

Editorial

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It gives us immense pleasure to wish you all a very Happy New Year 2023 from the editorial team of *Loyola Journal of Social Sciences*. In 2022- 23; in the twilight of the country emerging from the restrictions Covid-19 had imposed for 2 long years, Loyola Journal of Social Sciences has withstood this odd period and is successfully bringing out its thirty sixth issue. From its very nascent steps in 1987 to very sturdy steps in 2022, the journal now publishes research central to cross-cultural and comparative scholarship in the social sciences and neighboring disciplines. The turbulent times of 2020-22 have also highlighted the importance and necessity of social sciences in the present day life. The current issue lays down an array of articles highlighting different methodological dimensions and perspective ranging from digital gender gap to skill development to the Challenges experienced by female headed households to religion and the power of prosecutorial heads

The first article by **Sidiya, Rulashe and Conradie** on Skills Development Needs for the Supply Chain Management Unit at a Provincial Government Department in The Eastern Cape, South Africa, attempts to explore the skills development needs in the supply chain management unit of the Eastern Cape Department of Education. Applying an interpretive paradigm, they have addressed the knowledge gap on the skills development needs within the supply chain management unit of a public sector department. A qualitative research approach using semi-structured interviews was adopted. Thematic analysis and findings revealed that the supply chain management unit at the Eastern Cape Department of Education is focused on the development of some hard skills and there is little focus on the soft and future skills. Article also revealed that skills possessed by Supply Chain Management are neglecting future needs. Hence the authors recommend a review of skills development in the supply chain management unit to accommodate soft skills as well as to address future skills needs.

Internet and Mobile Use: Exploring the Gendered Digital Divide in Kerala by **Thakkar, Miller, Palackal & Shrum** explored the digital gender gap through an examination of mobile phone ownership, usage, and

perceptions within the unique regional context of Kerala, India. The analysis provides an overview of similarities and differences between women and men in the use of the Internet, mobile phones, and social media based on pre-pandemic survey data collected in 2018 from 296 households in four impoverished areas of Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India. The article also analysed the perceived advantages and disadvantages of mobile and social media use as well as their relative impacts on both men and women. The authors conclude with a discussion of the gendered implications of technology within Kerala and suggest several areas of investigation for future research.

Challenges experienced by female headed households in utilising cash transfers: Case of Zvishavane, Zimbabwe by **Faji and Garutsa** gives a clear depiction of how the unprecedented knock of covid19 shook the socio-economic structure of the female headed households, and other vulnerable groups. The researchers utilised the phenomenological qualitative approach in understanding the challenges faced by female-headed household poverty. The findings showed that female-headed households are more vulnerable and their incomes tend to fall below the poverty line. The constraining cultural and patriarchal norms deterred most women in achieving autonomy. The authors recommends that the Basic Agriculture Assistance Programme should consider grassroots approaches in project initiation and implementation.

Perspectives to Study Indian Islam: With Special Reference to South Indian Muslims by **Hashim T**, enquires into the different perspectives of scholarship used to study Islam. The article critically explores the conceptual frameworks such as Islamisation, syncretism, co-existence, and hierarchical models put forward by different scholars to comprehend the dynamics at play within Muslim communities in India. It also introduces the different Muslim religious groups and their differing practices in the public sphere of Malabar that would pronounce the idea of discursive tradition in its essence. The author argues that the frameworks presuppose an existing binary opposition between textual and lived Islam and points out that such a precondition is problematic. Hence, it argues for a flexible and more plural notion of Islam.

The last article of this issue by **Mujuzi** is on the power of prosecutorial heads to intervene in private prosecutions in Commonwealth countries. Author demonstrated that in some countries these powers are provided for in constitutions and in others in pieces of legislation other than the constitutions. Mujuzi argues that there are challenges which must be addressed to make the prosecutorial heads more accountable in Commonwealth countries. Firstly, in all cases where the prosecutorial

head takes over or discontinues a private prosecution, they should be required to give reasons. Secondly, in countries where legislation is silent on the criteria that courts should consider in assessing whether the prosecutorial head's decision complies with the constitution and legislation, the standard of review should not be too high. Thirdly, in countries where legislation is silent on the body or person to which or whom the prosecutorial head is accountable, there is a need to amend legislation to remove that lacuna. Finally, in countries where the prosecutorial head is accountable to a cabinet minister, this could affect the prosecutorial head's independence about prosecuting politically influential individuals. It is therefore critical that the prosecutorial head is accountable to an institution such as Parliament to minimise the risk of exposing them to being abused or used by politicians.

Let me also take this opportunity to place on record my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the former editorial team who has been contributing to this journal in the most effective manner. I feel honored and fortunate to be a part this journal and with a highly effective team of editorial board members and peer reviewers will ensure that the journal continues to be a trusted source in the relevant field of social science

**Nisha Jolly Nelson, PhD, Post Doctoral
Editor**

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