

TISS CONVOCATION 2000

Director's Annual Report: 1999-2000

JACOB AIKARA

Chairman Shri B.G. Deshmukh, Honourable Chief Guest Dr. Manmohan Singh, Distinguished Guests, Students, Staff and Faculty

INTRODUCTION

This is the sixtieth convocation in the history of the Institute and the first convocation of the Institute in the new millennium. Convocation is the last event in the academic year of the Institute. Today, the Institute is presenting to the world outside a group of persons who have gone through the professional training and studies offered by the Institute. They are receiving their degrees in recognition of the successful completion of their education at the Institute.

We are singularly fortunate to have Dr. Manmohan Singh as the Chief Guest on this occasion. It is indeed a privilege to have a person of his stature, who embodies a rare combination of erudite statesmanship and eminent scholarship, in order to grace this august function. We are thankful to him for agreeing to be with us today.

Sixty-four years ago, the Institute was established for providing professional training in social work and to produce professionals who would be engaged in human service for the betterment of the society. With a modest beginning in the year 1936, the Institute has grown in size and expanded its activities to become a deemed university. Today, the Institute has acquired the recognition of a centre of training in social work and similar human service professions, and research on social issues and development. In pursuit of its objectives, the Institute has been undertaking various kinds of activities year after year.

The Institute has successfully completed another year culminating in this event of convocation. Apart from the usual programmes of professional training and other academic activities, the year is characterised by certain special events. As we hold the 60th convocation of

the Institute this year, we also celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of *The Indian Journal Social Work*, published by the Institute. Sixty years ago, the Institute launched this journal as part of its mission of professionalisation of social work. Today, it has become an internationally recognised publication in the field of social work. It is a creditable record that the Institute has been able to bring out this journal uninterrupted during the last six decades.

The Institute has had the tradition of intervening in situations of disasters and calamities in order to render service to the affected people. Consistent with this tradition, the students, staff and faculty of the Institute participated in relief work in the cyclone affected areas of Orissa. In all, 137 student, staff and faculty volunteers went to Orissa for the relief work. The Institute is very happy that their work with the cyclone affected people has been quite satisfying and fruitful. The Institute is grateful to the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust for providing us the financial support for the relief work.

The Third Review Committee of the Institute, appointed by the Governing Board, completed its work and submitted the report to the Governing Board. It was a quarter of a century ago that the Second Review Committee of the Institute did the exercise of reviewing the Institute. The report of the Third Review Committee has provided the Institute the opportunity to have the much needed self-introspection so as to enable it to perform its mission in the new millennium. We are thankful to the members of the Committee for undertaking this important and delicate task.

IN MEMORIUM

The Institute would like to remember four persons, who had rendered their services to the Institute in the past and left us for ever during this year. We deeply mourn their loss.

Mr. G.K. Chandiramani, who had served the Institute as a member of the Governing Board for over 25 years from February 1974, passed away on December 31, 1999. Mrs. M. Ramachandran, who retired from the Institute as Section Officer on November 2, 1994, after 39 years of service, passed away on May 11, 1999. Mrs. G. Narayanan, who retired from the Institute as Assistant in the Publications Unit on December 13, 1988, after 25 years of service, passed away on December 3, 1999. Mr. A.D. Datar, who joined the Institute on July 7, 1975, and was working as Senior Library Assistant, met with an accident and passed away on August 27, 1999.

While paying tribute to their memories, we acknowledge their contribution to the Institute.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR

During this year, the Institute has undertaken several activities consistent with the objectives, and in pursuit of the mission of the Institute. They include teaching of degree/diploma/certificate courses, research projects, other programmes of knowledge dissemination and activities outside the Institute. In presenting the annual report, let me briefly highlight the activities of the Institute during this year.

Teaching

The Institute offers degree programmes of Ph.D. and M.Phil. in Social Sciences and Social Work, M.A. in Social Work, Personnel Management and Industrial Relations, and Master of Hospital/Health Administration. The diploma programmes offered by the Institute are in Hospital Administration and Personnel Management. The certificate programmes of the Institute are in Rehabilitation Counselling, Research Methodology, Social Work and Social Welfare Administration.

During the academic year 1999-2000, the Institute had students from all over the country for the degree, diploma and certificate programmes. They represented 20 States and two Union Territories.

Field Work

Field work is an important component of the programme of professional training at the Institute. It provides the students with the real field setting wherein they learn by doing. Students of all the Master's programmes are placed for field work in various agencies. To meet the various needs of field work, new agencies are selected for field placement. The students of the different Master's degree programmes were placed for their field work in a total of 164 agencies during this year.

Rural Camp and Study Tour

The rural camp is an integral component of the M.A. programme in Social Work for the first year students. It is designed to help students understand rural realities and interventions for rural development. This year, the students were divided into five groups and each group visited a different place.

While the first year students of M.A. in Social Work were engaged in the activity of rural camp, the second year students undertook the study tour. Students of each specialisation selected places of their own special field of interest for the study tour. They visited institutions and organisations engaged in social intervention, communities or sites under developmental programmes, and projects of development.

Research

Social research has been one of the major activities of the Institute. No educational institution of the status of a university can fulfil its objective without a strong research programme for generating knowledge. Over the years, the Institute has developed itself into an acknowledged centre of research. This is evident from the increasing number of requests received by the Institute from the national and international agencies for undertaking research projects.

Nature of Research

In keeping with the mission and thrust of the Institute, research at the Institute has been largely based on social issues or related to programmes of social development. A number of research projects undertaken at the Institute have policy implications. Some others are evaluations of developmental programmes.

Units and Departments

The important place research has acquired at the Institute is evident from the existence of the research units, which have been set up primarily for conducting research. There are eight research units at the Institute. They are for: Child and Youth Research, Research in Sociology of Education, Urban Studies, Social Policy and Social Welfare Administration, Rural Studies, Labour Studies, Women's Studies and Family Studies. These units have been primarily engaged in social research and related professional activities in their respective fields.

However, research activity is not confined to the research units. Faculty members of the teaching departments, which are primarily engaged in teaching, do undertake research in their respective fields of professional interest. Similarly, many of the faculty members of the research units participate in the teaching programmes of the departments. This organisational set up of teaching departments and research units, with mutual professional interaction, is unique to the Institute.

Funding of Research

The Institute gets the funding for the research projects from various sources. They include the Institute's own research funds (administered by the Board of Research Studies), Central and State Governments, international agencies, and other organisations such as industries.

Research Projects

The faculty members of the Institute have been engaged in a number of research projects during the year. They include the projects that were carried on from the previous year and fresh projects undertaken during this year. The Institute was engaged in 85 research projects in 1999-2000, of which 30 projects commenced this year.

Knowledge Dissemination

The Institute has been continuously engaged in disseminating knowledge and exchange of ideas in the fields of social theory and practice. This is done through the seminars, conferences and training programmes held at the Institute, publications and video productions.

Seminars, Conferences, Workshops and Training Programmes

The faculty members of the different Departments and Units regularly conduct seminars, conferences, workshops and training programmes with participants drawn from various sections of the society.

The usual programmes of the Institute include the courses conducted for the IPS, IAS and IFS officers for exposing them to certain values and ideas that are part of the goals of social development and nation building in the country. A regular training programme of the Institute is the Orientation and Refresher Courses, conducted by the National Service Scheme Unit of the Institute for the NSS Programme Officers in the colleges of Maharashtra.

Publications

The Institute's activity of publication includes books and articles, brought out by the Publications Unit of the Institute and those of the individual faculty members, published elsewhere.

As part of the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of *The Indian Journal of Social Work*, the Publications Unit of the Institute brought out the April 2000 issue of the journal as a special issue on 'Social Work Education' in felicitation of Prof. Armaity S. Desai.

Video Production

The Unit for Media and Communications at the Institute has been regularly producing videos on themes of social issues, such as domestic violence and forest management. The videos produced at the institute have been selected for screening in various national and international film and video festivals, and are being utilised extensively by the faculty, students and researchers.

Activities Outside the Institute

External activities of the Institute include field action projects, participation of the faculty members in seminars, conferences and workshops, and functions performed by the faculty on the executive committees of professional bodies.

Field Action Projects

Field action projects have been one of the extension activities of the Institute. They are generally interventions for community development or improvement of the situation of the disadvantaged and backward sections of the society. This year, the Institute has been conducting 24 field action projects.

Library

The Library of the Institute has a stock of about 93,300 volumes. They have been acquired in consideration of the needs of the various teaching, research and training programmes of the Institute. The Library subscribes to over 430 professional journals, in addition to a few magazines of general interest, and has about 1,600 titles of audio-visual material. The Library has been covered under the IN-FLIBNET programme of the UGC.

Computer Centre

The Computer Centre of the Institute is equipped with the hardware and software necessary for the activities of the Institute. It is recognised as one of the nine centres in India, sponsored by Indian Council of Social Science Research, for giving free guidance and consultancy services to the M.Phil. and Ph.D. scholars from various other universities.

Students' Union

As usual the Students' Union has been engaged in several activities at the Institute. They include cultural activities of celebrating India's Independence Day and Republic Day at the Institute, screening of documentaries and movies, the drama circle, programmes in collaboration with SPIC-MACAY, and the QUINTISSENCE. The Annual Sports Day was organised by the Union on January 18, 2000, at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre grounds with the enthusiastic participation from all the students.

Several other useful activities were conducted by the Students' Union, such as the talk on 'Good Governance' before the Lok Sabha and State Assembly Elections, the Wall Quiz Competition to update the general knowledge of the students, the Book Donation Camp at the Nair Hospital and the setting up of the Student Mutual-Aid Fund for medical emergencies.

Personnel

Long Service

The Institute has a long-standing practice of honouring the employees who have served the Institute for 20 years. This year, 13 employees, who completed 20 years of service at the Institute, were felicitated on the Institute Day.

Retirement and New Appointments

This year six employees, including Prof. P.N. Mukherji, the Director, retired from the Institute. While they have left the Institute, five faculty members and two administrative staff have joined the Institute in 1999-2000.

Campus Development

This year, the Institute has been fortunate to receive an additional special grant from the University Grants Commission for some of the major basic maintenance works that were pending for several years for want of funds. With this grant, we have been able to undertake certain major repairs of the Institute's infrastructure and give a relatively better look to the campus. The Institute is grateful to the University Grants Commission for this special assistance.

Malti Jal and Jal A.D. Naoroji Campus Annexe

The work on the construction of an institutional building and a hostel is in progress at the Malti Jal and Jal A.D. Naoroji Campus Annexe. They are expected to be ready for occupation in the coming academic year. Plans have been finalised for the construction of residential units for the employees at the new campus annexe and the work is to start shortly.

Rural Campus

The Rural Campus was established in June 1988 in Tuljapur in order to conduct rural based programmes for rural development. Over the last one year, efforts have been made to consolidate the work done in the previous 10 years and reorient the activities to strengthen intervention in six core sectors of community service, namely, land and water, agriculture, credit, health, education and local self-government.

The development of curricula for training of front-line workers at the grassroots has been a priority during this period. With this specific objective, a workshop was organised for enhancing the training skills of the team members of the Rural Campus.

Steps have been initiated to develop the Rural Campus library as a resource centre for the region. This would support and complement village level resource centres, which have been initiated for two sectors, namely agriculture and health, so far.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

With the convocation today, another year in the academic life of the Institute is coming to an end. We are thankful to the University Grants Commission for the continued financial support. In particular, we would like to record our gratitude for the additional funds released by the Commission during the year for the major maintenance works at the Institute.

The Tata Trusts have always been helpful to the Institute in some of its schemes and activities. Their assistance for construction, scholarships, field action projects, conferences and intervention in crisis situations is very much appreciated. We sincerely thank them for their continued support to the Institute.

The Institute has benefited from its association with various national, international, governmental and non-governmental agencies. In particular, they have provided financial assistance for a number of

research projects undertaken by the Institute. We are grateful to all of them in helping the Institute in its mission.

A number of outside agencies are closely involved in the programmes of the Institute. They provide the students the real field setting for their field work, an important component of the professional training at the Institute. We are thankful to our field work agencies and supervisors for their contribution to the educational programmes of the Institute.

Today 123 graduates are receiving their Master's degree—93 of them in Social Work and 30 in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations — after successfully completing the two year programme of professional training at the Institute. In addition, five scholars are being awarded the degree of Master of Philosophy and four scholars, the degree of *Doctor of Philosophy* at this convocation.

Hundreds of alumni of this Institute are already in the field of social work, personnel management and related professions all over the country and even abroad. Today the Institute is offering to the nation another batch of professionals to be in the service of the country. Those of you who have had the benefit of acquiring the knowledge and skills in the human service professions and applied social sciences through the two Master's programmes and research degree programmes of the Institute are indeed fortunate. You are now ready to carry out the mission for which the Institute has equipped you. I am sure that you will be able to make a significant contribution to the country in general and to the relatively disadvantaged sections of the society in particular.

I would like to congratulate all of you who have been successful in your studies at the Institute and are being awarded the degrees at this convocation. Let me also congratulate specially those of you who have earned for yourselves the merit awards and prizes in the different subject areas. I wish all of you excellent career opportunities and success in your endeavours.

Jayati Jayati Vidya Sansthan

May 6, 2000

Jacob Aikara
Director (Officiating)