



INSIGHTS

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School of Liberal Arts
Indian Institute of Technology Jodhpur

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Message from the Head

Dear Friends,

Greetings!

I welcome you to the eighth edition of SoLA's Newsletter, which covers some of the recent activities in the School of Liberal Arts over the last six months.

We welcome our newly joined faculty, Dr. Sheriya Sareen and wishes a successful academic career ahead.

SoLA organised a half-day workshop for community engagement with Anganwadi workers from 10 villages near IIT Jodhpur. Many of the faculty colleges received prestigious extramural funding projects, including those from IKS Division, MoE, and ICSSR.

Faculty members and PhD scholars presented and published their work at various prestigious forums and journals.

I hope you may like to have a glance at the newsletter.

Kind regards,

Alok Ranjan



New Member of Team SoLA



I am an early-career researcher who recently joined the School of Liberal Arts at the Indian Institute of Technology Jodhpur as an Assistant Professor. My work lies at the intersection of higher education policy, digital technologies, and pedagogy, with a focus on how technological transformations are reshaping teaching-learning practices and higher education systems. I previously held a postdoctoral position at IIT Delhi in collaboration with Imperial College London, and completed my PhD at IIT Jammu.

I come from Jammu city, cradled in the serene Trikuta Hills, where the temples of Vaishno Devi and Bawe Wali Mata stand as quiet protectors, shaping both the landscape and the spirit. Moving from those green, sacred surroundings to the expansive, golden hues of Jodhpur is becoming a journey of gentle rediscovery. I am taking my time, slowly growing into this new rhythm and learning to feel at home in its openness. Late nights often find me on unhurried walks across campus, under vast starlit skies, in the magical company of chinkara, peacocks, and 'Alice in Wonderland' rabbits. Lately, I've also been feeling drawn to the kitchen, curious and hopeful, planning to recreate the comforting flavours of home, one tentative recipe at a time.

Happy to connect: for work, conversations, or a simple walk under open skies.



Outreach Activities of SoLA

Community engagement of SoLA faculty in collaboration with ICDS, Ministry of Women and Child Development

A half day training programme was organized for Anganwadi workers from 10 villages near IIT Jodhpur on 24 March 2026 . Led by Dr. Alok Ranjan, Dr. Rachel Philip and Dr. Tonisha Guin, the Anganwadi workers received training in Soft Skills required during their work as well as on Low Cost Strategies for Active Learning as part of the Early Childhood Education Component. This initiative was carried out in collaboration with the Jodhpur Team of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Ministry of Women and Child Development.



New Projects - 2026

Alok Ranjan received a consultancy project as an invited public health expert from IIM Kozhikode on “Independent Verification Agency (IVA): Kerala Health Service Improvement Program”, sponsored by the Department of Health and Family Welfare (DoFW), Government of Kerala, to IIM Kozhikode, March 2026- March 2031.

Bhaskar Kumar Kakati and Dinesh Mohan Joshi received IKS funding (IKS Division, MoE) for carrying out research on Indigenous Agricultural Rituals of Rajasthan: An Interdisciplinary Study through Indian Knowledge Systems

The objective of this project is to document the diverse agricultural rituals of Rajasthan, shaped by generations of adaptation to its harsh climate through practices such as alternate land use systems, mixed cropping, khadins, and indigenous seed banks. It also aims to capture the cultural significance of festivals such as Pushkar Fair, Nagaur Cattle Fair, Mallinath Animal Fair, and Beej Utsav, which reflect the region’s traditions, social life, and artistic heritage. Through this documentation, interns will highlight how these fairs function as vital spaces for community interaction, trade, and cultural expression.

Suman Dhaka (PI) and Rajlaxmi Chouhan, from CETE (CoPI) received ICSSR funding for Digital Education in Rajasthan Schools: A Mixed-Methods Assessment of Quality, Equity, and Psychological Determinants for Advancing Educational Outcomes towards Viksit Bharat@2047.

The project, Digital Education in Rajasthan Schools, examines the quality, equity, and psychological factors that influence digital learning outcomes. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study aims to generate evidence-based insights to strengthen inclusive and effective digital education systems, contributing to the broader vision of advancing educational outcomes towards Viksit Bharat@2047.

Sunil Lohar received ICSSR funding for the project titled Art, Culture, and Digital Preservation: A Visual Ethnographic Study of the Sahariya Tribe of Rajasthan.

The project focuses on documenting, analysing, and digitally preserving the visual, performative, and oral traditions of the Sahariya community, Rajasthan’s only Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG). Through ethnographic fieldwork in the Baran district, the study examines Mandana paintings, Swang performances, folk songs, rituals, and indigenous knowledge systems as living expressions of ecological wisdom, spirituality, and cultural identity. Using participatory research methods, the project actively involves Sahariya artists, elders, and youth as co-researchers and knowledge custodians. A major outcome of the project is the development of a bilingual open-access digital archive and website that will preserve photographs, videos, oral histories, and cultural documentation for future generations, while also contributing to scholarship, cultural policy, and community empowerment.



Faculty Research

Anupama Mohan

Mohan, A. (2026). Transmodernity and literature: Introduction, part 2. *Asian Review of World Histories*, 14(1).

In this second part of the special issue of *Asian Review of World Histories*, we continue to explore and examine the many conceptual and material connections between transmodernity and literature, this time with a closer focus on the Indian subcontinent. In this volume, each essay investigates whether and how transmodernity remains a compelling frame/paradigm for reading literary and cultural texts from the peripheries of global empire, now resurgently neocolonial, neoliberal, and explosively hypercapitalist. The essays wrestle with varying combinations of transmodern thinking but are united in their rejection of Eurocentrist goals and parameters.

Farhat Naz

Kumar, G and Naz, F. (2026). *Invisible Lives, Inadequate Policies: A Study on Manual Scavengers Welfare Policies*, *Contemporary Voice of Dalit*, 1-25.

This paper talks about the implementation strategies that align with the aim of fulfilling constitutional goals of social justice and living with dignity for the manual scavengers. Its is first empirical studies regarding the real impact and effectiveness in context of Rajasthan, India.

Mishra, K. & Naz, F. (2026). *Beyond Domesticity: Empowering Women and Restoring Ecosystems, Development in Practice*, 1-13.

The paper illustrates the role of traditional ecological awareness and sustainable livelihoods in Uttarakhand. The findings contribute to broader discussions on the gender-climate nexus and nature-based solutions in mountains.

Singh, S. & Naz, F. (2026) 'Diminishing Water-Energy-Food Nexus Approach and Sustainability in Agricultural Practices: A Study in Saharanpur District, Uttar Pradesh, India,' *Agricultural Science Digest*. 1-13.

The paper suggests that farmers in Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh, should be trained to improve the situation of agriculture cropping pattern by encouraging crop diversification and promote the use of drip and sprinkler methods of irrigation.

Hari Narayanan V

Narayanan, V. H. (2026). *Epistemic Injustice and Indigenous Epistemology*. *Anthropology of Consciousness*, 37(1).

The article argues that current discussions on epistemic injustice, centered around the distinction between testimonial and hermeneutic types of injustice, cannot adequately deal with the injustice done to Indigenous epistemology. This happens primarily because of the significant difference in the way phenomena like self, mind, and knowledge are understood in Indigenous life. After discussing the salient features of Indigenous life, the article points out how the understanding of self, mind, and knowledge is interdependent in both Indigenous and Modern ways.



Narayanan, V. H., & Show, J. P. (2026). Contemplative Concordance with Creativity. *Creativity Studies*, 19(1).

The paper takes cudgels against the view that contemplative practices are not conducive for creativity. Since contemplative practices often require discipline and controlling the tendency of mind to wander from one thought to another, the received wisdom often militates against giving any place for contemplative practices in nurturing creativity. At the same time there are studies indicating how practices such as mindfulness enhance creativity. This paper argues that this paradox concerning the relationship between contemplative approaches and creativity can be resolved by looking into the role that open attention and passivity play in facilitating creativity.

Suman Dhaka

Sharma, K., & Dhaka, S. (2026). Sleep modulation by binaural beats and its relation to error-aware response inhibition. *Sleep and Breathing*, 30(2), 94.

The paper reveals how binaural beats can actively shape sleep dynamics and enhance error-aware response inhibition—offering promising insights into the powerful role of auditory stimulation in strengthening cognitive control during sleep.

Juhi, A., Sharma, S., Bhatia, D., Dhaka, S., Kumar, R., Kumar, D., ... & KUMAR, R. (2026). Anodal Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation as an Adjunct to Physiotherapy in Lacunar Stroke. *Cureus*, 18(2).

In a detailed clinical case, Juhi and Suman Dhaka et al. (2026) highlight the potential of anodal transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) as a powerful adjunct to physiotherapy in lacunar stroke rehabilitation. A 56-year-old patient with significant motor impairment showed marked improvements in mobility, balance, and hand function following a six-week combined intervention, with gains sustained at follow-up—underscoring the promise of accessible neuromodulation techniques in enhancing recovery, particularly in resource-limited settings.

Juhi, A., Sharma, S., Bhatia, D., Dhaka, S., Kumar, R., Kumar, D., ... & Mondal, H. (2026). Effect of repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation modulating supplementary motor area in stroke rehabilitation: Systematic review of randomized controlled trials. *AIMS Neuroscience*, 13(1), 50-63.

In a comprehensive review, Juhi and Suman Dhaka et al. (2026) examine how repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS) targeting the supplementary motor area can enhance stroke rehabilitation outcomes. Synthesizing evidence from randomized controlled trials, the study highlights the potential of rTMS to improve motor recovery, positioning it as a promising neuromodulatory approach in post-stroke care.

Research Scholars' Conferences and Publications

Jyoti Sharma

Conference Presentations:

Presented a paper titled "Architecture of Accuracy: Moving Beyond Fair-Weather Models of High-Stakes Decision Making in Indian Bureaucracy" (Co-authored with Prof. Ankita Sharma) at the 35th Annual Convention of the National Academy of Psychology (NAOP) held at Indian Institute of Management Shillong from 29th April - 1st May 2026.

Presented a paper titled "The Architecture of Wise Decisions: A Grounded Theory for High-Stakes Leadership" (Co-authored with Prof. Ankita Sharma) at The Asian Conference on Psychology & the Behavioral Sciences (ACP2026), held at Toshi Center Hotel, Tokyo, Japan, 22-27, March 2026.

Poster Presentation:

"Architecture of Accuracy: A Grounded Theory for Differentiating Success, Failure, and Folly in High-Stakes Decisions", co-authored with Prof. Ankita Sharma at the 32nd Annual Society of Decision Professionals (SDP) Conference, held at the University of Massachusetts Boston, USA (online), 24-26 March, 2026.

Sanskriti

Presented a paper titled "Interruptive Cultural Citizenship and the Politics of Bans, Curfews, and Internet Shutdowns in the Urban Borderlands of Northeast India" at the Borderlands and their Mediations: Examinations/Anticipations Seminar at Ashoka University, Delhi March 27-28, 2026.

Presented a paper titled "Tactical Media Infrastructures and their Circulation in the Borderlands of Northeast India" at the International Conference on Urban/Media Infrastructures organized by The Cultural Studies Cell of the Department of English and Cultural Studies, in collaboration with the Department of Media Studies, Central Campus CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bangalore, March 5-7, 2026.

Presented a paper titled "Rice Hotels and Roadside Sovereignties: A Photo Essay on Vernacular Infrastructure in Manipur's Borderlands" at the 8th Asian Borderlands Research Network Conference in with the Department of Geography at National Taiwan University (NTU), the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), and the Asian Borderlands Research Network (ABRN) at National Taiwan University (NTU) in Taipei City, Taiwan 13 - 15 January 2026.

Recipient of the 8th ABRN Conference Grant and Organizer of a Photo Exhibition at the Department of Geography, National Taiwan University (13 - 15 January 2026)

Sanskriti. 2026. "Mukbangs as Vernacular Infrastructures of Care in Borderlands of Northeast India". The Journal of Contemporary Food Studies, 1(1).

Sanskriti. 2026. "Learning Through Interruption: Fieldwork Reflections from Urban Borderlands in Northeast India (2024-2025)". Sociological and Anthropological Studies of Education in India (SASEI). Open Access.

Sonal Sinha

Presented a paper titled, "Feature Hierarchies and Conjunct Agreement in Thethi." Students' Conference of Linguistics in India-16 (SCONLI 16) held at English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU), Hyderabad, 19th -21, January 2026.

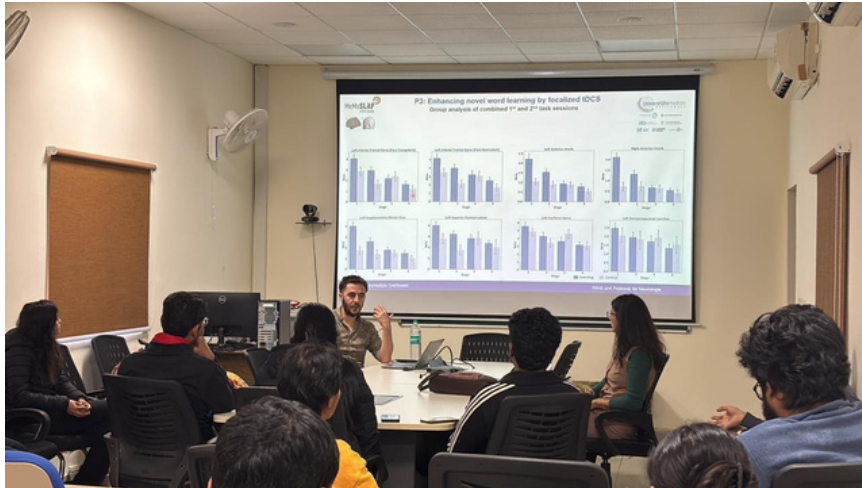
Presented a paper titled "Sequential probing in conjunct Agreement: Evidence from Central Magadhan Prakrit languages." Formal Approaches to South Asian Languages (FASAL 16). Columbia, South Carolina, USA. 10-11, April, 2026. (Online)

Utkarsh Sharma

Presented a paper titled "Global Flows, Local Currents: Reading Angārē as a Transnational Event" at ACLA Annual Meeting 2026, 26 February to 1 March 2026. (Hybrid)



Research Scholars' Forum



Research Scholars and students of SoLA had an interaction with Mr. Harun Kocataş, a research Scholar from Germany, who was visiting Dr. Suman Dhaka's research laboratory for research and training in January 2026.

Mr. Kocataş has training in linguistics and neurolinguistics. He holds a Master's degree from Bielefeld University, Germany, and is presently associated with the Meinzer Lab | Cognition, Aging and Brain Stimulation Lab, Department of Neurology, University Medicine Greifswald, Germany, where his work focuses on aging, language learning, and tDCS-based interventions.





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