

# **Fifteenth Annual Conference**

**INDIAN ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HEALTH  
(IASSH)**

*in collaboration with*

**National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj,  
Hyderabad**

**THEME:**

**Health, Gender and Rural Development:  
Research, Practice and Policy**

**16-18, November 2017**

**&**

**Pre-conference Workshop on Research Methodology**

**13-15, November 2017**

**Conference Report**



## **Fifteenth Annual Conference of the INDIAN ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HEALTH (IASSH)**

### **Inaugural Session**

The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual IASSH Conference began with its formal inauguration at the auditorium of National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj at Hyderabad on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2017 at 10:00 AM. Dr. W.R. Reddy, Director General of National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), welcomed the esteemed dignitaries, IASSH members and the delegates. Dr. W.R. Reddy firstly took the opportunity to thank Prof. S. Siva Raju and Prof. T.V. Sekher, President and General Secretary of IASSH respectively, for considering collaboration with NIRDPR to host the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference at Hyderabad. He concluded by welcoming the guests, delegates, colleagues, media persons and participants who have graced the inaugural event. Prof. S. Siva Raju, President, IASSH, chaired the inaugural session and talked about the growth and expansion of the Indian Association for Social Sciences and Health (IASSH) and its activities. Prof. T.V. Sekher, General Secretary, IASSH talked about the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in terms of its preparation, arrangements, programs and collaborations. Dr. K. Sujatha Rao, former Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India, delivered the Key-note address of the conference. On this occasion, two books were released. First one authored by Dr. K. Sujatha Rao titled- "Do We Care? India's Health System" (Oxford University Press, 2017) and the second book authored by Prof. K. Srinivasan titled- "Population Concerns in India: Shifting Trends, Policies and Programmes" (SAGE Publications, 2017).



Dr. W.R. Reddy, Director General, NIRDPR, addressing the conference



Participants at the Inaugural session



Inauguration of the conference by lighting the lamp





Dr. K. Sujatha Rao, former Secretary, Ministry of Health, Govt. of India, delivering the Key-note address of the IASSH annual conference



Prof. S. Siva Raju, President, IASSH, delivering the presidential address

Prof. T. V. Sekher, General Secretary, IASSH was called upon to introduce the overall program and special features of the 15th Annual Conference. During the year 2017, the conference announcement was made through the circulation (by post and e-mail) of a well-designed Conference Brochure. In

response to the call for abstracts, around 500 abstracts were received, from which 200 abstracts were selected for the Oral, Poster and Youth Best Paper presentation categories and acceptance letters were sent out. The IASSH secretariat team located at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, handled the communications and response to queries of the delegates and presenters promptly and consistently. During the 3 days of the conference, we have about 120 Oral, 28 Youth Best Paper and 50 Poster Presentations by participants from various parts of the country.

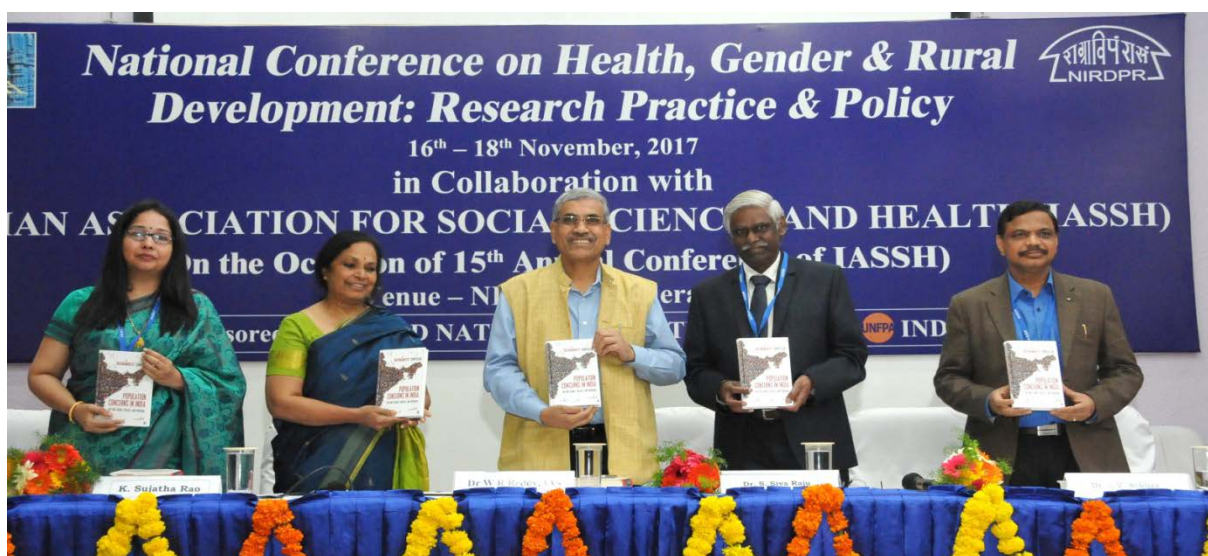
This year, the pre-conference workshop on 'Approaches to Social Science Research' held during 13-15<sup>th</sup> November, 2017 has been a highly successful event with demand from research scholars. 29 PhD scholars from various universities participated proactively at the workshop and received certificates. This workshop is a regular feature at the IASSH Annual conferences and will continue every year to improve its outreach and meet the demand for such courses on research methodology from time to time. The fourth Prof. K.E.Vaidyanathan Memorial Lecture is also a major event in this year's conference. Prof. T.V. Sekher stated that IASSH has instituted a memorial lecture series in 2016 in honour of Prof. John Caldwell, a doyen of Demography and an internationally acclaimed scholar. The Second Prof. Caldwell Memorial Lecture will also be part of this conference. A special issue of "*Arthavijnana*" (journal of Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune ) published the selected papers from the last year's conference, under the theme " Health and Development". Prof. T.V. Sekher also mentioned that the first Dr. John Caldwell Memorial Lecture delivered by Prof. K. Srinivasan was published by the Association for wider dissemination.



Release of the book- "Do We Care? India's Health System" (authored by Dr. K. Sujatha Rao and published by OUP, New Delhi) during the inaugural function of the conference



Prof. S. Siva Raju, President, Indian Association for Social Sciences and Health, welcomed the Chief Guests, dignitaries on the dais, the delegates participating in the conference, media persons and others. IASSH is an independent professional association that came into being more than a decade ago, to meet the felt need of having an exclusive forum for social scientists from various disciplines who are working on health issues- to meet periodically and share the research findings. Through highlighting the implications of the study findings among different stakeholders, it is hoped to bring about concerted action to address the identified issues. Thus, the activities of IASSH in line with its vision, aims and objectives were to conduct annual Conferences on themes relevant to social sciences and health, and publication of the conference proceedings for its wider dissemination among scholars, practitioners and various stakeholders.



Release of the book- "Population Concerns in India" (authored by Dr. K. Srinivasan, Sage Publications, 2017) during the inaugural function of the conference. On the Dias: Dr. Sujarita Pujari, Dr. K. Sujatha Rao, Dr. W.R. Reddy, Prof. S. Siva Raju and Prof. T.V. Sekher.

Prof. Siva Raju stated that the IASSH began in a small way with just 8 members in the year 2002 and now it has grown into a major professional association with more than 1200 life-members and the membership cuts across the disciplines in the field of Social Sciences and Health. IASSH specifically encourages young scholars by providing this platform to disseminate their research findings. Currently, IASSH through its life members and collaborating agencies has developed networks with a pan-India outreach on a continual basis, for exchange of ideas and themes every year through the annual conferences, and more than 12 edited books were published by the Association.

As is the trend with any growing professional association, IASSH is seriously considering to have regional chapters/workshops with specific themes from time to time, delineate the association's advisory role to policy makers in the field of social sciences and health, to assist the corporates in planning and implementing interventions in the field of health, and catalyze the networking among the various stakeholders by taking a facilitator's role while having 'maximizing the outreach' as the main motto.

Dr. K. Sujatha Rao in her keynote address appreciated the efforts of IASSH in organizing the conference and other activities. She stated that, it is a matter of concern that despite 70 years of development, the linkage between rural development and poverty alleviation with health is still tenuous and virtually non-existent. The challenge before us is how to enlighten the community and the individuals on their entitlements and the causation of diseases and illness on the one hand and on the other how to get public functionaries to think in an integrated way. The *Panchayats* can be a force of change but lack of knowledge or information provided to them has also made them to think in vertical terms. Low public investment in health and absence of social security has meant that the poor have no recourse to seeking medical care from private hospitals that are very expensive. She reiterated that linking development, women and health is no more a matter of choice but an imperative in order to ensure a more effective implementation of programmes and better outcomes with the same level of investment. Development must mean the development of the individuals and families living to their full potential and development also must mean that growth is the sum of individual inputs. Dr. Sucharita Pujari, Local Organizing Convener, proposed the vote of thanks.

### **Presentations by the Delegates**

Specific to 15<sup>th</sup> IASSH Annual Conference, we are happy to note that the response to 'call for abstracts' was overwhelming for all the 3 categories of oral, poster and youth best paper award presentations and across the 26 sub themes provided under the main theme: "Health, Gender and Rural Development: Research, Practice and Policy". We received almost 500 abstracts out of which a screening committee reviewed and selected 200 abstracts. Overall, 300 delegates have participated at the conference across the 3 days. In all, 120 presentations were made as part of the 20 technical sessions held on Day 1 & 2. About 50 posters were displayed and presented by the respective authors. Around 22 Youth Best Paper Presentations were done in the conference which was evaluated by expert committees.



Technical Sessions in Progress



Poster Sessions in Progress



## Second Prof. John Caldwell Memorial Lecture



**Prof. S. Parasuraman, Director, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, delivering the Second Prof. John Caldwell Memorial Lecture at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of IASSH**

The Doyen of Demography, Professor John Charles (Jack) Caldwell died on 12th March 2016 at the age of 87 in Canberra. He was associated with the Department of Demography of Australian National University (ANU) for many decades. Caldwell's seminal work included documentation of the role of mother's education in fertility limitation and child mortality decline and the role of circumcision in inhibiting the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa. He is known for his "wealth flows" theory, which relates demographic transition theory to changes in intergenerational transfers within the family. He has encouraged and mentored many young scholars from India, and good number of them received their Ph.Ds from ANU under his able guidance. His anthropological demographic work on south India, particularly on marriage, fertility and contraception, received lot of research attention.



Prof. S. Parasuraman  
delivering the second Prof.  
John Caldwell Memorial  
Lecture at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Conference of IASSH



Dr. Venkatesh  
Srinivasan, Assistant  
Country  
Representative,  
UNFPA India, chaired  
the Memorial Lecture.



His students, colleagues and friends at the initiative of Prof. K.N.M. Raju have approached the Indian Association for Social Sciences and Health (IASSH) to institute a memorial lecture in his honour. Considering this request, the IASSH instituted the lecture series in memory of the most famous demographer of our times. The First Prof. John Caldwell Memorial Lecture was held during the 14th Annual Conference of IASSH in 2016 at Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune.

Distinguished Scholar and Development Expert, Prof. S. Parasuraman (Director of TISS, Mumbai) delivered the second Prof. John Caldwell Memorial Lecture on the theme -"Is India the hope for the troubled world?" Dr. Venkatesh Srinivasan, Assistant Country Representative, UNFPA India, chaired the session. He listed the programmatic challenges that we are facing in health and education sectors of India. Prof. T.V. Sekher welcomed the gathering and spoke about the contribution of Prof. Caldwell to Demography as a discipline and also his research work on India. Prof. S. Siva Raju introduced the guest speaker Prof. S. Parasuraman. Prof. Parasuraman in his address discussed the developmental challenges faced by India and the possibility of reaping the demographic dividend. He emphasized the advantages of scientific and technological manpower, secular and inclusive approach, participatory democracy and above all, the resilience spirit. He also highlighted the weakness and limitations of the developmental model that India has followed. Prof. Parasuraman's lecture generated lot of discussions among the participants.

### **Fourth Prof. K. E. Vaidyanathan Memorial Lecture**

IASSH has instituted a memorial lecture in honour of Prof. K.E. Vaidyanathan since 2014. He was the President of the Indian Association for Social Sciences and Health (IASSH) from 2007 to 2011 and was mainly responsible for the growth and expansion of the Association to its present form. In his demise, we lost an outstanding scholar, an excellent teacher, an expert health and census professional, and above all, a fine human being. Prof. S. Siva Raju recollected Prof. K. E. Vaidyanathan's contributions to social science research and to IASSH in particular. Prof. T.V. Sekher introduced the guest speaker Dr. Amar Jesani to the audience. The Fourth Prof. K. E. Vaidyanathan Memorial Lecture was delivered by well known expert on Bioethics and Public





Prof. S. Siva Raju, Dr. Amar Jesani and Prof. T.V. Sekher

Health, Dr. Amar Jesani on the theme: "Contribution of Social Sciences in the study of ethics in health research in India" on 17th November, 2017. His lecture highlighted the paramount importance of ethics while undertaking research on health and social sciences. Dr. Jesani felt that the organizations like IASSH can play an important role in communicating with young scholars regarding the relevance of research ethics, which has not yet received enough attention in India.

### **Valedictory Session**

The valedictory session began with Prof. T.V. Sekher welcoming the audience and the Chief Guest, Prof. R. Siva Prasad, a well known Anthropologist and the Director, Center for Education and Educational Technologies at Hyderabad Central University. He spoke about the inter-relationship between social sciences and health and the need for undertaking more field-based research. Based on his vast experience, Prof. Siva Prasad emphasized the need for understanding the perceptions and attitudes of the people while undertaking studies related to health behaviours and life styles. Prof. S. Siva Raju (President, IASSH), expressed his happiness in the successful completion of the conference and thanked the local organizers, National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, for their active involvement and commitment in successfully organizing this conference. Dr. Sucharita Pujari, the Local Organizing Convener, proposed the vote of thanks. The certificates to the paper presenters were distributed.



Valedictory Session of the Conference: Prof. R. Siva Prasad (Chief Guest), Dr. Sucharita Pujari, Dr. W.R. Reddy, Prof. S. Siva Raju and Prof. T.V. Sekher

#### **Announcement of the Awards:**

The General Secretary Prof. T.V. Sekher announced the awards for best papers and best posters, selected by the expert committees. The prestigious **Youth Best Paper Awards - 2017** were awarded to four young research scholars (Ms. **Shruti Anil Kumar** (IIPS, Mumbai), Ms. **Ankita Bhattacharya** (ISI, Kolkata), Mr. **Mohammad Zahid Siddique** (JNU, New Delhi) and Mr. **Kodali Prakash Babu** (Central University of Kerala) and they were each honoured with a certificate and cash prize. **The Best Poster Awards - 2017** were awarded to four young scholars (Ms. **Madhumita Bango** (TISS, Mumbai), Mr. **Harchand Ram** (JNU, New Delhi), Ms. **Monica Kundu** (IIPS, Mumbai) and Mr. **Prashant Tapase** (NIRRH, Mumbai) and they received the certificates and cash prizes.



Kodali Prakash Babu



Shruti Anil Kumar



Md. Zahid Siddique



Ankita Bhattacharya

## **EC and General Body Meetings of IASSH**

The Executive Committee (EC) met on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2017 and deliberated on various activities of the Association. The meeting also discussed issues regarding regional chapters, research workshops and starting a online journal. The General Body (GB) meeting also took place on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2017. During the last one year, 100 new members enrolled as life members of the Association. The discussions in the GB meeting were on the membership drive, new collaborations, newsletters, updating the website, and planning for the next conference. The Audited Statement of Accounts of the Association was presented by the Treasurer Prof. D. P. Singh and was approved by the EC and General Body. The audited statement of accounts is placed on the IASSH website for the reference of members. 15<sup>th</sup> annual conference received financial support from United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and NIRDPR. IASSH is thankful for their collaboration and support in successfully organizing the conference at Hyderabad.

## **Eighth Pre-Conference Workshop on 'Approaches to Social Science Research'**

The pre-conference workshop was held during 13-15<sup>th</sup> November, 2017 at NIRDPR. In order to train young research scholars, IASSH has initiated the Pre-Conference Workshop on "Approaches to Social Science Research" from the year 2010 onwards. Important aspects of social science research were discussed in this year's workshop and the experts provided guidance to the M.Phil/Ph.D scholars in designing, analyzing and executing their study. This year, 29 research scholars from various universities and institutes have participated in the workshop and gave feedback that this is a useful platform for them in fine-tuning the methodological aspects of their dissertations. The participants were given certificates and a newly published book on research methodology.





**Participants of the Pre-conference Workshop with organizers**

**Topics Covered in the Pre-Conference Workshop:** Introduction to Social Science Research, Selection of Research Problem, Approaches in Quantitative and Qualitative Research, Methods of Collection of Qualitative and Quantitative Data, Development of Tools, Quantitative Data Analysis using SPSS, Qualitative Data Analysis using Atlas-ti, Writing Research Proposal, Thesis writing, Presentation Skills and Ethics in Social Research. The resource persons included Prof. R. Siva Prasad, Prof. M. Gopinath Reddy, Prof. S. Siva Raju, Prof. K.N.M.Raju, Prof. T.V. Sekher, Prof. N. Audinarayana, Prof. D.P. Singh, Dr. Anil Chandran, Dr. Sucharita Pujari, Dr. Lakhan Singh, Dr. Vijaya Kumar, Dr. Gyan Mudra and Dr. Akansha Shukla. Dr. W.R. Reddy, Director General, NIRDPR, inaugurated the program, and Dr. Sucharita Pujari and Prof. T.V. Sekher coordinated the workshop.

#### **New Office Bearers (2018-19)**

IASSH General Body and Executive Committee unanimously elected new office bearers for the next two years. Prof. T.V. Sekher (IIPS) is the new President of the Association. Other office bearers are Prof. P.M. Sandhya Rani (General Secretary), Dr. U.V. Somayajulu (Vice President), Dr. Anil Chandran (Treasurer) and Dr. Malika B. Mistry (Joint Secretary). The executive committee members are Prof. M.K. Agarwal, Prof. V.K. Tiwari, Prof. L.N. Dash, Prof. R. Maruthakutti, Dr. Hemanta Meiti, Dr. Goli Srinivas, Dr.J.K. Basu and Dr. Sucharita Pujari. The out-going President Prof. S. Siva

Raju will serve as Ex-officio. The members of the Board of Trustees are Prof. C.P. Prakasam, Prof. K.N.M. Raju, Prof.N. Audinarayana and Dr. A.G. Khan.



**Prof. T.V. Sekher is the new President of IASSH**

**We are Thankful to**

**UNFPA and NIRDPR for supporting the conference**

