

Life and Work of a Social Psychologist in India: 1945-Present



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Background

I was born in an agrarian family of the Village Balara in the District of Sarlahi in Nepal on May 16, 1945. I am the first formally educated member of that family. During my high school years (Shree Shankar High School, Marpasirpal, Via: Basbitta, District: Sitamarhi, Bihar, India: 1958-1961), I aspired to pursue my initial study in psychology in India and the advanced study in the United States of America. The elderly villagers cautioned my father that I might remain unemployed after my university degree in psychology as the major and philosophy as the minor. Nevertheless, my parents supported my choice of study.

I earned my BA Honors (1965) and MA (1968, Gold medalist) degrees in experimental psychology in the first-class from the University of Bihar at Muzaffarpur, India, and MS (1972) and PhD (1973) degrees in personality and social psychology from Purdue University, USA, within a short period of three years (1970-73). For the master's degrees, I had received the Post-graduate Merit Scholarship at the University of Bihar (1965-67) and the Fulbright-Hays Scholarship at Purdue University (1970-72).

Prior to the completion of my doctoral dissertation on [interpersonal attraction](#), I received a letter from my advisor and the world-renowned personality and social psychologist Donn Byrne: *"If your behavior were the mode instead of the exception, we would have a tremendous program"* (February 8, 1973). Even before my PhD degree from Purdue University, Byrne recommended to the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur to offer me a faculty position in psychology. To my pleasant surprise, I received an offer of assistant professorship from IIT Kanpur on April 4, 1973, right on the day I

defended my dissertation at Purdue. When I was to return India, Donn Byrne wrote another letter: *"We're glad that you came to Purdue, and we expect to follow your future career with pride"* (July 3, 1973).

In hindsight I now believe that for a scientist's sustained productivity the roles of teachers, mentors, students, and collaborators are as important as are his or her own intrinsic motivations for academic quests. The fairness that Azimur Rahman, the former professor at Langat Singh College, demonstrated in evaluating my exam papers at both the bachelor and master's levels; the encouraging letters from Donn Byrne from time to time; the guidance from Jai B. P. Sinha, the former professor of social psychology at A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna; and the support that came from my bosses and/or seniors in India (e.g., Pankaj Chandra, I G Patel, Udai Pareek, Kamta Prasad, Rajendra Prasad, Narayan Sheth, Vijay Shankar Vyas) and Singapore (e.g., Lim Pin, Edwin Thumboo, S Vasoo) collectively transformed me into whatsoever I am today.

To acknowledge the importance of research collaborators (e.g., William Self, Philip Tetlock, Duane Wegener) is to stress the obvious. In fact, I re-equipped myself with new knowledge and skills required for 21st century research in psychological sciences during the 2008 sabbatical in the Laboratory of then-Purdue professor Duane Wegener.¹ Therefore, I agree with Kulbhusan Balooni, director of IIM Kashipur, who noted, *"... the continuing success of Singh in international publications may have been also because of his tapping of international collaboration in producing superior recent research through better teamwork"* (2017, p. 141).

Recognition and Honors

In recognition of my original contributions to psychological sciences, I was elected as a fellow of five international bodies, including *American Psychological Association, Association for Psychological Science (APS), British Psychological Society, Singapore Psychological Society, and Society for*

¹ American psychologists Kristopher Preacher and Andrew Hayes had already initiated me to mediation analyses through emails in the early 2000. Hadn't they taught me to perform mediation analyses, I might have stopped publishing articles in this century or even going on sabbatical in 2008. I salute them for their contributions to my sustained productivity.

Personality and Social Psychology in the early 1990s. In 2008, the *National Academy of Psychology (India)* also welcomed me as an international fellow.

Fulfilling Donn Byrne's (1973) expectation, I received the [Purdue University Distinguished Alumni Award in Psychological Sciences](#) for my achievements in social psychology and management on March 25, 2022. I had earlier received the *Psychology National Award* from S P Trust of Psychology in India (1990), the *Inspiring Mentor Award* from NUS in Singapore (2009), and the [Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Research](#) from IIM Indore in India (2021). The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Kanpur established the [Prabha and Ramadhar Singh Distinguished Lecture in Psychology](#) in January 2022 to annually celebrate my contributions to the advancement of psychology and management. As of today, I am the only resident psychologist from India included among the [Faces and Minds of Psychological Science](#), a website of influential psychologists worldwide developed and maintained by APS, Washington, DC, USA.

Scientific Contributions

I conducted experimental research at the levels of the **individual** (*decision making, impression formation, and interpersonal attraction*), the **group** (*age-related changes and intergroup relations*), the **organization** (*diversity, job satisfaction, leadership effectiveness, prediction of performance, and reward allocation*), and the **society** (*cross-cultural differences, justice and fairness, intuitive prosecution, and prediction of donation*). Most of my research articles are published in international journals of psychology and management. My articles and chapters have also been [cited in](#) (1) **textbooks** on *industrial and organizational psychology, management, organizational behavior, psychology, and social psychology*; (2) **books** on *communication, human resource management, law, marketing, organizational behavior, political science, and public policy*; and (3) **handbooks** on *industrial and organizational psychology, leadership, and social psychology*, and (4) **journals** on *animal husbandry, biology, communication, economics, finance, law, marketing, physics, physiology, political science, psychology, social work, and sociology*.

Through my research, I made applied, methodological, and theoretical contributions to cross-cultural, developmental, organizational, personality, and social psychology. These accomplishments came from my applying, extending,

and/or modifying three well-known research paradigms, namely, the *attraction paradigm* of Donn Byrne, the *information integration theory* of Norman Anderson, and the *social-functional models* of Philip Tetlock to the topics mentioned above. My analytic “toys” (i.e., methods of data analyses) over the decades were analysis of variance (ANOVA), monotone analysis of variance (MONANOVA), and regression-based PROCESS models. My participant populations ranged from children and managers in Asia to university students from several countries. I always paid careful attention to the adequacy of an experimental design for supporting my proposed hypothesis but refuting the competing ones from the same set of data. Further, I never lost sight of the potential cultural and developmental differences in a phenomenon (i.e., moderators of a causal relation). Consequently, I could come up with findings as outlined below.

Attraction Paradigm

In the attraction paradigm, my NUS undergraduate students and I first demonstrated that similar attitudes lead to attraction, but dissimilar attitudes produce repulsion. More important, the dissimilarity-repulsion effect is often stronger than the similarity-attraction one, the *similarity-dissimilarity asymmetry*. We demonstrated such asymmetry by using a [control condition of no-information](#) as well as by crossing dissimilarity *versus* similarity in one set of attitudes with dissimilarity *versus* similarity in another set of attitudes. Our [second method](#) was important because it did not require the control condition of no-information that is often confounded with the person positivity bias toward the stranger. We further found the asymmetry to be happening at the [level of attention](#) to similar *versus* dissimilar attitudes and more so when the participants were cognitively overloaded as people are nowadays than when they were underloaded as in the 1960-70s. Thus, we could explain both the [law of attraction](#) (i.e., a *positive linear relation between proportion of similar attitudes and attraction*) reported until the [1974](#) and the *similarity-dissimilarity asymmetry* reported after 1986. The methods we developed at NUS provided an altogether new interpretation of the classic [warm-cold effect](#) in impression formation and the widely known [in-group bias](#) in intergroup relations as well.

Our other important contribution was an in-depth investigation of the potential mediating variables in the similarity-attraction relation. While the similarity-attraction literature, including my [1973 doctoral research](#) at Purdue,

theorized [positive affect](#) as the sole mediating variable (MV), my collaborators and I first demonstrated that *positive affect*, *validation* of one's attitudes by those of the partner, *respect* for and *inferred attraction* of the partner toward the participant, and *trust* in the partner mediate the similarity-attraction relation when considered by themselves. The anomaly of no mediation by one or more potential MVs arises when these [serial processes](#) (i.e., one MV leading to another) are erroneously construed as [parallel processes](#) (i.e., the MVs as operating independently of each other). Specifically, the more plausible causal order could be the independent variable (IV) of attitude similarity → MVs of validation → positive affect → respect → inferred attraction → trust → the dependent variable (DV) of interpersonal attraction than any other order of MVs considered together. We investigated mediation through both the [measured](#) and [manipulated](#) MVs. In some cases, we experimentally [manipulated the MVs at two times](#) to determine their orders of effectiveness.

The findings from our several articles on attituded-and-attraction converged in showing that there are multiple MVs of the similarity-attraction relation, not just one as was envisaged during the 1970s. Further, attitude similarity triggers each of them, and the preceding MVs do influence the succeeding ones as we had predicted. At the present stage of my attraction research, therefore, validation is the initial process (an MV distal to the DV) and trust is an MV proximal to the DV in the causal chain of five known MVs of the similarity-attraction relation.

Of the five known mediators, not only the two early occurring processes of validation of views and positive affect in the participant but also the last two occurring processes of inferred attraction of and trust in the partner are seemingly *self-serving*. The only exception is the in-between MV of respect for the partner. Such supremacy of the self-serving MVs reminded me of Goswami Tulsidas--a Hindu saint and poet--who wrote in *Ramcharitmanas* almost 500 years ago that it is the goal of serving the *self* that eventually draws Gods, men, and sages to others.²

² “सुर नर मुनि सब कै यह रीति। स्वार्थ लागि करहिं सब प्रीति”। अर्थात देवता, मनुष्य, और मुनि सबकी यह रीति है कि स्वार्थ के लिए ही सब प्रीति करते हैं। [English: God, men and sages all, as a rule, have some selfish motive behind their love (Kishkindha Kand, p. 678).

Information Integration

Human judgment from the given pieces of information encompasses a chain of processes of [valuation, integration, and response production](#). Valuation converts different pieces of information given into their psychological values (i.e., psychophysical function), integration unitizes those subjective values in generating covert responses (i.e., integration function), and response reproduction translates covert responses into the overt ones along the scale of judgment provided (i.e., psychomotor or action function). In my early research within this paradigm at IIT Kanpur, I essentially applied the information integration theory to the resolution of pending issues in [contingency model of leadership effectiveness](#), [equity theory](#) of reward and resource allocation, [expectancy theory](#) of motivation, and [two-factor theory of job satisfaction](#) as well as to new topics of [disciplinary action](#), [playgroup attractiveness](#), and [personal happiness](#) among children that interested me most at that time.

As I continued solving the puzzles in these domains at IIT Kanpur and IIM Ahmedabad, I realized that the covert responses coming from an integration rule of adding, subtracting, multiplying, or dividing might not be necessarily reproduced (or acted upon) linearly along the given judgment scale. That is, the subjective interval responses are simply ranked on the response scaled used. Such discrepancy between the covert and overt responses of the psychomotor function can arise more clearly with participants from cultures wherein feelings and thoughts are rarely expressed in actions than from those wherein thoughts, feelings, and actions go hand in hand. If the psychomotor function is indeed linear, then ANOVAs of both the overt responses and their rescaled values by MONANOVA that presumably converts ranks into subjective interval values should yield the same result. In contrast, any discrepancy between the results from the analyses of the two responses would point toward response distortions and a nonlinear psychomotor or action function.³

As envisaged, I found reward allocations by Indian managers to be along an ordinal scale. They appeared to have considered an outcome as “fair” if the relative position (i.e., rank) of that outcome in the distribution of

³ I am grateful to American psychologists Michael Birnbaum and Colleen (Surber) Moore for suggesting such a possibility and NUS colleague N Sriram for equipping me with the skills to use MONANOVA correctly.

outcomes was the same as the relative position (i.e., rank) of the input in the distribution of inputs as [already reported](#) from studies of College students in the United States. It was easy, therefore, to regard reward allocations by Indians as more consistent with a simpler [difference rule](#) than the widely held complex *proportional rule*. That is, Indian managers ranked the merit of their subordinates while allocating money, praise, resources, and/or [workload](#). Moreover, the first inclination was toward [equality](#) between the two claimants (i.e., Total sum available/2) to which their respective inputs subsequently made correspondingly addition or subtraction.

In [developmental psychology](#), the no, moderate, and large difference between shares of outcome allocated to the high and low performers over increasing ages were taken as reflecting on use of the rules of equality, ordinal equity, and proportional equity, respectively. Moreover, the ability to employ the proportional rule was believed to develop around the early teenage years due to cognitive maturity. In cross-cultural research, in contrast, Asian adults, relative to children, were reported to be making less distinction between the outcome allocated to the high and low performers. That is, allocations by Asian adults appeared to be more consistent with the rule of ordinal equity than that of proportional equity. Such discrepancy from the expected proportional rule with adults unfortunately implied cognitive deficiency of Asians!

My NUS undergraduate students and I delved into the foregoing inconsistency between cultural and developmental differences in reward allocation. In particular, we showed that the [perception of merit](#) does become more precise with age in both the Asian and American participants. Because they perceived the merits as they should have been, the possibility of any cultural difference in cognitive capacity (i.e., integration function) seemed rather untenable. At the same time, the possibility of Asian, relative to American, adults more distorting actions to maintain group harmony between the claimants seemed more promising.

By instructing Indian managers to pursue the goals of dividing outcome “fairly” versus “minimizing conflict” between the claimants, I further demonstrated that such goals evoke more response distortions than a change from the complex proportional rule under the goal of divide “fairly” to a simpler ordinal rule under the goal of “minimizing conflict.” In fact, most Indian managers had used the [same difference rule](#) under both the goals set. Thus,

cultures differed in articulation of subjective “fair” responses on the response measure used, not in the use of the allocation rule. This important distinction was achieved by my attention to the cultural context of fairness judgments, combined with [experimental design and analytic methods](#) to distinguish the alternative hypotheses.

While studying prediction of performance from information about motivation and ability of students and that of donation from information about generosity and income of people at IIT Kanpur and IIM Ahmedabad, I also raised important conceptual and methodological issues. To diagnose the rule, the prevalent approach was to present both types of information together as well as each one separately. Responses to the information presented alone were bases and frames of diagnosing the integration rule for the two pieces of information presented. I argued for reversing the approach.

People usually know something about a person and infer other attributes such as motivation, ability, integrity, and sincerity. Information available for these characteristics is hardly complete. To make a judgment, therefore, people may impute values to missing information from the given information. If so, the widely popular crossover test of that time (i.e., a single piece of information presented should have a stronger effect than the two pieces of information presented together on the response if the averaging rule applies) cannot always distinguish the adding rule from the averaging rule or the multiplying rule from the differential-weighted averaging rule. However, if the integration rule itself is diagnosed in ways other than that of withholding some pieces of information, the patterns of imputations about the needed but missing information can be ascertained more clearly.

To test the foregoing novel possibility, my collaborators and I manipulated both the *weight* (i.e., importance, reliability, validity) and the *value* (low to high levels) of the two pieces of information presented together. As expected, the predicted performance from motivation and ability information followed the [constant-weight averaging rule](#) (i.e., there was a pattern of parallelism in the Motivation x Ability effect), but the predicted gift size from generosity and income information followed the [multiplying rule](#) (i.e., there was a pattern of linear fan in the Generosity x Income effect). Given such evidence for the rule for integrating the two pieces of information given, we succeeded in demonstrating that the imputed value to the missing motivation or generosity information was often constant, usually a value around the nominal neutral

point of the response scale used, but the imputed value to the missing ability or income information increased with the increasing value of the given motivation or generosity information. Notably, integration rules for achievement and moral judgments can be different as we in fact found. Nevertheless, Indians believe that an energizing factor of motivation or generosity can alter a capability factor of ability or income, a positive outlook on life indeed!

I had observed similar tendency of making inferences about missing information in studies of [impression formation](#) from personality traits and those of [interpersonal attraction](#) from attitudes of the target person. In the control condition of no-information, for example, participants had rated the target significantly above the nominal neutral point of the response measure, a hint for initial person positivity bias. Responses to the given information thus seemed to be mere adjustments against the initial opinion of or positivity bias toward the target. In the control condition of no-attitude information, participants had assumed similarity of attitudes with the partner between .70 and .74 along a scale of 0 to 1, another index of person positivity bias. [Intellectual traits](#) activated inferences about competence as they should in fact do as well as about sociability hinting prevalence of imputations in social evaluations. In contrast, social traits did not lead to inferences about intellect. Thus, imputations about the missing dimension of one's personality from the known dimension was also found to be asymmetrical in person perception.

Personality and social psychologists are yet to appreciate the importance of the foregoing phenomenon of imputing values to the needed but missing information in social judgments! In most experimental studies they perform, the control condition hides the information manipulated. The difference between the control and experimental conditions is often attributed to the manipulated information. Such interpretation erroneously assumes that people do not go beyond the information given in the control condition. When consumers infer quality and price of a product from its country of make, quality from price, and vice versa, for example, how anyone interested in everyday social cognition can ignore imputations about the needed but missing information from the given information. I believe that being mindful of the possibility of imputations about missing information of the control condition could very well alter the direction of experimental research programs in personality and social psychology in the years to come!

Social-Functionalist Models

During my high school years, I had to recite some portions of the Hindu epics to the elderly brother of my great grand-father every evening. In the [Uttarkand of Ramcharitmanas \(p. 532\)](#), Kaga-Bhusundi had narrated a story to Garud that Lord Shiva in his previous birth had once shown disrespect to his Guru [teacher]. The Guru never tolerated any violation of the code of conduct by his disciples and so he cursed Shiv. According to the Guru, not punishing Shiva for the misconduct could have severely compromised the sacred way of life at that time.⁴ I had remained intrigued by such a manner of upholding normative order until I met American social psychologist Philip Tetlock at NUS in 2002.

What was then viewed as the [fundamental attribution error](#) (i.e., explaining an event by the person when the circumstance could be an equally conceivable cause) by the model of people as [intuitive scientists](#) seemed to us as one of the forms of prudent prosecution within the [social-functionalist models](#) of people. Another reason for our research collaboration was my own finding from [intergroup relations](#) that people favor the in-group, but they also try to appear fair-minded to the out-group and/or others in contemporary democratic societies. Evidence for non-negative ratings of the out-groups, favoring them in unimportant respects, making intergroup discriminations on some dimensions but not on others, and equating the in-group with some of the out-groups of society collectively hinted at people's proclivity to make the positive self-presentation of fair-mindedness. Still another reason was my own earlier interest in disciplinary actions.

Collectives do operate through a set of *accountability procedures* (e.g., constitution, norms, rules, traditions). Moreover, people belonging to a collective regard themselves as fair-minded persons as I had also observed; they desire safety of their lives, liberties, and properties; and they remain vigilant defenders of accountability procedures. In relation to those accountability procedures, people can play three possible roles. One is always defending accountability procedures as sacred values. Another is demanding accountability from others

⁴ “तदपि साप सठ दैहउँ तोही। नीति बिरोध सोहाइ न मोही॥ जौं नहिं दंड करौं खल तोरा। भ्रष्ट होइ श्रुतिमार्ग मोरा॥२॥” अर्थात तो भी हे मूर्ख! तुझको मैं शाप दूँगा, (क्योंकि) नीति का विरोध मुझे अच्छा नहीं लगता। अरे दुष्ट! यदि मैं तुझे दण्ड न दूँ, तो मेरा वेदमार्ग ही भ्रष्ट हो जाए॥२॥

such as children, patients, subordinates, and students. The final is responding themselves to the accountability demands by others such as bosses, doctors, elders, and teachers. Contingent upon the requirements of the rule-role matrix, one can shift from one mindset to another in everyday life. In particular, defending the sacredness of accounting procedures, placing accounting demands on others, and responding themselves to accountability demands of others spontaneously turn people into intuitive principled theologians, prudent prosecutors, and pragmatic politicians, respectively.

Through collaboration with NUS students and colleagues at IIM Bangalore, IIM Lucknow, and Ahmedabad University, I made five notable contributions to this paradigm. When people know of any rule-violation (IV), they do make causal attribution (person *versus* situation), express outrage, and form attitudes (support *versus* oppose; retribution *versus* deterrence) which supposedly function as MVs of the IV effects on any punitive response (DV: demotion, displeasure, fine, imprisonment, resignation, suspension, termination, etc.). In the [2007 formulation of the model](#) by multiple American psychologists and me, however, all the measured responses to the IV showed a unidimensional structure. That is, the MV and the DV responses loaded on a single factor which made the model unfalsifiable and the mediation model untestable. Consequently, we evaluated the model of prudent prosecutors in Asia as well as cross-culturally.

First, causal attribution is distinct from the assignment of blame or responsibility to an actor. Easterners and Westerners think alike while making causal attributions, but they differ in the assignment of blame or responsibility (i.e., a [moral judgment](#)). Second, both Easterners and Westerners hold the perpetrator equally accountable for the error of commission. However, Easterners hold the associates of the actor more responsible than do Westerners for the error of omission. Apparently, [social circle of responsibility](#) is wider in the East than in the West. Third, age-related changes in recommending punishment reflect more on forgiving for an accidental harm (a stronger age difference in responses to an accidental harm) than hounding for the intentional one (a rather weak age difference in responses to an intentional harm). Likewise, the decrease in importance of severity of harm effects on punishment over ages reflects a belief in a better social order among adults than children. Thus, [social, compared to cognitive, development](#) accounted for

the developmental shift from overweighting consequence by children to overweighting intent by adults when determining punishment for a transgression. Fourth, the prosecutorial mind of Asians is [multidimensional, not unidimensional](#). That made the test of a mediation model feasible in Asian settings. Finally, and the most important, the multiple serial mediation model in which dispositional attribution → outrage → attitude toward the wrongdoer best represented the relation between an inappropriate response (IV) and the desired punishment (DV) for the wrongdoer. Evidence for such [multiple-MV sequential model](#) reaffirmed the importance of causal attribution in punishment as any legal system requires and refined the prosecutorial model in a way never done before.

Our foregoing findings first empirically confirmed the value of punishment in upholding social order as rightly pointed out in the *Ramcharitmanas* and then showed that the dispositional attribution, outrage, attitude, and punishment responses are different indicators of the prosecutorial mind triggered by awareness of a wrongdoing. The last response of punishment switches off the prosecutorial mind activated. It is natural for public to desire and ensure punishment of members as well as leaders who shirk the responsibility that goes with the position held in the collective. Considered from this vantage point, a greater weighting of personal over situational causation (i.e., the otherwise called fundamental attribution error) can be interpreted as the prudent tightening of the accountability procedure to minimize Type 2 error in norm-enforcement.

Overall Portrait of Humans

The foregoing findings from my three research programs converged in portraying humans as being cognitively affluent and dynamic, not miserly as was the American view in the 1980s. People do go much beyond the information given to them in judging others. They actively process multiple pieces of information given or inferred, give greater importance to negative than positive information about attitudes and personality traits of the targets, and relate activated covert processes with each other serially in producing an overt response. Therefore, I theorize that *information integration* is a basic cognitive process, and that *cognition* (validation of attitudes by others, causal attribution to the perpetrator) precedes *emotion* (positive affect, outrage)

regardless of whether it is interpersonal attraction from similar attitudes or intuitive prosecution for a wrongdoing.

Public Service

Introducing to the audience while bestowing upon me the honor of the Distinguished Alumnus of the College of Health and Human Sciences, Jaffrey Karpicke, James V Bradley professor and head of the Department of Psychological Sciences at Purdue University, reported that I contributed tremendously not only to psychology as a science but also to education in the society at large. Given my own frustrating experiences in accessing formal education in the 1950s and my parents' enthusiasm for making formal education available to all children, I did take up the cause of affordable early education in my ancestral village in Nepal. Through donations from my savings and the financial aid from the Embassy of India in Kathmandu, I extended the existing Janta Primary School to the Ramsakhi Mohit Singh Janta Secondary School. This public service, emphasized Karpicke, touched the lives of thousands of rural children who might have otherwise been deprived of formal education. So did my donations of money to two new institutions (ASSERT Institute of Management at Patna and Institute for Resource Management and Economic Development at Delhi), I believe, in improving the delivery of quality education or service across India. Mentoring scholars, inspiring them first for high quality research and then for publishing it in important international journals, and nominating the deserving persons for suitable appointments in Indian academia are parts of my normal routine.

To advance psychology as a science in Asia, I played key roles at the national level first in India. I was a member on the Psychology Panel of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and its Standing Advisory Committee for the Center of Advanced Study in the 1980s. As the UGC National Lecturer in Psychology, I further shared my knowledge in psychology with faculty and students of the psychology departments of Banaras Hindu University at Varanasi, University of Poona at Pune, and Sri Venkateshwara University at Tirupati during 1985-86. In the *Asian Association of Social Psychology* (AASP), I have been active since its inception. Specifically, I played key roles in the development of the *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* and in organizing the *Asian Summer School of Social Psychology* for doctoral students of social psychology from East and Southeast Asian nations. At the international level,

I served as a consulting and/or associate editor of several journals and thus had my say in what should or shouldn't be considered as the part of management and psychological literature. Further, I served as a member on some award committees of APS and AASP.

While accepting the Purdue University Distinguished Alumni Award, I said, "Being recognized with this award makes me feel humbled, honored, delighted, and fully satisfied with my life journey as a psychological scientist." Most of the institutions where I had served celebrated the recognition by paying tributes and write ups in my honor (see, e.g., [IIT Kanpur](#), [IIM Ahmedabad](#), [NUS](#), [Ahmedabad University](#)). [Ritu Tripathi](#), a faculty member at IIMB, also described how I had fulfilled the missions given to me in my unique appointment as the first-ever distinguished professor of management in India and inspired others to emulate my dedication to psychological sciences and sense of responsibility that went with the unique position given. I remain ever grateful to these institutions for providing me the opportunity to serve them and to grow in ways I wished. Being a social psychologist indeed enabled me to pursue both my personal and societal interests satisfactorily in schools of psychology as well as of management.

Regret, Hope, and Advice

Psychology as a science of behavior and mind has a history of 106 years in India. It is offered as a career choice in more than one thousand universities across the country. Psychological sciences also provide invaluable inputs to fields such as defense, forensics, health, law, management, and public policy as well as guide delivery of public services to the society by various local, state, and national agencies. At the dawn of the 21st century, the 108-year-old Indian Science Congress Association had a section of Psychology and Educational Science. At the moment, however, there is a section of Anthropological and Behavioral Sciences. Included among behavioral sciences are archaeology, cognitive science, educational science, psychobiology, and psychology. Nevertheless, psychology is taught under the faculty of arts of most Indian universities.

Of the 12 universities selected under the contemporary scheme of center with potential for excellence, only the Center of Cognitive and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Allahabad appears in the list. The departments of psychology which were earlier under the UGC schemes of center of

advanced study, special assistance, or research support no longer remain so. Worse, most departments of psychology have been under-staffed in recent years. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the impact of psychology and that of psychologists in India are barely visible. I regret that I could not see psychology and psychologists in India get the same recognition as they do in the United States! When American psychologists are winning Nobel Prizes in economics and American economists are getting Nobel Prize for using the [experimental method](#) popularized by psychologists in alleviating poverty, the decision of the Indian Science Congress Association to place psychological sciences under the current broad category of behavioral sciences seems to be myopic!

I fully agree to Munshi Premchand's 104-year-old observation on Indians: "यह कितनी अनोखी लेकिन यथार्थ बात है कि सोये हुए मनुष्य को जगाने की अपेक्षा जागते हुए मनुष्य को जगाना कठिन है" (पेज ११८, मुंशी प्रेमचंद (१९१८/२०१९). *सेवासदन*. Prakash Book India Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 100002). [English translation: It is such a strange but true thing that it is difficult to wake a person who is awake than to wake up a sleeping man.] Nonetheless, I hope that my academic journey in psychology as reported herein should now draw attention of the Ministry of Education, the UGC, and the Office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India to the mounting need of promoting psychology as a science and of involving psychologists in nation-building and human welfare for which they are ideally suited.

To reaffirm the past glory and to make themselves socially and scientifically relevant, my fellow psychologists must heed to the correct advice that RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat had so insightfully given to Indian academics in 2018:

"... शिक्षा का स्तर नहीं घटता बल्कि शिक्षा ग्रहण करने और शिक्षा देने वालों के स्तर में उतार-चढ़ाव होता है। ... छात्रों और शिक्षकों को यह बात स्पष्ट तौर पर समझने की जरूरत है कि वह शिक्षा लेने और देने का काम क्यों कर रहे हैं। ... देश में डिग्रियां बड़े स्तर पर दी जा रही हैं लेकिन रिसर्च के काम में सुस्ती है।" [English translation: It is not the standard of education per se but those of the givers and the receivers that actually decline. ... Students and teachers must understand why they are in this field. ... The degrees are being granted in the country in a large number but research itself is at rather slow pace.]

Likewise, I advise the fellow and younger psychologists to first equip themselves with new knowledge and skills required for 21st century research in psychological sciences. They must regularly [read articles in good journals and go on sabbaticals](#) whenever they are due to upgrade themselves from time to time. Before agreeing to either supervise or examine any doctoral dissertation, one should also ask oneself whether one is knowledgeable of the topic. When one does agree to examine a doctoral dissertation or review an article for possible publication in a journal, one must say unambiguously why the recommendation of either acceptance or rejection has been made. I emphasize so because a number of colleagues and doctoral students had shared with the [authors of an article on research productivity](#) “... that supervisors never take research guidance seriously, nor do examiners take evaluation of the dissertation seriously” (2017, p. 131). To support or oblige a friend for a substandard work kills the goose that lays the golden eggs. Thus, let us now commit ourselves to psychology as a science to achieve the status it deserves in our vast and diverse nation. I look forward to having not only the attention but also the commitment of each one of us to this mission in “New” India.

Concluding Comments

A Sher by [Dushyant Kumar](#) about the *status quo* in the society reads as follows: "सिर्फ हंगामा खड़ा करना मेरा मकसद नहीं, मेरी कोशिश है कि सूरत बदलनी चाहिए।" [English translation: "My purpose is not to activate mere uproar, I wish to see a real change for the better.] In responding to the news about the [Purdue Distinguished Alumnus Award](#) to me, the post by [Siddhant Bhardwaj](#) acknowledged that I inspired all Indians “... *to pursue what our [their] hearts and minds desire,*” reiterating, “... *where there is will, there is always a way.*” I personally am grateful to Siddhant for making my message reach so many Indians.

Vishal Gupta, a faculty member at IIM Ahmedabad, rightfully claimed that he is my academic great grand child. As he stated,

I will forever remain indebted to Professor Singh for his guidance and training during my formative years. He continues to stay in touch and encourages me to strive for more impactful research. He is kind enough to share his vast knowledge with a junior colleague like me.

Vishal shared not only his above-mentioned personal post of early April but also of the April 2022 #IIMAarchives snippet on *LinkedIn* to widen my reach

to so many people heretofore influenced directly or indirectly. I commend Vishal for picking up my values and skills of a scientist, admitting so publicly, and regularly publishing his papers in journals I have been wishing to see from each of us. It is always better to be late than never!

May I humbly appeal now to all those interested in and/or in-charge of psychology in India to strive for its scientific status in the country as well as for a sound application of psychological facts and principles to human welfare? If we all resolve so and work sincerely toward this mission for psychological science, my life journey as a psychological scientist shall end with Nirvana. More important, we shall be restoring the past glory of ancient Indian scholarship (see, e.g., [A](#), [B](#), [C](#) and [D](#) for Indian ideas to be translated into psychological facts through new experiments) and thus changing the landscape of [quality research and international publications](#) at the [contemporary Indian institutions of higher learning](#).

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- A. “कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन। मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि॥” {English translation: You have the right to work only but never to its fruits. Let not the fruits of action be your motive, nor let your attachment be to inaction.]
- B. “जिन खोजा तिन पाइया, गहरे पानी पैठ, जो बौने डुबन डरा, रहा किनारे बैठा।”
[English translation: One who constantly tries does get the desired, but one who sits on the shore out of fear of drowning does not get anything in life.]
- C. “गुरु गोविन्द दोऊ खड़े काको लागूं पायं। बलिहारी गुरु आपने जिन गोविन्द दियो बताय।।”
[English translation: “Given both Guru [teacher] and Govind [God] standing in front of you, whom should you bow to first?” All the glory should go to your Guru for showing the right way to Govind.”]
- D. “करत-करत अभ्यास के जड़मति होत सुजान। रसरी आवत जात ते सिल पर परत निसान
॥” [English translation: The rope tied to a bucket for fetching water from the well everyday erodes the hard stone. Likewise, an unintelligent person can turn intelligent if he continues trying.]