM participant's village field stay throws up some challenges as well as revelations



Getting off the bus I looked out towards the vast landscape stretching out before us. A swarthy-complexioned middle aged man, obviously a tribal villager, glanced at me once before getting back to chopping what looked like a golden heap of hay.

Having entered IRMA charged with Dr. Kurien's mission of serving the rural sector I had wasn't altogether unfamiliar with the inherent challenges. Nevertheless, as I looked around into the undulating mountains I couldn't check a feeling of trepidation. I was supposed to conduct a survey in 30 households within a period of six weeks. In a little over a month's time I was expected to tap into the changing patterns of livelihoods in this tribal village of Biriguda in the Laxmipur block of Odisha's Koraput district as part of our fieldwork assignment.

Documenting facts in this remote village I did encounter some hiccups.

To begin with, there were no written records of the village's history. This meant that I would have to depend on hearsay and second hand accounts for data. To top it all, I didn't know the local language!

Staying in a village came with its attendant challenges, no doubt. Yet it also gave me rare insights into the life of a typical village in the tribal belt of eastern India. While I had cut my tooth, so to speak, during the Induction stage, living with the villagers and interacting with them opened my eyes to a great extent. I had known about the risks and challenges that the villagers were exposed to first hand. These had to do with climate unpredictability, recurrent natural disasters, and ill developed rural infrastructure and so on.

I learnt that the Biriguda village was 150 years old. Its inhabitants comprising the tribal community, designated as SCs and STs, earlier



The children of Biriguda



Looking at all these problems I realized the urgency with which government interventions are required, especially as far as storage is concerned. A government agency needs to be installed for farmers to get the correct value for their produce inspiring, thereby, agricultural activity in the area.

resided in the surrounding forests. Community living gave rise to a residential colony and, in 1975, the Central Government built 45 houses under the Indira Awas Yojana (IAY).

Agriculture is the mainstay of Biriguda with paddy, mandiya, and suan (a lower category of millet) as the main crops. Going around the village I also spotted fields growing potatoes, cabbages, cauliflowers, and brinjals among others. The challenge to agriculture, I realized, was in the nature of the soil, which is black. The rocky terrain of the village too, does not seem to help matters, especially where irrigation concerned.

Most villagers refrained from using pesticides in their fields even as they resorted to rather primitive practices. Lately, however, organizations like

the Odisha Tribal Empowerment & Livelihoods Programme (OTELP) and the Information Technology Development Agency (ITDA) have been helping the Biriguda agricultural community with the latest technology and machinery.

Although I didn't speak the language I found the villagers to be very forthcoming and cooperative. I was warmly welcomed into their little dwellings and they seemed more than willing to share information with us. I discovered, for instance, that the average income of a household ranged between Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 3,000 per month. This is when the season was favourable and yields high. During the 'low' period incomes varied between Rs. 500 and Rs. 700 per month. Such a far cry from the fat eight figure salaries received by MNC employees, I couldn't help reflecting.

Enquiring about agricultural marketing I realized that much of the agricultural yield is used for consumption with little left over for marketing purposes. The surplus is stored inside community buildings



Residents of Biriguda are a friendly lot

that are so poorly maintained that the villagers are forced to sell it in nearby Laxmipur for prices lower than those dictated by the market.

Another problem plaguing the farmers in Biriguda is the ever decreasing size of land holdings, thanks to inheritance related issues. As the land gets passed down from one generation to the next, land size shrinks leaving farmers with small pieces that usually gets sold for investment for a non agricultural activity (like a kirana shop). Moreover, the fact of abysmally low returns on agriculture stimulates mass scale migrations to nearby states.

Looking at all these problems – and more – I realized the urgency with which government interventions are

required, especially as far as storage is concerned. The government also needs to look at constructing dams alongside maintaining check dams in the region. Besides, a government agency needs to be installed for farmers to get the correct value for their produce inspiring, thereby, agricultural activity in the area.

Last, but not the least, farmers need to be educated about the latest rural and farm-related technologies and the optimum use of fertilizers.

It was with such sombre reflections that I headed back to IRMA, wiser and more thoughtful than when I had started out.

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Milaap 2015



Milaap is an event where IRMA's distinguished alumni congregate in a spirit of bonhomie and nostalgia. As always, those who attended Milaap 2015 witnessed a grand celebration with over a hundred alumni attending the event. The event spanned two days, 24-25 January, while our alumni reached the campus on 23rd January itself, with many of them expressing a wish to sojourn in their old hostel rooms to refresh fond memories of their two years.

What followed was a student alumni ice breaking session and later, the nostalgic *Bees Saal Baad* event which reunited PRM 15 and the faculty. The crowning event was a cultural night entitled *Bailamos*.

The next morning was flagged off by the adrenaline pumping Anand Run commencing at the crack of dawn. This year's event upheld the cause of education for the girl child. Highlights of this event included a quiz conducted by Jigyasa – the in-house quizzing fraternity – a treasure hunt, another cultural evening, and a second Grind event.

For the first time did Milaap include two nights of exuberant cultural performances. The appreciation expressed by the alumni was heartening.



After seven years

A first batch FPRM participant reminisces her heydays at IRMA.

It felt like the proverbial seven year itch. Going past the busy, dizzy Ganesh Chowkdi nothing seemed to have changed over the last seven years except for a few shops and restaurants dotting the still-lazy landscape of Anand.

Turning to go into my beloved institute the memory clock began to

distinction of being the first Fellow of IRMA.

Entering the portals of the institute I could sense the presence of its progenitor, the late Dr. Kurien. As I entered the campus, the tree-lined avenues, the mellow lighting, the Carillon Chimes, the hostel buildings, welcomed me once again-



IRMA lawns have been witness to years of camaraderie and friendship

tick... 2001. That was the year it all began- the frenzy of filling up the IRMA entrance test form, qualifying the entrance exam, and finally gaining entry to IRMA. It was, you guessed right, a seven-year journey that culminated in 2008. I had earned the unique and once-in-a-lifetime

it was like homecoming. The trees, I noticed, had grown taller since my time here. It is as though they were underscoring IRMA's trajectory and growth. Turning around I saw the new buildings and some new faces in the faculty block. I was looking at bright-eyed youngsters rushing



Coming back to terra firma I began reflecting on the uniqueness of IRMA and its culture. IRMA's culture is about a high level of conscientiousness in the context of punctuality, meticulousness and organization or, stated in simpler terms, it is about being professional.

about with their assignments and classes. They looked as intense, committed, and blithe as they did back then. I was told the current FPRM constituted the 13th batch at IRMA. "I belong to the torch bearing batch," is what I felt like saying.

So much had changed and yet it hadn't.

Coming back to terra firma I began reflecting on the uniqueness of IRMA and its culture. Some of it has to do with a form of "structural" symbolism that embraces signage such as 'Do Not Cross The Lawns' signage, sipping *chai* at the mess

lawns, Anand-based alumni doling out lessons learnt from their work lives at workshops and seminars, strict classroom rules, and a liberal hostel environment. At a deeper level, IRMA's culture is about a high level of conscientiousness in the context of punctuality, meticulousness and organization or, stated in simpler terms, it is about being professional. It is about maintaining order, adhering to the rules and behaving ethically even when no one is watching (including making an entry for an extra in the mess register).

Other structuralism symbols abound... The late-night discussions at the mess lawns over cups of tea, discussions pertaining to existential questions including what it means to work in the 'development sector' and the critical dissection of courses taught and pedagogies adopted. The discussions carried over to light-hearted banter touching upon, say, the unforgettable Nine Square Mandala (with due apologies to the professor concerned) and the (then) most terrifying Professor in IRMA's history (PRM-23 would know).

The warm camaraderie, so reflective of IRMA's culture, is apparent even today. The mess lawns, centres of discussions stretching well into the night, have been witness to people joining in and disbanding, which is where the social capital of IRMA is created. The norms of behaviour, trust, cooperation and reciprocity emerge in these networks and go a long way towards sustaining the spirit of being an IRMAN.

The hostels too, have been built so that each block and its inmates have a sense of identity. There is bonding within the blocks and bridging among the blocks, all of which is integrated through a centralized mess. Being IRMAN does not mean dishing out jargon

Being an IRMAN is about rising above the petty needs of the self for the larger good and making a difference in people's lives. An IRMAN has a deep sense of empathy and is concerned about how they would feel if they were on the other side.

such as development, sustainability, inclusion, partnership, self-help groups, and livelihoods. What makes an IRMAN distinct is the ability to face challenges, 'walking the talk', and making it happen. The 35-year old history of IRMA and IRMANS stand testimony to this spirit.

Being IRMAN is about having a strong value system comprising honesty, integrity, hard work, trust, fairness, cooperation, and openness. IRMANS are distinguished as those having a strong concern about their actions on society and their decisions' impact on stakeholders. Being an IRMAN is about rising above the petty needs of the self for the larger good and making a difference in

people's lives. An IRMAN has a deep sense of empathy and is concerned about how they would feel if they were on the other side. Carrying the mutated IRMA gene, like all other IRMA alumni, I headed back home more reflective – and optimistic – than when I had started retracing my steps to the institute that stands tall like its iconic tower.

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निभाता रहा Mistaken loyalties

कितने दिपक जले थे मेरी राह में,
पर मैं नजरो का धोखा यू खाता रहा ।

मंजिले मुस्कुराती हुई रह गई,
राह में अपनी कांटे बिछाता रहा ।

रहमत रकीबों की यूं भा गई,
दोस्तों से नजरें चुराता रहा ।

लब पे खुशकीयां, कातिराना निगाहें,
रिश्तों को इस तरह निभाता रहा ।

साथ उसके उम्र में हाँसिल मुझे था,
वो बेखबर बन के लुटाता रहा ।

उधर उसकी नजरें मुझे खोजती थीं,
इधर खुद को उससे छिपाता रहा ।

जफा करके चलता रहा उम्र भर,
नगमें वफा के मैं गाता रहा ।

So many lamps lit up my way,
But my eyes were by deception swayed.

As destinations smilingly beckoned
I simply strew thorns along the way.

Stealing away from friends
I depended on my rivals' grace.

With cracked lips and quease
Have I my kinships maintained.

In this skewed alliance
Only one had right of way.

Even as eyes sought my presence
I just chose to stay away.

Infidelities did not cease
In spite of my loyal refrain.

(Translated by Indrani Talukdar)



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Not out of the woods yet

Although well-intended and optimistic the Joint Forest Management movement needs to be tapped well

Even as the world celebrated the International Day of Forests in March, the forests of Telengana and Andhra Pradesh were keeling under anthropogenic distress. While forests were traditionally administered via top-down interventions the need for a collective, participatory approach was sensed way back in the 80s. This led to the launch of the National Forest Policy (NFP) in 1988. The NFP identified a clear need to associate tribal and village communities with restoring degraded forests. Another significant step towards a progressive people-centric approach involved establishing the Joint Forest Management (JFM) by the Government of India in 1990. The JFM was envisioned as a collaborative effort between village communities and the forest department. Adopted enthusiastically by state governments, the JFM succeeded in getting 1.13 lakh forest protection committees (FPCs) to manage nearly 24.65 million hectares of forest land constituting a little over a third of the country's total forest area by 2010. The FPCs are unique in that

Adopted enthusiastically by state governments, the JFM succeeded in getting 1.13 lakh forest protection committees (FPCs) to manage nearly 24.65 million hectares of forest land constituting a little over a third of the country's total forest area by 2010.

they are spread out mainly along forest-fringed villages inhabited by disadvantaged groups including the scheduled tribes and scheduled castes.

The JFM called upon state forest departments to seek people's participation in the protection of degraded forests. It made clear that the community members were not to be given any ownership over forests. They were, however, entitled to a share of usufructory benefits, including the right to collect various non-timber forest products. They were also given a share in

the final harvest of protected areas. Tree species aligned with local community preferences were to be included in the regeneration plan.

How far has the JFM succeeded then? The reactions are mixed. Those who view the policy through an optimistic lens aver that it has succeeded in breaking state-centric legacies that had, hitherto, alienated local communities. It is thanks to JFM's efforts, they contend, that the forest department has been goaded into redefining its role and relations with

the community. Barring some initial hiccups, the JFM has succeeded in propagating its message and *raison d'être* aided by the forest department. The Twelfth Five Year Plan credited multi-stakeholder platforms like the JFM for having empowered women and for having introduced innovations in the management of natural resources. As a policy,

with a political ecology perspective attribute JFM's variable performance to the largely ambivalent stand taken up by the state forest departments. Many foresters see JFM as a betrayal of the latter's historic mission of protecting forests. Then there are those who claim that state-led interventions are unlikely to succeed with the state's non neutral



JFM has been criticised for excluding women in its domain

JFM has been hailed for its change-engendering potential leading to the reversal of injustices meted out to disadvantaged communities in the past.

The pessimists beg to differ, however, by contending that JFM has been more a reactive policy and its success limited. According to them, the JFM has to be more proactive while addressing the institutional dimensions of devolution, equity, and sustainability lest it lose out on the limited gains it has made. Those

stance in a capitalistic economy known for advancing capitalistic interests over those of the poor and underprivileged. Given the pre-eminence of the state, the customary and informal rights of communities may not always have tenability, which reduces JFM to the status of a mere user-group based intervention.

The JFM has also been criticised for lagging in terms of inclusivity. In its initial phases, it was seen as highly insensitive to the role women could play in effecting

change with no explicit provisions made for their participation. Growing pressures from various groups forced the inclusion of women, both in the general body and executive committees of FPCs. While some states did attempt to organize exclusive women-based FPCs huge variations continue to mar inclusivity, specific state-laid norms for women membership notwithstanding.

The main *bête noir*, however, is the perpetuation of the top-down approach exercised by the forest departments, which is in sheer defiance of the JFM rationale. The forest-department officials hold ex-officio positions with extensive powers giving them dominance in their working. The relationship between the forest department and the community has been perceived as vertical with the forest officials calling the shots in all the major FPC-related activities.

A Planning Commission's Working Group in 2011 affirmed the high degree of control exercised by the forest departments over FPCs causing divergence between the interests of the FD and the community. The abiding top-down attitude of the FD, inadequate devolution of powers, lack of transparency in the working, social backwardness of the communities, and low capacity building of the FPC members are some of the reasons behind perpetuating the control.

The results are there for all to see. While the people's participation has been completely undermined the communities have been reduced to mere wage seekers and beneficiaries as opposed to empowered stakeholders. Women are unable to participate and exercise any control. In some cases, women simply serve as conduits with regard to decisions imposed by forest department officials. Community based micro-plans remain a pipe dream.



Women are unable to participate and exercise control

While the JFM has been in existence for over a decade, it has been unable to come up with significant, far-reaching results. The proportion of forest cover, which was 19.5 percent in 1987, increased only marginally to 19.9 per cent in 2001. Constrained and shackled the JFM has not made much headway obviously.

Lately, however, there have been some improvements in the country's forest cover. The total forest cover, according to the India State of Forest Report, went up to 21.03 percent in 2013- a trend attributed to protectionist efforts. Overall, JFM efforts have modest at best at the macro level.

Micro-level assessments, on the other hand, depict diverse scenarios of forest regeneration with a limited overall impact. An all-India study on NAP, for instance, shows the survival rate of plantations as ranging from 68 to 82 percent across different zones. Another micro study in Haryana reveals the people's involvement in protection having led to a significant increase in tree density from 13 to 810 per hectares stimulating an amplified green cover, reduced soil erosion, and improved water conservation. Diminished illicit felling, curtailed grazing, reduced forest-related offences, and appearance of wild life are some of the proxy indicators

Many foresters see JFM as a betrayal of the latter's historic mission of protecting forests. Then there are those who claim that state-led interventions are unlikely to succeed with the state's non neutral stance in a capitalistic economy known for advancing capitalistic interests over those of the poor and underprivileged.

of forest regeneration identified by many micro studies.

Failing (mostly) at the macro level, the little islands of success point to potential capable of being tapped. All said and done, there is no better alternative to involving the community in forest conservation.

The JFM experience may be strengthened by: (i) deepening its participatory framework while ensuring legal back-up to FPCs for them to emerge as empowered institutions, (ii) ensuring autonomy both in the JFM institutional design and planning processes so that focus is on the local livelihood needs of the community, (iii)

allowing the FPCs to continue either as user-based or wider community-based institutions tailored to local needs resolved through democratic processes involving the Panchayats, and (iv) mobilizing larger resources for forest conservation through the convergence of interventions.

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A programme in dairy management

A unique dairy management programme of which IRMA was a part



The author sitting at the meeting with dairy plant professionals

Nobody had imagined some three-and-a-half decades ago that India would go from being milk dependent to becoming the world's largest exporter of dairy products. Its enviable position notwithstanding, the dairy industry still begs constant upgrading and development. It was with this aim that the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) developed a unique five-week 'Dairy Plant Management Training Programme' (DPMP) targeting dairy professionals from across the country. The programme conducted between February 16, 2015 and March 20, 2015, aimed to build professional competence in

dairy cooperatives by way of 'upgradation of skills & knowledge for efficient and sustainable operations of dairies'.

The cherry on the cake? IRMA's role in designing the entire programme and suggesting various resource persons from different organizations.

It was clearly visible that NDDB had taken proactive steps to share both knowledge and experience, both being essentials in an industry that is getting increasingly competitive. What was also evident was the fact that dairy cooperatives needed to focus on milk production, processing, and value addition with

cost-effective measures in place coupled with a judicious utilization of resources.

A total of 24 dairy plant professionals from eight states (Tamil Nadu, Bihar, West Bengal, Kerala, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jharkhand, and Assam) were invited for the training programme. In all, there were 74 classroom sessions by 32 faculty members from NDDB, KDMPCUL, GCMMF, IRMA, IDMC, and other organizations with the IRMA faculty taking a total of 30 sessions and attending many others.

The main modules covered during the DPMP included the sustainable dairy plant operations, product process development, food-safety quality and the regulatory environment, financial and physical

performance analysis of the dairy cooperative industry, and human resource development.

Over the ten days of DPMP, the participants visited some of the finest dairies in Gujarat to gain insights into their working. These included the Amul Dairy, Banas Dairy, Sumul

Dairy, IDMC and Vidya Dairy.

On the last day of the programme, all the 24 participants presented their key gleanings from the DPMP and committed actions they will take after returning back in their dairies.

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Editor

Endless search

He has walked miles
On this undulating land.
With each sunset, time dies
Across the vast expanse of sand
Each day there is a fight
Between this life and many others
For him who has never known death
The passion to survive grows rather

He stares into nothingness
And keeps walking
Without a tinge of restlessness
His eyes, the green of a shallow lagoon
Still don't reflect weariness
They have seen the copper of the sun, the blue of the moon
The peak of happiness, the depth of sadness

His heart has grown heavy
With the burden of diverse emotions
That have been bartered during his journey
Rest in a deep dark corner.
Entwined, yet in isolation.

His life is a journey of perpetual change
Unobserved, not noticed for ages.
Unless significant, like the shapes of mountains
The course of rivers, or the sinking of islands.

Someday he will stop walking
Only to take a look back in time
To see what all changed and what didn't
And all the actors who have been a part of this mime

No one knows the next reaction
Smile, tears or stoic he may remain
Or a sudden outburst of all the emotions
That had been camouflaged under the blood and veins

All this while he kept searching for love
Hoping to find it in a living entity, a mass draped in skin
Only to realize he was never meant to confide it in one
It is rather spread across millions who shall forever keep smiling.

*By: Shruti Kapoor
(PRM 33)*

Email: kapoorshruti55@gmail.com

The poet is Assistant Program Leader at SM Sehgal Foundation

Hope

She looks up as she breaks stones
and lines the wall
with cement that splits her fingers
once nimble with the ladle.
The sky appears taut
like a blanket
relentless and orange
Sans clouds growling
with thunder and rain.

“Daydreaming again!”
The roar of the overseer
Remains unheard,
Blending with the
argot of bricks and mortar,
the titter of female labour
and cries of their children.

Her own son,
barely ten years' of age
bakes under the sun
his head keeling under
the weight of bricks.

He looks a replica
of her husband
lying drunk
in a gutter
in the village.

Perhaps the rain gods
will be merciful this year,
perhaps this year
the fields will bloom
Perhaps...

*By: Indrani Talukdar
Email: indrani@irma.ac.in*

Beyond perceptions

A book with rare insights into the soul

Reading the book *Silent Messages for Soul Searching* is almost like a travelogue into self-reflection and introspection. The author of this marvellous odyssey, Dr. CN Narayana, is a management thinker and researcher, and allows the reader to gently connect with the soul while carefully presenting the context, architecture, and personalities that make up this unique and ultimate pearl of wisdom. It would be no hyperbole to state that I have never encountered any book on spirituality that purveys wisdom with such compelling readability. It conveys a perennial philosophy that is both

scientific and practical. It is up to the reader to walk through the plush sands of prudence leaving day-to-day struggles and challenges on the wayside. The book helps one to understand the true meaning of the phenomenon called life. Topics cover the awakening the soul, various nuances of nirvana, and the material world with sensitivity and warmth.

One measure of gauging a book's success is the extent of its life changing quality. And I have to say that this book has changed some of the ways in which I live my life by giving given me support, encouragement, and insight to pursue real transformation

Silent Messages For Soul Searching



by :
Dr. C.N. Narayana

It conveys a perennial philosophy that is both scientific and practical. It is up to the reader to walk through the plush sands of prudence leaving day-to-day struggles and challenges on the wayside. The book helps one to understand the true meaning of the phenomenon called life. Topics cover the awakening the soul, various nuances of nirvana, and the material world with sensitivity and warmth.

with courage. I feel confident enough to state that if everybody were to read just one half of the book, they would come away enlightened and rejuvenated. Such pearls of wisdom can only serve to lessen the tension and venomosity prevalent in today's world. The thought that trouble-torn places like Nigeria, Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan can finally find peace – that peace can actually descend on this world like a healing blanket – is an overwhelming one. Dr. Narayana captures the essence of his purpose of creating the book when he writes "beyond perceptions and imaginations, let it go."

Silent messages... happens to be one of those rare works that seem to speak to the reader personally. Speaking for myself, whenever I had an issue that needed to be addressed at the personal level I seemed to find an answer in the very next paragraph or after a few paragraphs. It was almost eerie! I wish that everybody

Silent messages... happens to be one of those rare works that seem to speak to the reader personally. Speaking for myself, whenever I had an issue that needed to be addressed at the personal level I seemed to find an answer in the very next paragraph or after a few paragraphs.

who has a passion for personal transformation read this book. I also acknowledge the fact that this is a book that I will read again and again over the years to get something new out of it every time to make me more self-aware and introspective leading self-development and enrichment.

Among the most moving chapters is the one entitled *Dynamic Truth* in which the author describes and interprets the process of celestial transcendence, its development and emergence in life and

philosophy. The book accomplishes its purpose of giving the reader a rich insight into soul searching through various approaches.

A must read, even for the least soulful.

By: Rachana Sharma
Email: rachanasharma0203@gmail.com
(The author is an Assistant Professor in HR for Kirloskar Institute for Advanced Management Studies, Karnataka)



The answer is blowin' in the wind

*"Yadyadacaratisresthas tat tad evetarojanah
Sa yatpramanamkurutelokas tad anuvartate"*

A staff member fondly recalls her three-and-a-half long sojourn at IRMA before bidding a final adieu.

As I begin to pack my bags and dust my table I cannot help recalling the immortal words of the *Bhagavad Gita*, which translates as: "Whatever noble persons do, others follow. Whatever standard they set up, the world follows..."

I know my time is up at IRMA. Thirty-five years... a long time. Today, I can say with utmost certainty that the norms set by IRMA in the Rural Management chapter are a result of the deeds performed by noble persons.

Inception

Today, I am proud to state that I was among the lucky few who joined IRMA during its formative years in 1979. The stewardship of its founding father Dr. Verghese Kurien and the mentoring provided by Dr Kamala Chowdhary and Leela Dube has stayed with me. I was one among the elite batch of employees who toiled hard to provide the impetus for IRMA to spread its wings. Each day brought with it new challenges but the amity between the staff

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always ensured that the work was done on time and with integrity. The discipline and punctuality demanded by my superiors taught me to value time, something that I still cherish and apply in my everyday life.

Arcadia

One of the many things that I am sure to miss are the lush green lawns, the beautiful flowers carpeting the roads of the campus, the peacocks that dance to the tune of the rain and my morning walks through this jade-like haven. I remember a conversation between one of the dignitaries, having insisted on staying

at the campus guest house, had asked Dr. Kurien the secret behind the lush green lawns of IRMA, to which the latter had instantly replied in his inimitable style: "I nourish it with milk!"

The torch bearers

Working under a legend like Dr. Kurien was an honour for any employee because of the lessons one could learn from him with regard to integrity, punctuality, and discipline. These values percolated from top down allowing the organization

to blossom into one of the best institutions of the country.

My over three-decade long association with IRMA has been replete with opportunities for interacting with the country's future leaders. Our alumni roll call is studded with names that have made examples out of their lives. I have often asked myself what it is that makes IRMA stand out differently as a management institute. The answer, as in the Bob Dylan song, "... is blowin' in the

wind..." Alumni who come back to visit IRMA never fail to reiterate their commitment to the social values nourished by their teachers. They never fail to mention the knowledge gleaned from them that was strongly imbued with humility.

Dreamers

A memory from a convocation-related event stands out till today. The chief guest was Sam Pitroda that year. In his address he said: "In order to get things done you have to be a bit mad..." And then pointing towards Dr. Kurien, he'd continued, "You have an example in front of you of a man who came with a dream – a bit mad – and today we are all reaping the benefits of his vision, his ideas. We don't have to agree with him on everything or admire every little

thing he does but the fact remains that what he has created is a dream that we all like to share. We need more and more people like him to create more dreams for our people."

It is this inspiration to dream and succeed that enables me to cherish every moment of my work and personal life. It's this vision that I share with my son (and now with my grandson) that it's never a crime to dream, to have ideas and perseverance to succeed.

Abode of Joy

One of the joys of motherhood is watching one's children grow and mature into good human beings. In the early 80s we were a fleet of women working like clockwork at IRMA, putting in our heart and soul into its growth. It was difficult to find good schools for our little ones in a town that still developing. Our children had to travel far from their homes to study at good schools. It was then that Anandalaya was launched with the aim of providing quality education to the children of employees of IRMA, NDBB, and other sister organizations. Thinking back to those times I feel that it all fits like a jigsaw puzzle. When I joined IRMA I had been advised by my superiors that all I needed to do was to focus on my work and that rest would be taken care of. I now

realize that the thorns were ejected to make our lives easier.

Wings of Flight

Today I have reached the final destination of the journey on which I had embarked 35 years ago. It was a journey during which I had seen my life change; people arrived and departed from the stage while a few left indelible impressions on me. Watching IRMA mature I now realize, it may have been a single person who "too had a dream" but

his vision lives on in the hearts of millions.

I am taking with me the strong bonds of friendship that I have nurtured in all these years. Here is wishing the organization and all my colleagues goodbye and the very best for the future.

*By: Padmini Unnikrishnan
Email:padminiunnikrishnan@gmail.com*

IRMA MDPs (July-September, 2015)

S. No.	Title of MDP	Dates	Coordinator (s)
1	Transformational Leadership and Managing Change	July 16-17, 2015	Girish Kumar Agrawal Vijay Menon
2	Logistics Approach to Supply Chain Management	July 22-24, 2015	Durga Prasad MV
3	Brain Mapping-Using the whole brain	July 29, 2015	Anish Baneti
4	Financial Modeling	July 29-31, 2015	Paresh J Bhatt Asmita H Vyas Rakesh Ramesh Arravatia
5	Power of Emotional Intelligence in Action: Development and Application	July 30-August 01, 2015	Asmita H vyas Vipul Vyas
6	Personal Empowerment and Interpersonal Effectiveness	August 5-6, 2015	Girish Kumar Agrawal Vijay Menon
7	Statistical Quality Control	August 10-12, 2015	Monark Bag
8	Rural Livelihoods and Poverty Alleviation	August 17-21, 2015	Mukul Kumar
9	Optimization in Business Situations	August 19-20, 2015	Rishi Sanwal
10	Practical Answers to Poverty: Marketing of Rural Products	September 1-4, 2015	Preeti Priya
11	Contemporary Developments in the Field of Finance and Accounting	September 8-11, 2015	Paresh J Bhatt Asmita H Vyas Rakesh Ramesh Arravatia
12	Comprehensive Project Management-From Need Identification to Project Financing	September 14-19, 2015	Hitesh V Bhatt Rakesh Ramesh Arravatia
13	International Management Appreciation Program for Voluntary Agencies (VOLAG-MAP)	September 28-October 23, 2015	Nivedita Kothiyal Shyam Singh
14	General Management Program	September 28-October 17, 2015	Hitesh V Bhatt

100 percent Placements at IRMA: Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Management 2013-15 batch

The placement week for the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA) was scheduled during February 2-7, 2015. As always, placement was 100 percent at IRMA, even with the batch size at IRMA of its Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Management (PGDRM) having grown from 117 students to 157 students this year.



The placement process concluded with 276 jobs offered by 84 recruiters for a batch of 157 students. While 12 students accepted the pre-placement offers made to them during their internship phase, one was a sponsored candidate and two students opted out of the placement programme.

The Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) came up with the largest number of job offers, a total of 15, like the previous year. The other single largest recruiter was Escorts Agri Machinery in the agricultural and rural marketing sector with 12 recruitments. They were followed by the State Bank of India, Agri/Rural Business division, taking 10 students, in the agri-finance and micro finance sectors. In the government development sector, the Rajasthan Grameen Ajeevika Vikas Parishad, a new recruiter, topped the list by selecting 11 students.

This year's placements laid emphasis on financial inclusion and revival of the Micro Finance sector as Agri-finance and Microfinance sector emerged as the biggest recruiters with about 1/3rd of the graduating batch joining the sector. Along with earlier recruiters such as Yes Bank and SBI, some of the new recruiters in the sector included names like the IndusInd Bank, Janalakshmi Financial Services, Light Microfinance and, Vistaar Financial Services among others.

Eight Non-Government Development Organizations also selected students for final placements. These included organizations like the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme, Bharat Rural Livelihoods Foundation, Building and Enabling Disaster Resilience of Coastal Communities (BEDROC), to name a few.

The social entrepreneurship sector emerged as a promising one with five organizations recruiting 12 students, which was more than twice the proportion of the batch joining this sector in 2014.

The average salary of the current batch was over Rs. 8.2 lakh per annum, about 8 per cent higher than the previous year's. The maximum salary for the batch stood at 15.5 lakhs. As always, IRMA's students adhered to the maxim of serving one's calling as opposed to running after tangible gains.

IRMA News

Recent Faculty additions to the IRMA Family

Dr. Rakesh Arrawatia is an Assistant Professor in the Finance and Accounting Area at IRMA. He holds a PhD from IIT, Kharagpur and prior to joining IRMA, he worked with IMT, Ghaziabad. He is an engineer from NIT, Surat and MBA with over five years' experience. He was associated with a prestigious e-Governance project floated under the National e-Governance Plan. He has undertaken consulting assignments with a start-up and an organization in the e-Governance domain. Dr. Arrawatia has also worked with IIM, Bangalore as Research Associate and was associated with the Centre for Public Policy on a research project. Broadly speaking, his areas of research include Banking Competition and Performance, Banking Risk and Financial Inclusion.

Bidding Adieu

Professor Ila Patel superannuated on 19th February, 2015 after a stint of 20 years. During her tenure she contributed to courses like Adult Literacy and Development Gender Equity in Education Information and Communication Technology and Development Communication for Development and Social Change Corporate Social Responsibility and Development. She also coordinated several Management Development Programmes (MDPs) on diverse themes such as, public advocacy, managerial communication, information and communication technology and development, and gender in development practice, gender and organisations, corporate social responsibility and community development, and rural development through dairy cooperatives. Network wishes her a happy retirement life!

Ms. Prabhavathy Sankaran (Executive PRM) and Mr. Ratilal (TAU) superannuated during this quarter after a stint lasting over three decades. Network wishes them a happy retirement life!

Faculty Publications

Kumar Mukul (2015), “Erstwhile villages in urban India”, *Development in Practice*, 25(1): 124-132. DOI: 10.1080/09614524.2015.986066.

Singh, PK and Nair, A (2014) “Livelihood vulnerability assessment to climate variability and change using a fuzzy cognitive mapping approach” *Climatic Change*, 127:475-491. DOI: 10.1007/s10584-014-1275-0, ISSN 0165-0009 (Print) 1573-1480 (Online), Impact factor 4.64

Journal Paper

Bhatt, Paresh, “Managing Constraints: The Prudence of Management”, *International Journal of Entrepreneurship & Business Environment Perspectives (Pezzottaite Journals)*, V4N1-23, ISSN: 2279-0918 (PRINT) ISSN: 2279-0926 (ONLINE).

Bhatt, Paresh, “Costing of artificial insemination in India: A methodological approach”, *Madras University Journal of Business and Finance*, Volume 3, No. 1, ISSN: 2320 – 5857.

Suratia C; Singh, PK and Chudasama H (2015) “Impacts of temperature variability on rural livelihoods in Kangra, Himachal Pradesh” in: *Socio-Ecological Aspects of Development and Climate Change*, Ed. Slariya MK and Jha P, Scholar’s Press, Germany, pp 263-280, ISBN 978-3-63976206

Case Study

Pankaj K. Mohanty and S.R. Asokan, “Social Enterprise and Its Challenges: A case Study of SELCO India”, *Eleventh Biennial Conference on Entrepreneurship* conducted by EDI Ahmedabad on Feb 18-20.

Article /Conference/Seminar

H.S. Shylendra (2015) ‘Fourteenth Finance Commission and Local Governments: One Step Forward and Two Steps Back?’ Blog Article on IRMA Grameen Gyan Kosh at <http://www.gyk-irma.in/discussionforum/blogdetail.php?id=12>

Prof. H.S. Shylendra (2015) made a presentation on ‘Strengthening Linkages Between National Service Scheme (NSS) and Community Development’ in the National seminar on Role of NSS in Nation Building: Scope and Challenges held during 5-6 March 2015 at North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong.

Prof. Jeemol Unni attended a GAP Summit as a partner organization and catalyst organized by the Global Action on Poverty (GAP) held at Ahmedabad on March 12, 2015.

Prof. Jeemol Unni delivered the fifth edition of the Leadership Wisdom Talk on “The Changing Contours of Rural India” at the Kerala Agricultural University, Vellanikkara, Thrissur on March 17, 2015.

Other Engagements

Prof. Hitesh Bhatt helped NDDB design and facilitate the maiden - one month long ‘Dairy Plant Management Programme’ (DPMP) for officers from various cooperative dairies from all over India. This was from mid February to mid March.

Prof. HS Shylendra was nominated as external referee for Ph.D Thesis in Economics, SJSOM, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay , March 2015.

Prof. Jeemol Unni participated at the “Round Table on Women’s Economic Empowerment” hosted by Ambassador Catherine Russell, President Obama’s Special Representative for Global Women’s Issues. John Kerry, Secretary of the State, USA, joined the Roundtable discussions. The Roundtable was organised by the American Consulate, Mumbai, at Sabarmati Ashram on January 10, 2015.

Prof. Madhavi Mehta was appointed as an expert Director on the Board of Maahi Milk Producers’ Company Ltd. with effect from January 2015.

Prof. Rakesh Saxena delivered a special lecture on “*Green Growth and Environmental Performance in India*” during the National Seminar on “*Environmental Sustainability, Social Well Being and Economic Growth: Exploring the Linkages*” organized by Centre for Research in Planning and Development, Department of Economics, MS University of Baroda during February 27-28, 2015.

Prof. Rakesh Saxena chaired a session on “*Agriculture and Natural Resource Management*” during the National Seminar on “*Environmental Sustainability, Social Well Being and Economic Growth: Exploring*

the Linkages” organized by the Centre for Research in Planning and Development, Department of Economics, MS University of Baroda during 27-28 February, 2015.

Prof. Vivek Pandey was invited as guest speaker at the Initiatives for Construction Safety Awareness (ICONSA-15), organized by IIT Kanpur and Meyer-Lawson School for Construction, USA on 21st and 22nd March 2015 at IIT Delhi. He delivered a speech on the topic “Effects of Socio Economic Conditions on Worker’s Attitude towards Safety”.

IRMA Seminars

Dr. David J. O’Brien Professor and Chair, Department of Rural Sociology, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri, USA, gave a presentation on “Diagnostic Tools to Measure Smallholder Engagement in Cooperatives’ Goals and Strategies” on January 09.

Dr. Rebecka Arman Assistant Professor, (Organization Theory and Management), School of Business, University of Gothenburg, Sweden, “Commercialization of Life Sciences – the case of IVF-clinics in Sweden, Europe on January 12.

Dr. Sankar Datta (first batch alumnus of IRMA), “What Ails Producer Collectives?” on February 27.

FPRM Doctoral Colloquium

Nilamadhab Mohanty, “Persuasiveness of Gain versus Loss Framing: Reconciling the Role of Perceived Risk and Prior Experience”, February, 18.

Visitors to IRMA

In the past quarter IRMA received around 250 visitors from various walks of life. A majority of the visits were by students of higher education. This included visitors from Lokmangal College of Agriculture, Solapur (15 students and 3 faculty members), University of Horticultural Sciences Bagalkot, Kolar (55 students and 3 faculty members), Rajiv Gandhi University of Cooperative Management, Assam (30 students and 1 faculty member), Office of Principal Dairy Science Institute Aarey, Goregaon, Mumbai (25 students and 2 faculty members), Atmiya College, Rajkot(60 students and 3 faculty members) and SIES college, Mumbai (40 Students and 2 faculty members). Mr. Nagesh Alai, Chairman, FCBULKA, Mumbai, 7 farmers from Gurudaspur, Punjab, Ms. Sruthi, Journalist from New York, and a five-member delegation from Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad.

IRMA Working Paper

IRMA working paper can be downloaded for free from:

(<https://www.irma.ac.in/ipublications/publication.php?cid=2>)

Vivek Pandey and Feler Bose, “Don’t let a serious crisis go to waste: Exploring linkages between environmental policy making and environmental incidents”, Working Paper No.266

H.S. Shylendra, “Regenerating forests through people’s participation: How far has the joint forest management (JFM) worked?”, Working Paper No.267.

Vivek Pandey and R. Brent Ross, “Sustainability And Strategy In Global Agri-Food Firms: An Assessment Of Current Practices”, Working Paper No.268.

PARESH J BHATT, “Artificial insemination of bovine and milk production: challenge of cost-effectiveness in India”, Working Paper No.269.

Girish K Agrawal, “CSR-CFP relationship in India - an idiosyncratic pestel context and research agenda”, Working Paper No.270.

Girish K Agrawal, “Business group affiliation advantage: policy favours, market imperfections and internal capital market”, working paper No.271.

On-Campus MDPs (January – March 2015)

Sr. No.	Title of the Programme	Dates	Co-ordinator(s)
1	Financial Control in Non-Profit Organizations	Jan 6-9, 2015	Paresh J. Bhatt Asmita H. Vyas Rakesh Arrawatia
*2	<i>Seminar on Rural Marketing</i>	Jan 7, 2015	Pratik Modi Preeti Priya
3	Communication for Effective Management	Jan 7-9, 2015	Hitesh Bhatt
4	General Management Programme (GMP)	Jan 19 – Feb 7, 2015	Hitesh Bhatt
5	Strategic Inventory Management	Jan 21-22, 2015	Rishi Sanwal
*6	<i>Livelihood Enhancement and Micro-Enterprise Development through Community Participation</i>	Feb 9-13, 2015	Pramod K. Singh
7	Finance for Non-Finance Executives	Feb 10-13, 2015	Paresh J. Bhatt Asmita H. Vyas Rakesh Arrawatia
8	Project Management	Feb 24 - 27, 2015	Prof. Hitesh Bhatt
9*	General Management Development Programme	Mar 1-7, 2015	Prof. Hitesh Bhatt
10	Developing Leadership Skills	Mar 23 - 26, 2015	Prof. Madhavi Mehta
11	Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods	Mar 26 - 28, 2015	Prof. Shyam Singh Prof. Vivek Pandey

* Sponsored Programme

Off-Campus MDps (January – March 2015)

Sr. No.	Title of the Programme	Dates	Co-ordinator(s)	Host
1	Project Management and Team Building	Dec 27, 2014 – Jan 1, 2015	Prof. Hitesh Bhatt Prof. SN Biswas	Foundation for Ecological Security
2	Statistical Process Control & Quality Management	Feb 11-14, 2015	Prof. Hitesh Bhatt	Vidya Dairy