

# Editorial

The journey of social sciences has never been an easy one. Since its very inception the primary focus of social sciences has been human beings and society. So knowledge for the sake of societal interests have always been an objective taken well care of. Presently, we live in a 'knowledge society' where knowledge is expected to produce for social betterment. The mission of producing fruitful knowledge in social sciences was always encouraged with a hope to enlighten public opinion and inform public policy. Yet, Bhupendra Yadav, in one of his article in Economic and Political Weekly (*EPW September 9, 2006*) suggests how social sciences despite its noble objective, if compared with its natural sciences counterpart, is still shrouded with its least glamorous attire, deprived of all kinds of sophisticated equipment and struggles hard for research funding.

The isolation in which social science disciplines were living from one another around mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, took a dramatic shift since the Second World War when the significance of dialogue between disciplines was recognised and gave rise to later relationship of interdisciplinary exchange. The sharing was however, more out of necessity than out of choice since studying an event from the perspective of one discipline within social sciences made it essential to 'borrow insights regarding problems studied, methods used and sources explored by the other social sciences' of the recent era. Thus, in the words of Prof Shelley, "Political Science without History has no root and History without Political Science has no fruits".

It is with this interdisciplinary approach in mind, that the *NSOU Journal of Social Sciences* started its venture in the world of academics. The current issue unfurls the wide range of serious matter of contention beginning from statelessness and the condition of enclave dwellers to the experiences of print media in open and distance learning. The first Article by Professor Rup Kumar Burman explicitly showed how statelessness, chaotic condition and lack of security had generated a trend of 'forced migration' among the Indian enclave-dwellers. Article by Sukanya Pal deviates from conventional topic and gives a vivid analysis of how women motorcyclists break away from gender stereotypes. Mahua Basu's Article was more grounded in real politics behind the nuclear bomb blast in India in 1974 and its aftermath. Definitions in policies often tend to pose a perplex situation. Samiparna Rakshit's Article demonstrates how childhood as defined by the planners and policy makers in India during 1947 eventually made the girl child the second sex in India. With the introduction of Open and Distance Learning, the orientation of higher education has witnessed relentless changes. The final Article by Dr. Ratnaparakhi delightfully suggests how the achievements of conventional and distance mode be culminated for a better eventual in the realm of higher education. The Book Review Section of the Journal has introduced two recent publications on the gender question and caste movement. Dr. Srabanti Choudhuri and Professor Chandan Basu have critically analyzed the research works on the 'Autobiographies and Women Activists' and 'Matua Movement' in Bengal respectively. We also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Vice-Chancellor, NSOU, the Registrar, the Finance Officer and all other officers, staff and colleagues for thier support to us in this regard. A special word of thanks must be added to all our colleagues who are there in the editorial board and always extend their hands of support and cooperation in bringing out the Issues of the Journal.

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**Editors**