

Personal Profile

Samar J. Singh,

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Personal Statement

I returned to India in 1997/98 after spending 25 years in academia in Hong Kong. During that time, my work was focused on simulation, technological development, studies in cognitive engineering, research into accidents, and chairing various professional organizations. That experience, when complemented with the findings of recent research in the field of neuroscience, made it obvious that much can be done to enhance the quality of education in our country.

I first set up Vidyashilp Academy in Bangalore with a colleague in 1998 where the beginnings of Howard Gardner's theories began to be practiced - but aided by technology. The technology aspect was designed to aid the scalability of learning processes. I believe we can provide a scalable, measurable, effective and affordable mechanism which can satisfy the needs of thousands of schools.

In the period from 2000 when I parted ways with Vidyashilp, I toured the country working with children in difficult circumstances in Tamil Nadu, Kashmir, Rajasthan, Delhi and Maharashtra as part of a DFID funded HIV project overseen by representatives from DFID, NACO and the United Nations Commission for AIDS. With my colleague we developed the role of Social Equity Audits for NGO's, and conducted an evaluation of a Child Rights project in Vietnam, in addition to preparing projects ranging from the reduction of MMR and IMR in Madhya Pradesh to Child Rights in Burkina Faso. I also worked with Janaagraha where we developed courses and extended the Balajanaagraha program to 40 schools in Bangalore in some of which I taught young children the concepts of democracy within local government. I assisted in the creation and delivery of the Citizens Awareness Program and worked on the submission to the Administrative Reforms Commission. For several years, I visited many international schools in different parts of the country to monitor their conformance with the standards of the University of Cambridge International Examinations. My association with Janaagraha continued till about 2013 with work on Systems Dynamics approaches for creating indices for Quality of Life indicators.

In Nov. 2007, I was invited to take over an unusual school which found itself in unusual circumstances through the previous director ostensibly running off with the fees. We restored the school as a legal entity, and got accreditation from University of Cambridge International Examinations. After a visit to Boston, we secured a working relationship with the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and contracted to run the Mind, Brain and Education Institute with them in India for the first time. Concurrently we were being reviewed to become HGSE's first Research School outside the United States. We developed unique technologies for sophisticated feedback in real time in the classroom and had a unique set of staff from many countries. This included 4 PhD's and 2 doctoral students. Following the economic meltdown of 2008, the investors withdrew support and I ceased operations at the school in December, 2008..

A valuable realization that ensued was that running a school is a full time job and does not leave enough time to provide the value addition that my team and I are best placed to do. We therefore decided to conduct a **Pilot program** to exhaustively evaluate the efficacy of our methods with some of the weakest students available. That has been an outstanding experience and the increment in performance the students have shown has surpassed our highest expectations. More recently I have assisted Mr. Alden Blodget to produce a **book** made available free online to assist those in the education field to understand the value of neuroscience in education.

Currently, I am also looking at the feasibility of using Heart Rate Variability as a mechanism for providing an economical way for providing early warning of immune system failure - primary heart disease and cancer - to village populations. I am also looking forward to using these methods in schools for monitoring and improving mental and physical health. I am currently working with children and adults on the ASD spectrum to find solutions and measure their efficacy.

Bio-data

Name Samar J. Singh

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Qualifications

Academic • M.Phil (HKU), 1989

- Ph.D (Wales), 1995.

Professional • Extra Master Certificate of Competency (UK), 1977

Appointments

Appointments 1997-2016

- Consultant, FutureTV (1997)
- Academic Director (Hon), Vidyashilp Academy, Bangalore (1998-2000)
- Director (Education), Innomedia Technologies Ltd., Bangalore (1998-99)
- Consultant, Singapore Polytechnic (1999-2001)
- Consultant, School of Public Health, Boston University, U.S.A. (1999)
- Consultant, Kalmar University, Kalmar, Sweden (2000)
- Consultant, Advanced Research Institute, New Delhi (2000- 2001)
- Consultant, Commonwealth Secretariat on deputation to Min. of Transport and Civil Aviation, Maldives. (Aug. - Nov., 2001)
- External Expert for DSIR (Govt. of India) grants, Ministry of Science and Technology (1999 - 2003)
- Consultant, Tolani Maritime Institute, India, to advise on productivity initiatives. (May 2003)
- Consultant, CLI3L, Bangalore, to advise on productivity in Call Center Management. (February - April, 2004)

- Consultant, Cambridge University International Examinations (2005- 2008)
- Consultant, Waves Communication (2005-2009)
- Consultant, Plan International - Evaluation Projects in Vietnam (2006)
- Coordinator, Research - Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy (2006-2007)
- Director, Trio World School, November 2007 - December 2008.
- Research Director, Prafull Oorja, 2016-Present.

University Appointments (1972-97)

- Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, Principal Lecturer(Final Appointment)

Professional Appointments

- Member, Editorial Board, WMU Journal of Maritime Affairs (till 2008)
- Chairman, International Navigation Simulator Lecturers Conference (1996-2000)
- Visiting Professor, Shanghai Maritime University (1996 - 1999)
- Chairman, IMLA Sub-Committee on IMO (1994-1998)
- Chairman, International Maritime Lecturer's Association (IMLA) (1990-1994)
- Visiting Professor, World Maritime University (1983-1993)
- Asia Pacific Visiting Fellow, Asia Pacific Maritime Centre, Tasmania. (1992)
- Member, Chartered Institute of Transport and Member of HK Section Committee.(1979-1981)

Patent Filing

- British Patent Application (Personal): Display of Radar Echoes. This application was filed in March, 1980 and concerned the provision of the Sector Based Decision Support Mechanism for decision making. Not taken beyond preliminary application.
- International Application (Innomedia Group) No. PCT/IN99/00017 on 18 May, 1999 for Interactive Participation System for Audience. Status not known after takeover by Reliance.
- International Application (Innomedia Group) No. PCT/IN99/00018 on 18 May, 1999 for A Cable Head End Based Interactive Media Education System. Status not known after takeover by Reliance.
- conducted and reported on an evaluation of the Young Media Club project in Vietnam for Plan Vietnam which involved interviewing more than a hundred children and officials in one Vietnamese province (Hue) as well as Hanoi.
- created design studies for projects to further the requirements of the International Convention for the Rights of the Child for
 - Plan Vietnam
 - Plan's Region of South and East Africa
 - Burkina Faso.

Additionally,

- prepared a proposal for the Govt. of Madhya Pradesh and DFID on the reduction of Maternal Mortality Rate and Infant Mortality Rate (Nov 2005)
- generated a 36 month report on progress on Plan's tsunami project in Sri Lanka, India, Thailand and Indonesia on the basis of observations in the field in November, 2007.
- coordinated as consultant to the University of Cambridge International Examinations, feedback on the content of CIE's India Studies course with Mr. Gurcharan Das, Prof. Raji Sunderrajan, and Ms. Swati Ramanathan (August, 2007)

On the technical front,

- led the development of multiple generations of infra red and radio frequency wireless hand held devices for capture of student feedback.
- researched a methodology for the effective measurement of student understanding and teacher delivery to integrate with electronic capture of feedback.

On the Janaagraha front:

- participated in the design of the Balajanaagraha course offered in about 40 schools in Bangalore. This included lecturing in locations varying from schools in slums to convents.
- participated in the design of the Citizens Awareness Program offered to Corporates in Bangalore. This included presentations to companies like Accenture.

Research

Obtained about USD 3 million in research grants in Hong Kong, Singapore and India from Governments, HK University Grants Commission (Hong Kong), HKPU and industrial sources during a 25 year academic career. Developed various methodologies and technologies for enhancement and quality assurance of the learning process. More than 40 papers, edited Proceedings, and research reports, chapters in Edited Books, and technical reports available on request.

As a consultant to Waves Communication, I have in concert with the Proprietor, Waves Communication:

- designed and helped to implement the DFID funded HAAP project whose prime deliverables were a HAAP kit including reports of surveys conducted with over 200 children in the 5 worst affected HIV/AIDS states in India, a film to create awareness of stigma and discrimination and a film to create awareness of the mechanisms of HIV. (<http://www.planindia.org/haaproject/index.aspx>)
- developed the Plan funded Social Equity Audit project which was implemented in Nagapattinam with Tsunami affected children over 3 years with the model developed being tested with the earthquake affected children in Kashmir. (<http://www.picturesforlife.org/>)

- development of system dynamics tools for decision processes in education and community settings (current)

All reports and deliverables available on request.

Education

Industrial Training HK Polytechnic University:

A wide variety of tailor made courses developed for simulator based exploratory learning for participants from various sectors of the maritime industry.

Shanghai Maritime University: Lectures to various undergraduate and graduate students at Shanghai Maritime University in the capacity of Visiting Professor (1996-1999)

Mass. Inst. of Tech.(MIT), Cambridge, USA:

One Seminar for graduating MSc class in Ocean Engineering, on the subject of Investigating the Feasibility of a Tanker Environmental Index, March, 1996.

Maritime Research Methodology: Lectures for students on the BSc(Hons) in Maritime Technology and Management at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in the mid 90's.

World Maritime University, Malmoe, Sweden:

For the ten years of WMU's life, conducted one or two week sessions once or sometimes twice a year, in subjects varying from Simulator Systems to Microcomputer Technology in Maritime Education to the Engineering and Nautical students on the MSc in Maritime Education.(1983-1993)

Dept. of Geog. and Geol., Hong Kong Uni.:

Occasional Lectures to final year students on Honours Degree and one seminar annually for students of M.A. in Transport Studies.

International Maritime Organization: Courses for Pan African Instructor Group in Casablanca, Morocco in 1998 and Courses for Pan Asian Instructor Groups at Dalian Maritime University in 1986 and 1991. Represented the maritime education sector at IMO as Chairman of the the International Maritime Lecturer's Association (IMLA) after securing Consultative Status for IMLA during the currency of my term as Chairman.

Director (Academic), Vidyashilp Academy:

Designed and implemented Vidyashilp Academy from 1998 to 2000 - inception to full operation including academic management, training of teachers and implementing two generations of feedback technology for the classroom.

Director, Trio World School: Took over this school after the founder departed suddenly in November, 2007 and restored it to a point where the school was awarded CIE accreditation within 3 months. We began collaborating with Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, University of Bergen, and several other schools in the neighbourhood. We commenced the implementation of a new methodology for delivery and evaluation in the classroom and were due to commence planning the MBE Institute in collaboration with Harvard University's PPE and HGSE for end January, 2009. We were also pursuing collaboration with Harvard University for Trio to become potentially the first research school outside the United States for the Harvard Graduate School of Education when the owners withdrew support following the global meltdown.