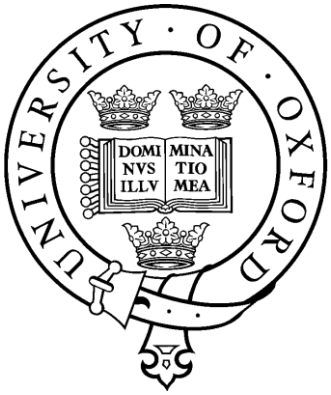
Social Science Research in India: Traversing the 'Local' and 'Global' Terrain



A dissertation submitted for the degree of
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by

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the global research environment, in the field of social science, from the perspective of International Relations researchers based in India. The study attempts to understand how these scholars translate the knowledge of their local realities to the global pool of knowledge. In this journey, the scholars traverse the local, national and global dynamics of knowledge production. They also navigate through the structures of the global science system that circulate, recognise, legitimate and value research.

For understanding the phenomena from the perspectives of the researchers, I conducted 16 in-depth interviews with research scholars based in India. For the interviewees, I formulated an equity with respect to various factors such as gender, interviewee profile, experience, current role, educational background, professional assignments and university type.

The study explores how the participants develop a close understanding of their local realities, employ existing methodologies and creatively use theories to navigate the global dynamics of knowledge production. In this journey, they also influence the prevalent global designs of the discipline. They thus attempt to establish a dialogic space in the global domain of knowledge production. While some scholars benefit from interaction with the global science, some participants felt the need to delink from these systems of recognition that they felt constrained the space for epistemic difference.

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I am truly grateful to Wolfson College and community for providing the environment and facilities to hone this research project. The dining hall conversations and common room talks with fellow members were instrumental in developing my ideas.

This dissertation is also a reflection of my learning experiences in the course of my diverse academic exposures. My teachers at Timpany School helped me build the strong foundations of knowledge and skills. The commitment and dedication of my faculty at Lady Shri Ram College inculcated in me a desire to learn and led me to apply for the institute's renowned international programmes. The faculty and fellow scholars at the National University of Singapore, King's College London Summer School and Sciences Po were integral in shaping my learning. Interactions with other Yenching Scholars and faculty at Peking University, I learnt to rethink assumptions and established norms in the field of social sciences. I am therefore truly indebted to everyone who has been part of my academic journey so far.

The common saying goes that behind every achievement of a woman, there is a man. While I have my reservations about the adage, I do acknowledge that my brother, Vidur Kedia, has been the guiding light throughout my journey. Brought up in Visakhapatnam, study at Oxford was a distant dream. This could only be realised due to the exceptional efforts and support of my family. This thesis is indeed a result of their countless endeavours to navigate the uneven terrains and provide me these invaluable avenues of learning.

List of Abbreviations

HE- Higher Education
HEI- Higher Education Institutions
ICSSR- Indian Council for Social Science Research
IR- International Relations
UGC- University Grants Commission

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This dissertation represents a journey from the global university which is a seat of knowledge production to the local terrains of India. In the field of Higher Education (HE), globalisation has mostly been understood from the experiences of international students or academicians. There have been fewer studies on how globalisation influences scholars based in nations like India, placed at a relative distance from the global domain. This study thus aims to enrich understanding of globalisation from the standpoint of these Indian scholars. The metaphor of a journey is used to conceptualise the explorative nature of the study.

This study also underlines the importance of understanding the local and national to analyse the global domain (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). In traversing the 'global' terrain, scholars also navigate the 'local and 'national' complexities. Studies have been conducted to understand how universities, institutions or nations react to global influences (Yang et al., 2021) (Shahjahan & Morgan, 2016). However, they have been few studies on how individuals as scholars and researchers navigate these parallel domains (Marginson, 2011) (Marginson & Xu, 2022). In this journey, we therefore attempt to learn about the journey of these researchers as they translate knowledge of local realities to the global pool of research.

This is also a self-reflexive study of my own journey as a scholar from India navigating the 'global' city of dreaming spires. Brought up in a coastal city in India's South East with scant opportunities in the field of social science for HE, I moved to the national capital to graduate from the college considered to the best in the country for women. During this study, I earned a place on two one-year international exchange programmes in Singapore and France. I studied International Affairs at a prestigious institute in France. Prior to joining the Department of Education at Oxford, I completed my Master specialising in Politics and International Relations (IR) from a sought-after university in China. In this study, I go back to 'local' in India to learn from the journeys of social science researchers in IR.

Prior studies have suggested that knowledge in social science is embedded in the local social, political and cultural dynamics (Connell, 2021). The heterogeneity of the local dynamics thus makes global visibility of research in the field tantamount to accommodation of diverse forms of knowledges (Marginson & Xu, 2022). "To internationalise humanities and social sciences research is more complex than science research" (Marginson & Xu, 2022, p.130). Further, a greater focus on practical applicability of research worldwide has constrained the space for the perceived 'low value' research of social sciences and humanities at national level (Hazelkorn, 2015) (Gulbrandsen & Aanstad, 2015). To understand these unique dynamics of the field, the study focuses on IR as one example of social science in India. This thesis seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How do social science researchers in India, in the discipline of IR, navigate the research environment, including the global research system?

RQ2: How do they perceive the ‘value’ of their social sciences research in the system?

By social scientists in India, it refers to researchers affiliated to a university in India. This excludes visiting faculty in Indian universities. The global research system refers to the formal and informal systems operating at the global level like the publishing of academic journals, collaborations, university partnership. These systems not only influence knowledge production but also lead to recognition, circulation and visibility of these knowledges (Xu, 2022).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Beginning this journey, in this chapter, I draw on prior studies and relevant literature to outline the "the story" of global research system and create a contextualised understanding of the phenomena (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.120). For the review, I began with generic search terms like 'global research system' 'global higher education' 'social science research in India' 'Indian higher education' and 'international relations in India'. Moreover, I also attempted to use specific terms to incorporate diverse perspectives which often do not feature prominently in general searches. For example, 'feminism in IR' 'Decolonial higher education'. The Bodleian Library catalogue was accessed for the review via SOLO online search engine. In addition, Google scholar and JSTOR were used to browse relevant literature. Since there are few studies that analyse social science research in India, I also referred to grey literature that consisted of newspaper articles, editorials and opinion pieces. These were searched via Google news and specific news websites like The Hindu. While this was initially done due to paucity of scholarly literature, I feel that the heterogenous sources bring added value to create an enriched understanding.

2.1 GLOBALISATION, IMAGINARIES AND INEQUALITIES

Globalisation can be understood as the process of "becoming global" via participation in the integrated systems and relationships that span across nation states (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). In this section, we aim to understand the different forces of 'globalisation' and its impact on knowledge production.

Globalisation consists of interactions between individuals, communities or organisations that take place beyond the confines of nation state (Wagner et al., 2015). Global science includes a communication system which is governed by the accumulated interactions of scientists internationally with the mission of knowledge creation (Marginson & Xu, 2023, p.34). Knowledge is developed and transmitted to a global pool of publications stored in bibliometric collections (Marginson, 2022). Global science is conceptualised in the form of a network where each successive agent can be added at a negligible cost and thereby forge any and every possible connection with the network (Wagner et al., 2015). Tracing of network collaborations and citation metrics suggests that "the network seems to encourage new participants and enable free movement inside" (Marginson, 2022, p.1573) (Wagner et al., 2015).

Globalisation, as a normative agent, shapes local imaginaries (Cantwell & Maldonado-Maldonado, 2009). An imaginary is an invisible frame that renders a meaning or conceptual understanding to the phenomena (Stein et al., 2019). The global domain is imagined as a "common space of equivalence" where large number of institutions are judged on the basis of a common criteria (Shahjahan & Morgan, 2016, p.92). These spaces are "universalised,

delocalised and depoliticised" (Shahjahan & Morgan, 2016, p.93). Global university rankings provide a classic illustration of the global domain of HE. The prevalence of rankings symbolises a "zero sum competition" in the global space with heterogenous institutions competing for the "scarce resource" of "reputational excellence", students and resources (Brankovic et al., 2018, p.280). The competition "fetish" is generally considered desirable to increase equity, quality and efficiency in HE (Naidoo, 2018, p.606). While in theory, the global domain is open to all and provides a compelling narrative of easy enrolment, the nature of participation and knowledge access has been asymmetrical on multiple levels.

The global flows of knowledge and science are not isomorphic in nature and the path of different objects (in this case, knowledge) have varying speeds, points of origin and termination (Appadurai, 2000). These differences can be understood by analysing the different geographic scales of interaction (Cantwell & Maldonado-Maldonado, 2009). In the process of "becoming global", national and local domains as parallel domains are equally important (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002) (Marginson, 2011). However, the distinctions between local, national and global are not "self-evident but are reified with power" (Cantwell & Maldonado-Maldonado, 2009, p.293). Demeter (2020), for instance, argues that different nations exercise different relations with the global. In countries like US and UK, "national science coincides with international science" (Demeter, 2020, p.36). In relatively powerful and developed nations like France, Germany and Japan, the two domains are differentiated and conducted in parallel. This is also the case with China where science is contained in English and Chinese language publications (Marginson, 2021). However, in economically lesser developed nations, access to international science is limited and thus scholars relegate to national domain. Mignolo (2012) argues that local histories exist everywhere but only some have the privilege to project the global design.

The conceptualisation of 'global' as spaces of equivalence creates a "desire to belong" to the international community among actors in these different geographies (Shahjahan & Morgan, 2016, p.100). This encompasses the desire for opportunities to benchmark themselves in the global domain and be globally visible. The desire can also be linked to the desire to gain epistemic privilege drawing from historical marginalisation of their knowledges (Shahjahan & Morgan, 2016). The global competition thus has power to enthral but also conceal the differences in material conditions of actors in the competition (Naidoo, 2018). Universities in the global South[1] are "catalysed by pressure" to enact policies that are not within the realm of their institutional priorities to gain a level of global standing (Teferr, 2019).

[1] Global South, in this paper, is used to refer to regions primarily in Asia, Africa and Latin America who have faced the brunt of colonialism or neo-imperialism which has led to inequalities in living standards, life expectancy, access to economic and symbolic resources today (Shahjahan et al., 2022). The term is used as a conscious effort to highlight regions that have not constituted the 'global design' of research system.

2.2 Coloniality And Dynamics Of Knowledge Production

This asymmetry in the respective distances between 'local' and 'global' is reflective of coloniality. Coloniality is a system of cultural and intellectual domination embedded in the practices of colonialism. This cultural domination continues to define the relationship between the cultures of Euro-America and others long after the "end of formal system of political domination by Western European societies" (Quijano, 2007, p.168). The cultural superiority is also disguised in the language of modernity "salvation, progress and being good for everyone" (Shahjahan & Morgan 2016, p.93). Spatially, coloniality is about "long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p.243). Despite the changes in geopolitical conditions, the colonially constituted hierarchy of knowledge remains more or less static (Stein et al., 2019, p.286) (Mignolo, 2012).

In social science, the 'global' is understood as the domain into which the "modern social political developments have expanded" (Bhambra, 2022, p.9). Global knowledge production is a site of imperialism and power (Chen, 2010). The cannon, in social sciences, refers to a "privileged set of texts whose interpretation and and reinterpretation defines the field" (Connell, 2021, p.4). Connell (2021) argues that in the field of sociology, for instance, the cannon was developed in the "urban and cultural centres of the major imperial powers" in the context of expansion of imperialism (p.9). These texts were organised around the central theme of "difference" between the civilisation of "metropole" and "other" cultures (p.9). For Connell, this global difference was embedded in the temporal imagination, of a linear progression of society from the primitive to the advanced. Mignolo (2012), however, explored the spatial dimension of what he called, the "colonial difference". The colonial difference mapped onto the geographies that were the 'Occident' and created disciplinary knowledge. This knowledge and understanding was projected on the 'Orient' as universal, disembodied theories (Tlostanova et al., 2016, p.214). The occident/orient was rearticulated to the metropole/periphery and global North/South divides mapping the difference between universal disciplinary knowledge and particularities of area studies/ subaltern studies (Mignolo, 2012, p.13) (Chen, 2010). There were some changes to these boundaries with United States, for instance, being the part of the global North[2].

This colonial difference emerged, amongst many factors, from the European paradigm of rationality (Quijano, 2007, p.172). Under this paradigm, knowledge was produced in the presumed distinction between 'subject' and the 'object' of study. The subject was an isolated individual, liberated from the social structures and bearer of reason (Quijano, 2007, p.173). The object, on the other hand, referred to an entity "external" to the subject by nature (Quijano,

[2] The term has been used, in this study, as a reference to former colonial and imperial powers whose local realities constituted the 'global design' of the research system.

2007, p.172). This subject-object relations could be mapped to relationship between disciplinary knowledge and area studies. This relation constitutes the colonial difference between the disciplinary subject emerging from the global North and the "known" object which situated in the 'other' geographies (Mignolo, 2012, p.18). The people at the exterior of the boundaries of disciplinary knowledge were interpreted as objects of someone else's study and "providers of raw material for someone else's universal and disembodied theories" (Tlostanova et al., 2016, p.214).

All knowledge production is "embodied and conditioned by researchers' situatedness" (Harding, 1986 as cited in Reiter, 2018, p.3). However, scientific knowledge emerging from metropoles in global North, "pretended to do the God's trick" (Haraway, 1988). Western scholars created conceptual tools stemming from their own limited situatedness that formed the disciplinary knowledge and claimed applicability in different worlds (Mignolo, 2018). In the construction of academic departments, journals and conferences, further institutionalised these tools (Reiter, 2018, p.3). Given the pre-eminence of scholars from global North in the field, the dominance of 'Europe' became a theoretical condition in which knowledge is produced in the third world. It would seem that only "Europe is theoretically knowable; all other histories are matters of empirical research that fleshes out a theoretical skeleton that is substantially Europe" (Chakrabarty, 2000, p.29).

The global South thus became a site to "learn about" using Western tools, concepts and preconcepts rather than sites to "learn from" (Connell, 2021, p.viii). The geographic identities, under the power of coloniality, became intrinsic to the onto-epistemic distinction (Said, 2003). The colonised thus assumed the image that was no more than the "reflection of the European vision of the world" which considered the colonised as the "inferior" (Mignolo, 2012, p.13). Connell thus argued that social science formed under the culture of imperialism "embodied an intellectual response to the colonial world" (Connell, 2021, p.9).

The tendency of social science to outline a universal path to modernity has been contested by social scientists. Postmodern perspectives, emerging from Europe, contested the "metanarratives" and "global solutions" and posited a relativist ontology of understanding the world (Daragmeh & Qabaha, 2020, p.158) (Wilkens, 2017). It created a discursive space for the emergence of postcolonialism. Postcolonialism further "aimed to disrupt the hegemonic discourses that reproduce truths based on European experiences" (Wilkens, 2017, p.4) (Seth, 2013). Postcolonial and decolonial scholarship, highlighted the impact of the colonial and imperial histories in "shaping a colonial way of thinking about the world" (Nair, 2017, p.1). Eurocentrism became a way to describe the coloniality of power that created classificatory apparatus of the planetary population (Mignolo, 2012).

Scholars put forth different mechanisms to undo this coloniality of knowledges that subsumed all models of cognition and interpretation of the world to norms imposed by Western

modernity (Tlostanova et al., 2016, p.214). There is no one prescriptive path to undo this coloniality. In critiquing the linear progress of modernity, it rather opens avenues for diverse conceptualisations. Mignolo (2012) posit “border thinking” as a form of “recognition and transformation of the hegemonic imaginary from the perspectives of people in subaltern position” (Mignolo, 2002, p.736-737 as cited in Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2023, p.189). Border thinking outlines two features of knowledge production. First is the epistemic disassociation from the modern imaginary in delinking from the universal claims of knowledges from global North. It involves refusal of submission to the global designs. Chakrabarty (2000) calls for challenging the centrality allocated to Europe as the ‘origins’ of global design (Seth, 2013). It further questions the universality of these designs which reproduce the power relations characteristic of the colonial encounters (Seth, 2011). Border thinking emerges from the impulse of discrepancy "of having to live in colonial power matrix but not belonging to its memories, feelings and way of sensing” (Tlostanova et al., 2016, p.217). As a response to rationality of Western thought, Mignolo (2012) argues for “rethinking and reconceptualising the stories that have been told” to divide the world into modern and premodern or disciplinary locations and the subaltern (p.98). Border thinking allows to remap the cultures of scholarship and the erase these borders. It thus brings together the geographies of knowing from and about (Mignolo, 2012).

Second characteristic of border thinking involves “destabilising the subject-object relationship from the position of those that have been denied subjectivity and rationality” (Tlostanova et al., 2016, p.214). Since modernity is a pervasive phenomenon that traps cognitive power and prevents critical thinking, border thinking emerges from the borders of local histories that enact global designs and local histories dealing with them (Tlostanova et al., 2016) (Mignolo, 2012). In this situated awareness of borders, It conceptualises knowledge exchange between two local knowledges. Decolonial scholars call for epistemic divergence in embracing alternate sources of knowledge (that were suppressed in the modern imaginary) and local ways of thinking (Mignolo, 2007) (Shahjahan et al., 2017).

However, the dynamics of global science make such forms of border thinking difficult. For instance, Abusalim (2023) outlines the challenges that researchers in Arab universities face in translating the local knowledges into the global system. This includes greater availability and reliance on the Western English-language sources. The global science also fosters epistemological dependencies on the existing frameworks (Abusalim, 2023). Therefore, taking a more pragmatic stance, Das (2018) argues for creation of a dialogic space of hybridities by embracing Western epistemologies. This would allow discussion on knowledge frameworks on more equal terms.

2.3 Asymmetries In Global Science And Academic Dependency

The following section outlines few ways in which the asymmetric interactions with global science structures fosters academic dependency on the North and reduces space for diversity of knowledge forms.

1. Citation Indexes

The two global citation indexes – Scopus and Web of Science form the basic data infrastructure of global science (Mills, 2022). These are used by global university rankings to evaluate research performance of universities (Hazelkorn, 2015). Universities use citation indexes to sign-post reputable journals and expect their academicians to publish in top-quartile journals (Marginson, 2022). These indexes act as systems of recognition through inclusion and citation that create boundaries between legitimate and delegitimate knowledges (Marginson, 2022) (Mills, 2022). They evaluate and select journals on the basis of similar criteria that place small journals catering to national ecosystems outside of Euro-America at a disadvantage (Mills, 2023). In social science, the publishing industry is dominated by four multinational companies based in global North - that publish more than 70% of all journals (Mills, 2023). In 2011, out of approximately 2000 journals published in India, only 371 were indexed in Scopus or Web of Science (Nagaraja & Vasanthakumar, 2011). Journals with non-uniform frequency intervals are excluded (Mishra et al., 2015, p.38). The focus on scientometrics also excludes research and knowledges that are not indexed like conference proceedings (Mishra et al., 2015). Such bibliometric rules reduce the ability of the scholars from global South to gain international recognition and visibility.

In India, there have been attempts to generate alternate citation index however these have suffered from lack of credibility and reputation. Recognising the need for a scholarly database for funding agencies to access data regarding scientific output in India, the 'Knowledge Society', a civil society organisation, created the Indian Citation Index (ICI) (The Knowledge Foundation, 2011) (Giri & Das, 2011). However, the credibility of ICI has been under question in the academic community. In 2017, the University Grants Commission (UGC), HE regulatory body of India, created a list of credible journals to weed out predatory journals and provide a metric to evaluate academic profiles. All ICI indexed journals, like those of Scopus and Web of Science, were granted default entry into the list. However, when the list was re-evaluated in 2018, the ICI indexed journals, unlike those of Scopus and Web of Science were reassessed on basis of complaints from the members of academic community (Bandyopadhyay, 2018). The UGC list includes about 32,000 journals. About 4,000 journals were excluded from the list in 2018 on account of poor quality, insufficient information or false claims (Nature Index, 2018) (Puskar, 2017).

The global indexes enhance the repute of elite journals from global North. These journals often marginalise scholars emerging from diverse geographic locations and backgrounds (Demeter, 2020) (Xu, 2022). While there has been increasing response to ensure

greater diversity of peer-reviewers, the Anglo-European scholars tend to dominate the positions of editors and peer reviewers (Xu, 2022). The reviewers also tend to be chosen from citation lists where Anglo-European scholars also dominate (Demeter, 2020, p.46). The international journals, as gatekeepers of knowledge, also influence the themes of research and style of writing (Beigel, 2014).

2. Open Access Publications

Open access publications provide a channel for researchers to communicate their knowledge, theories, methodologies and topics of significance to a global community. Elite institutions based in global North purchase publishing access rights to these journals (Demeter, 2020). These publications can be accessed by students and scholars around the world free-of-charge. However, with limited funds, universities in India find it difficult to cover the Article Processing Charge (APC) for the scholars. The scientists in India are under pressure to divert funds from research or human resources to pay the APC of open access journals and make their publication visible internationally (Kaushik, 2023). The PhD scholars under the Department of Science and Technology receive emoluments of INR 5 lakh per annum (equivalent to about 4726 GBP)[3] to cover tuition fees, boarding and other living expenses. Notwithstanding the fact that these disbursements are often delayed for months, the APC of publishing in a paper ranges from INR 2.5 lakh to 5 lakh (equivalent to about 2363- 4726 GBP)[4] (Kaushik, 2023). Prestigious journals levy higher APC but undertake few steps to bridge the 'perceived' excellence gap between scholars of U.S, Europe and elsewhere. Scholars applying for waivers are unable to supply documentary evidence of lack of funds and are subject to vetting processes designed from a Euro-American understanding (Kaushik, 2023). With libraries in global South facing budgetary constraints, there is greater tendency to incorporate open access journals in the database (Aragudige & Vasanthakumar, 2014). Therefore, these scholars are restricted to the freedom of "silent listening" without having the "ability to have their voices heard" (Demeter, 2020, p.71).

3. Research Collaborations

Another merit of the global system is collaborative knowledge production (Marginson, 2022). Given that global science transcends national borders and is relatively autonomous from national control, it provides an avenue for international research collaborations (Wagner et al., 2015). Between 1996 and 2018 the proportion of all published papers in Scopus] that had co-authors from more than one country increased from 12.4% to 22.5% (Marginson, 2022). Given

[3] The amount in GBP is based on HM Revenue & Customs exchange rates as of 2nd August, 2023 (1 GBP = 105.7912 INR) accessed via https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hmrc-exchange-rates-for-2023-monthly

[4] Ibid.

the inequality of resources and expertise between nations, international collaborations act a mechanism that contributes to bridging the gap (Chinchilla-Rodríguez et al., 2019).

Most collaborations are shared on a North-South basis, where scholars from South tend to foster collaborations with the global North due to perceived quality and reputational advantage. (Varghese, 2015). Social scientists publishing in the internationally recognized journals tend to cite journals from the North and collaborate with Western scientists leading to a subsequent loss of local reference points in academia (Gingras & Mosbah-Natanson, 2010 as cited in Beigel, 2014, p.620). The benefits of collaborations are unevenly shared. Studies found that nations with developed scientific capacities (like Unites States, Switzerland, Sweden and Singapore) have higher citation impact when they lead collaborations relative to lesser advantaged countries (Chinchilla-Rodríguez et al., 2019). This means that the latter group have incentives to collaborate but not lead these collaborations and thus are mainly reliant on the former. Moreover, the perceived hierarchies, in these North-South collaborations, leads to inequality in work and credit share in these partnerships (Demeter, 2020).

4. Academic Conferences

Academic conferences form a key location for researchers to present their research, interact with other scholars in the same field and gain visibility in academia (Corona-Sobrino et al., 2020) (Mishra et al., 2015). They are generally organised by academic and professional associations with prestigious ones being attended by well-known institutions, editorial board members of journals and scholars (Dongre et al., 2021). Conferences increase collaborations between scholars by an estimate of 10-15% and offer possible publication opportunities (Edelman, 2023) (Bos et al., 2019). It thus provides an avenue for scholars from global South to interact with the global domain. Enhanced "scientific reputation" via greater perceived ability can also lead to increase in citation counts (Corona-Sobrino et al., 2020, p.3).

While most conferences are generally thematically organised to allow for different forms of research, elite institutions in global North have greater access to invitations for these conferences and their scholars generally hold the symbolic space for keynote speeches (Demeter, 2020, p.34). Moreover, the travel costs to these conferences generally in the global North, are prohibitive for early-career researchers and faculty in the resource- constrained institutions of South (Edelman, 2023). In India, Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) provides travel grants to scholars invited to attend International Conferences. While amount of funding could not be traced, the organisation funded only about 172 applications for travel abroad in 2019-2020 (ICSSR, 2022)[5]. The funds spent for international collaboration,

[5] It funded only 6 applications in 2021-22, a big drop from before the coronavirus pandemic in 2020. This is an irregularity in the general trend perhaps owing to lesser in-person conferences in the year and pandemic recovery. Therefore, prior figure has been cited. See Appendix III A.

travel grants and for organising conferences was estimated to be INR103.55 lakh (equivalent to about 97881 GBP) in 2021-22 (ICSSR, 2022)[6]. While the amount granted is substantial for India, it is no match to the global North (Thorat & Verma, 2017).

5. Research Culture

The drive to worldwide excellence has led to institutionalisation of the publish or perish culture in academia worldwide (Bello et al., 2023). It induces academics to publish number of papers or face the possible risks to career. Research acceptance is viewed as a means for scholars and their universities to earn reputation, prestige, recognition, bargaining power and mobility on international scale. As a result, publications have become the most important determinant of career progress for scholars in the South (Singh, 2021). Scholars in Africa feel that their contributions as teachers, administrators, scholars and researchers in service to the community is undermined with the emphasis on publications (Amutuhaire, 2022).

6. Research Funding

Traditionally, national governments have been the main source of research funding (Nadh, 2022, p.102) (Hazelkorn, 2019). The research funding pool globally has experienced diversification of sources with governments from global South now enhancing allocations to research (Chankseliani, 2023). However, as Chankseliani argues that the "most globally visible research output" from Central Asia, for instance, is usually funded by United States (p.797). Universities and research institutes worldwide are provider for intellectual and other resources for research (Mishra et al., 2015) (Chankseliani, 2023).

In India, the ICSSR forms the main funding body for research of social sciences in universities and research institutes in India. During the year 2021-22, ICSSR received grant-in-aid of INR 135.82 crore (equivalent to about 12838497 GBP) from the Department of HE (ICSSR, 2022, p.322). These grants are used to fund research projects, PhD and other fellowships, travel grants and other activities. However, even for the research institutes under the ICSSR, international agencies form the major source of research support (Thorat & Verma, 2017). These constitute grants from international foundations like the Ford Foundation, Department for International Development, Rockefeller Foundation and from international universities like Colombia University, Harvard Law school amongst others. The funding is primarily for large research projects, organising seminars and publications. In India, following the National Education Policy (NEP) published in 2020, central universities, (established under the Act of Parliament) have been issued guidelines to create endowment funds for funding research (University Grants Commission, 2021). The NEP has encouraged universities to look for independent sources of funding, delegating this responsibility to them. This is likely to

[6] Calculation in footnote 3.

exacerbate existing hierarchies where high-ranked universities in India will be able to mobilise funding from well-placed alumni. Primarily social sciences universities and institutions aiming to recruit students from socio-economic margins will be facing challenges (Agrawal, 2023).

In reality, scholars argue that global science communication magnifies the voices of the global North. The former colonial powers and the imperialist power (United States) still hold the symbolic space within academia (Demeter, 2020). This also creates academic dependency when scholars in the South tend to rely on the global recognition systems of the North and thus align with the Eurocentric theories and methodologies. For instance, the social science research practise in India, disregards interrogation of the 'normalized' methods of doing research emerging from the West (Das, 2018, p.102). "The hegemonic power creates an inclusion/exclusion divide in the global knowledge pool, where only certain knowledge is legitimated and codified to be seen, used, trusted, and valued" (Xu, 2022, p.37). It therefore constrains the space for recognition and circulation of alternate forms of knowledges.

This study aims to understand how IR researchers in India navigate these asymmetries between the global designs and local conditions.

2.4 IR Landscape In India

Adding to the discussion on national context of India, this section provides a brief outline of the IR research landscape in the country.

1. Pre- Independence Institutional Set-Up and Universities

The central universities (universities of Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras) that majorly constituted the HE landscape in India were established during the British Raj (1857) (Jayaram, 2007). These universities were modelled after the University of London (1836) and were established with the intentionality of creating an Indian elite to fill the middle ranks of the civil service (Altbach & Agarwal, 2012) (Chanana, 2006). Intellectual enquiry was not a prerogative of these universities (Jayaram, 2007). However, while universities provided space for discussions on other social science disciplines, the same cannot be said for political thinking on issues that address the relations between states (Bajpai, 2005). The British felt that providing the legitimate space in university to discuss IR would tantamount to independence of India in dealing with other nations (Bajpai, 2005). The same concerns are reflected in the pro-British stance of the Indian Institute of International Affairs set-up in 1936 (Thakur & Davis, 2017). While IR set-up in India eventually began with the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) in 1943 and subsequently the School of International Studies in 1955, it provided a delayed start to institutional space for IR research in India (Mishra, 2021).

2. Post Independence Research Orientation

After independence from British colonialism, Indian HE system was oriented towards the local needs of the newly founded nation. Enhancing access to education and improving teaching standards was the priority. Research was perceived as teachers' obligation to remain up-to-date (Jayaram, 2007). In IR, researchers primarily attempted to "justify and operationalise" non-alignment policy of the then foreign minister. There was greater inclination to produce research of contemporary relevance and theory-building was perceived as an endeavour that could be afforded by the "Western" scholars (Bajpai 2005, p.22). Indian scholars, thrown into the "hostile" and "unforgiving" realities of the post colonial world needed to focus on their social responsibility.

3. Massification of HE

India reported a four-fold increase in HE enrollment since 2001. In 2019, the gross enrollment ratio[7] in India was 26.3% (Ravi et al., 2019) (Chakraborty, 2021). With the expansion and privatisation of HE Institutions (HEI), there is an increased demands on HEI to cater to the first generation students from disadvantaged backgrounds entering academia (Navani, 2020). While there is a pull towards aligning with the global ranking frameworks, there are local needs of these students that need consideration. However, with the massification of HE at the undergraduate level, the enrollment in research programmes as a ratio of total enrollment has declined (Ravi et al., 2019). This is probably due to lack of research capacity of the Indian HEI. Only 34.9% of all HEI run postgraduate programmes and just 2.5% run PhD programmes (Ravi et al., 2019). Scholars have criticised policy makers and HEI in India for treating teaching and research as disparate activities and not acknowledging the complementary role of the two functions (Jayaram, 2007). "Universities have been reduced to centres of teaching and examining masses, without any scope or desire to encourage innovative thinking" (Pal et al., 2019). This leads to students opting for postgraduate study abroad. There is also a lack of research training provided at the undergraduate level. Moreover, the returned researchers from institutes abroad often carry their research agenda of industrialised countries which may not have relevance to the local context in India. This leads to a situation of brain drain in the absence of actual emigration (Jayaram, 2007). Despite the problems of research capacity, in terms of number of publications, India occupies a salient position in global citation indexes (Singh et al., 2021). This is also due to the fact that about 80% of all scientific publications in India are in English (Thorat & Verma, 2017). However, the citation counts for India remain low. The relative impact of citations for India is half (0.51) of that of the world average (1.0); the relative citation impact for China is 0.61, and that for the U.S. is 1.24 (Ravi et al., 2019).

FIGURE 1 : Research Output Comparison

[7] Constitutes the ratio of young population to the students enrolled in HEI

Research Volume, Global rank and share of top 15 countries (Singh et al., 2021)

Country	Web of science			Scopus			Dimensions		
	Rank	Output	Global share[a] (%)	Rank	Output	Global share[b] (%)	Rank	Output	Global share[c] (%)
USA	1	3,600,634	27.24	1	4,161,030	23.04	1	4,790,566	17.03
China	2	2,282,005	17.26	2	3,213,841	17.80	2	2,637,890	9.38
UK	3	908,609	6.87	3	1,239,951	6.87	3	1,450,521	5.16
Germany	4	895,656	6.78	4	1,101,725	6.10	4	1,209,059	4.30
Japan	5	707,307	5.35	5	859,673	4.76	5	1,164,208	4.14
France	6	621,170	4.70	7	772,988	4.28	6	869,547	3.09
Canada	7	598,829	4.53	9	681,064	3.77	8	764,264	2.72
Italy	8	578,752	4.38	8	691,017	3.83	9	736,789	2.62
India	9	529,199	4.00	6	852,896	4.72	7	770,778	2.74
Australia	10	524,123	3.97	11	607,092	3.36	11	654,941	2.33
South Korea	11	483,207	3.66	12	552,628	3.06	13	558,350	1.98
Spain	12	479,277	3.63	10	613,668	3.40	10	658,268	2.34
Netherlands	13	350,776	2.65	15	392,326	2.17	15	441,760	1.57
Brazil	14	344,012	2.60	13	495,022	2.74	12	616,541	2.19
Russia	15	285,171	2.16	14	441,954	2.45	14	443,510	1.58

4. Diversification of Research

While universities suffer from lack of research capacity, research at independent think tanks and research institutes have gained greater salience for policy-making. Government is the primary consumer of such research. Operating outside of the bureaucracies of universities, these think tanks provide an avenue for conglomeration of skills and expertise for research (Ravi et al., 2019). However, there has been increasing skepticism of the autonomy of the institutes. Media reports have exposed their close affiliations to government (Donthi, 2017) (Shroff, 2018) and corporate entities (Sarkar, 2019). These reports question the extent to which these institutes are able to maintain their independence or become legitimating tools for the government-corporate nexus.

5. The ‘Global’ and ‘Local’ in IR

Scholars in IR experience Euro-American centrism in the discipline. Major IR philosophies are drawn from European thinkers like Machiavelli and Thucydides (Narain, 2017). The history of the discipline globally emerges from the two world wars and thus little attention is paid to issues like colonialism even though it significantly influences IR today (Alejandro, 2018). The Western experiences are taken as universal and ideal referents negating the diversity of experiences of the global South (Alejandro, 2018). The strategic thought of these countries are then conceptualized as derivatives of European practices neglecting its unique intricacies (Datta-Ray, 2015). This Euro-American centrism creates a discourse of IR that neglects Southern agency (Alejandro, 2018). The ‘West’ is perceived as the active ‘doer’ of IR while the other nations are ‘reacting’ to the West. The issues in IR are placed in a

hierarchy with the concerns of the major powers occupying the central themes (Narain, 2017). The field of IR has also sought to 'globalise' by encouraging scholars to draw understanding of IR from non-Western frameworks (Acharya & Buzan, 2019).

However, the onset of critical perspectives (like postcolonialism and feminism) drew attention to IR theory's neglect of the critical intersections of Empire, race, gender and class in the global power dynamics (Nair, 2017). However, these alternative paradigms of knowledge have had limited impact on IR scholarship and continues to be on its margins (Daragmeh & Qabaha, 2020). Although issues raised by postcolonialism relate directly to the international gaze of the discipline, the term appears relatively less in IR literature (Wilkens, 2017). Amongst other factors, this is due to the ontology of nation states in IR (Ojha & Jaiswal, 2023). Methodological nationalism, as an intellectual orientation, assumes nations as the natural units of comparison and renders dynamics of coloniality (Bhambra, 2022). It also prevents analysis of global power dynamics like gender and race as a constituent of IR. The discourses in the discipline itself seek to reproduce rather than challenge the unequal global socio-political order (Ojha & Jaiswal, 2023).

As a result of the Euro-American centrism alongwith its own history that hindered academic discussions, IR scholarship in India has mainly subscribed to mainstream ontology and epistemology, IR theories like Realism, Liberalism and their deviants emerging from the global North (Chagas-Bastos et al., 2019, p.435). This uncritical acceptance of existing theories and further neglect of theorising works is one of the reasons why IR scholars in India have fallen short of making significant contribution to knowledge in the field (Bajpai, 2009). Bajpai argues that 'theory' should be viewed from a post-positivist lens which is a reflective process of making explicit the underlying assumptions and concepts (Bajpai, 2009). However, other scholars argue that Non-Alignment Movement (NAM)[8] that formed a major feature of IR in the global South was not recognised as a theory in IR. "Despite offering an alternative world-view of how the global state system should function, non-alignment was never accorded the status or recognition as a 'systemic' IR theory because it did not suit the interests of powers that be" (Behera, 2007, p.347). Behera (2007) points out that the idea of 'theory' is itself constructed in the North and has its own parameters of what counts as theory.

The study thus aims to understand how scholars navigate through the local, national context to produce knowledge.

[8] A coalition movement of about hundred states of the world led by India, Yugoslavia and Egypt

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

In this chapter, I outline the research design of the dissertation study.

3.1 OVERALL APPROACH IN THE STUDY

The dissertation worked with "in-depth" qualitative research interviews (Marvasti & Tanner, 2020, p.329) as the methodology for understanding IR researchers' experiences with the social science research system. The methodology was informed by the Research Questions (RQs).

RQ1: How do social science researchers in India, in the discipline of IR, navigate the research environment, including the global research system?

RQ2: How do they perceive the 'value' of their social sciences research in the system?

The study aimed to go beyond the prevalent statistical metrics (via citation counts and comparisons) of the global research system. Qualitative interviews provided a means to gather in-depth insights not captured by statistics. Interviews were chosen as a method to enable participants to discuss interpretations of the world they live in (Cohen et al., 2007, p.409). It also helped discern what 'value' meant to them. In-depth interviews help in privileging the participants' point of view and generating a "deeper and empathetic" understanding of their engagements with the system (Marvasti & Tanner, 2020, p.333). Given, that literature about the social science research environment in India is relatively limited, the format created a space for participants to "answer questions that have not been asked" (May, 2011, p.135). In-depth interviews are also effective in illuminating and exploring the complexities of the given topic (Marvasti & Tanner, 2020, p.333).

Drawing from the style metaphorically described as "an intrepid traveler", the interviews aimed to foster a conducive environment for fellow travellers to tell their stories (Forsey, 2012, p.366). Since, the participants were also fellow researchers, interview was a "social occasion" for the interviewer and the interviewee to jointly involve in the production of knowledge (Marvasti & Tanner, 2020, p.329) The study used semi-structured open-ended questions. The structure was kept flexible to allow room for deviation from the planned agenda in accordance with the participants stories (Marvasti & Tanner, 2020, p.333).

3. 2 POSITIONALITY AND REFLECTIONS

I approach the study from a "social constructivist" standpoint (Hartas, 2010, p.44), in which individuals are understood to experience reality through their interactions. Knowledge of the reality can be constructed by understanding people's experiences. More specifically, in this study, I attempted to understand the research system via the experiences of the scholars who interact with it. I thus have striven to focus on "participants' perspectives and ideas and

obtain rich descriptions of the context that surround them" (Hartas, 2010, p.44). Also drawing from the reflexive standpoint, I understand that all research is "interpretive" (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.13). Operating within the qualitative paradigm, researcher subjectivity is seen as a "resource" for knowledge generation which is inherently "subjective and situated" (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.8). The metric for judging 'scientific rigour' in this case is then for researcher to be aware of these subjectivities and make them explicit.

My own positionality helped me create the space for learning the stories of the IR scholars in India. As my findings suggest, the 'personal is academic'. This academic journey was also a reflection of my own journey of being brought up and attaining education in different locations in the global South and also navigating the space of the 'global' system from the University of Oxford. In this sense, as a 'researcher' I also became the 'researched'. Having pursued my undergraduate studies in a public university in India, I shared a common knowledge of the HE system and the discipline of IR with my participants. Yet, having not engaged with the particular dynamics of research landscape in India and approaching the study from an institution in global North, I was aware of the deficits in my knowledge. The common bonds of lived experiences, however made me eager to learn their stories as fellow travellers, whose experiences might be different from mine. In the course of the interviews, I thus attempted to co-construct a "familiar" space with my participants (Berger, 2015, p.222).

My familiarity with the participants' local context, helped me formulate use terms familiar to the interviewees. In this customary space, the shared experiences with the participants helped me understand the "implied content" and hear the "unsaid" in the interview process (Berger, 2015, p.223). I was also aware that my familiarity with the participants carried risks of "projection of own bias" (Berger, 2015, p.224). This can lead to participants withholding information that is obvious, or the researcher taking their own experience for granted and overlooking certain elements of the participants experience (Berger, 2015, p.224). However, the format of semi-structured interviews provided the latitude to "probe beyond the answers and thus enter into a dialogue" with the participants (May, 2011, p.134) in which the common ground helped the mutual flow of conversation. I attempted to create a dialogical space in the interviews where participants would feel free to guide me in case they felt the questions were irrelevant and also continually make me aware of the context.

3.3 Research Process

1. Selection of the Discipline

Social science constitutes a "fundamental category" of academic disciplines (Kumar et al., 2017, p.180) in India. These disciplines form a common objective. They seek to analyse the components of the manifold social system, human behaviour and interactions with one another. Thorat & Verma (2017), listed 11 "broad categories" of Social Sciences identified by

ICSSR, including Economics, Sociology, Social History, Social Geography and Population Studies, International Studies and others. This study chose the discipline of IR as a case for understanding social science research. IR, has a very intrinsic 'international' element to the discipline. It therefore provided a prospective avenue to understand the local/national conceptions of international/global.

Selection of IR was also due to my own familiarity with the field. Learning IR in different geographical contexts, I understood the subject through varied lenses. Having pursued a Masters thesis and its defense in IR, I was aware of the methodological inclinations and theories prevalent in the discipline. I could thus understand the researchers' insights in relation to navigating the discipline, enabling me to collect in-depth insights on the dynamics of knowledge production. If instead I had familiarised myself with another discipline in the short duration of the research, I could not have provided with an equivalent depth of epistemic understanding. IR as the case study was a prudent choice.

2. Selection of Institutions

There are approximately twenty-four universities that offer courses in IR in India (Shahi, 2016). Keeping in mind the scope of the study, I limited my outreach to universities in Delhi. This is due to the relative prominence of the IR discipline in the capital, reflected in the universities and think tanks. This locational prominence is due to the historical beginning of teaching and learning IR in India at the University of Delhi in 1955 (Shahi, 2016). Secondly, there was belief amongst researchers studying foreign policy that proximity of the political milieus of the country was necessary to gauge the "stakes and power relations that determine foreign policy" (Alejandro, 2018, p.112). The prospects of networking and facilities for research was concentrated in Delhi and a breadth of institutions became located at the capital. As scholars A, D and O mentioned during the interviews, the IR field in India continues to be quite "Delhi-centric" (D). Despite the increase in IR courses in other regional universities (Shahi, 2016), the locus for researchers still tends to be the capital.

I further attempted to ensure diversity in terms of public and private universities. The public central universities established during colonial times were modelled after the University of London, where undergraduate teaching was mainly undertaken in colleges (Altbach & Agarwal, 2012) (Chanana, 2006). Postgraduate students were a smaller community taught at the university centre by professors. Altbach & Agarwal (2012) represent the distinction between college teachers and university professors as the differentiation of the functions of teaching and research in universities. However, browsing through faculty profiles in colleges, it was realised that this is no longer the case with more college teachers now engaging in research. Therefore, scholars in colleges were also approached in the study. The private in the study included institutions with 'Deemed University' status (accorded to universities central

government notification) and state private universities (accorded the status by state legislature) (Navani, 2020). The study's diversity of institutions helped in gaining different perspectives of both the local and global dynamics. Degrees granted by all of the selected universities were recognised by the UGC in India.

3. Recruitment of Participants

I collected information of faculty members from websites of universities offering IR or Political Science courses in New Delhi. I also reached out to my friends who have studied IR in India, and professors based in India, asking them to identify possible candidates. Students enrolled in research degrees like MPhil and PhD were identified via university websites and personal contacts were former was unavailable. Initially chosen students were asked to nominate other possible interviewees in a process of 'snowball sampling' (May, 2011, p.145). I also contacted researchers based in think tanks, located outside university systems.

Participants were included on the basis of their profiles explicitly stating research interests in IR or its intersections. Approximately 50 participants meeting the criteria were contacted for the study, while keeping in mind a need for institutional and gender diversity. Besides non-respondents, some potential participants could not make it due to busy schedules. A number of women researchers particularly mentioned that they were balancing a busy work schedule and family commitments.

In total, 16 participants were interviewed. They comprised one MPhil student and two PhD scholars, three assistant professors (early-career) and four associate professors (mid-career) working as academics in universities, five university professors, and one research analyst. Together they were based at three public universities, three private universities and one think tank, all located in the National Capital Region of Delhi. Amongst the participants from the public universities, two were based in a college affiliated to a public university. Gender balance was achieved with eight participants self-identified as women and eight as men.

TABLE 1 : Participant Profiles

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Institution Type
A	Male	Private University
B	Male	Think Tank
C	Male	Public University
D	Female	Public University

E	Male	Public University
F	Male	Private University
G	Male	Private University
H	Male	Private University
I	Female	Private University
J	Female	Public University
K	Female	Public University
L	Female	Public University
M	Female	Public University
N	Male	Private University
O	Female	Private University
P	Female	Private University

4. The Interviews

The interviews took place between June 15th and July 20th in 2023. All interviews were conducted online using Microsoft Teams.

Before the interview, I collected preliminary information about the participants from university websites and in cases where available, referred to participants' personal blogs. Further, I also browsed through the participants' previous conducted studies, newspaper articles and online lectures in some cases. All of these sources were drawn from the public domain. This pre-activity was important to familiarise myself with the participants backgrounds. Studying their prior works helped me understand their writing, research interests, topics of study and methodological inclinations. It also helped to give a preliminary understanding of where the participant's work was situated in the field of IR. This was all helpful in three ways.

First, with this knowledge, I could adapt and personalise the interview questions for the participants. This helped me collect in-depth responses in the limited duration. Rather than asking generic questions about 'what theories and methodologies do you think are prevalent in the field of IR?' I asked them what drew them to select the particular theory they did. The participants would, in response, describe the relative position of different theories in the field and factors they considered in choosing theory.

Second, knowing about the participants helped me bridge the geographical distance between myself and them. With my participants, I could thereby co-create a common shared

space. This space is important for the in-depth style interviews so that participants feel comfortable in sharing their stories (May, 2011, p.148). Learning about the participants before and engaging with them in the interviews, I felt personally connected to my participants. They reciprocated the connection by sharing their own personal stories and their journey through the terrains of the research landscape.

Third, knowing participants' background, I could understand their responses in nuanced and multi-level way. This helped me adequately represent their perspectives and narrate their stories in this dissertation.

Each interview lasted for 60-90 minutes, except for one that was wrapped up in 30 minutes due to pressing commitments of the participant. All participants were provided with the information sheet explaining the format and data collection before the interview and their consent was obtained. They were reminded of the main points before the beginning of the interview session. The interview began with questions about participants' specific research methodological inclinations, their perspectives on the research landscape in India, the differences with research environments overseas, teaching experience and their takeaways from their journey. In the end, most participants said they were appreciative of the interview process. Some even offered to provide additional help for the study.

5. Data Analysis

I pursued thematic analysis of the interview data (Punch & Oancea, 2014) (Braun & Clarke, 2022). I believe that thematic analysis embodies a qualitative approach to analysis where analytical rigour is credited over "frequency" of data (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.141). Given the diversity of participants, I felt that this method would provide greater flexibility of engagement with the data without compromising on diverse perspectives. An inductive approach helped me derive insights from participants' understandings of the research system.

The interview was transcribed using MS Teams in-built transcription services. I verified the transcriptions with the recorded interviews. The transcriptions were de-identified and uploaded to the nVivo software for analysis, license for which was provided by the University of Oxford. During the process of verifying transcripts and reading them, I developed an initial knowledge of the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.43). On reading the transcripts, I tagged segments of text with "topic codes" (Richards, 2005 as cited in Punch & Oancea, 2014, p.226). These were assigned on the basis of the subject that piece of data was providing information on. These subjects were drawn inductively from the data. These codes were descriptive, low inference, useful to "summarise segments of data" (Punch & Oancea, 2014, p.226). The data summaries further helped me familiarise myself with the dataset. I then proceeded with data interpretation.

In the second stage of the coding process, I created "pattern codes" based on data interpretation. The second stage involved consolidation of data into "smaller and meaningful" units (Punch & Oancea, 2014, p.226). This also involved re-arranging data from different topics that were pointing to the system and the individual, for example. I drew out the relationships between the different codes to understand whether they were informing me of the system or the way researchers navigate them. This "shared organising concept" helped me arrange data into themes (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.77). These themes were further developed and revised. The process of moving from data set to "developed analysis" was an iterative one involving back and forth (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.77). The final themes are reflected in the findings and discussion chapter in the thesis.

TABLE 2 : Coding Examples

Transcription	Topic Codes	Pattern Codes	Themes
In my field, international relations or in the social sciences in general, there are very few players in India there are some organizations which are sort of beginning to do some work. There are some that existed for a long time, but if you look at the quality and the volume of their output, it's very limited. So I suspect this what has been the case until now is that it hasn't been so much the institution or the organization, but you know, a bright person comes along and that person will succeed regardless of what their, you know, what kind of institutional support is.	Research System in India	System and the Individual	The National Terrain
So there are different ways of looking into IR as well, but it is generally preferred to give more importance to the realist perspective like we do not have permanent friends and permanent enemies, but only permanent interests.	Theory	Existing Disciplinary Structure (Influence of external in India?)	The National Terrain

3.4 Research Ethics

The procedure entailing recruitment of participants and thereafter engagement was approved by the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) at the University of Oxford[9]. With regard to confidentiality, the participant names have been substituted with pseudonyms, and some personal information (like the designation in organisation) has been provided above in an aggregated form. In certain sections, quotes have been further anonymised to ensure non-traceability of participants. Since participants in this study, where researchers themselves, they were also familiar with the procedures.

Since the interview is a social interaction between the researcher and the participant, it is important to be aware of how space and time can influence power relations (Massey, 1994 as cited in James & Busher, 2009). In online settings, the researcher sets the call and asks the questions holding greater control. I attempted to share the control by asking interviewees before staring the recording and informing them that they could pause the interview when they wished to.

3.5 Limitations

Fieldwork could not be conducted for the study due to limitations of funding and schedule. This posed some limitations on the outreach to potential participants as some participants maybe less inclined to respond via e-mail (Sproull & Kiesler, 1986). However, with assistance from my friends and professors in India I was able to achieve due equity in terms of participants.

Moreover, reduced social context in a computer-mediated communication setting can make the interaction impersonal and deter engagement from participants (Sproull & Kiesler, 1986) (Lobe et al., 2022). However, in collecting interviewee information beforehand and personalising questions, I was able to make the interviews more relevant to their research endeavours. In online settings, high engagement topics make it easier to facilitate interaction (Lobe et al., 2022).

[9] See Appendix 1

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

In this chapter, we seek to understand the research landscape from the perspective of IR researchers in India. For these scholars, researching mainly in English, the local, national and global landscapes overlap and we shall therefore be exploring these intersections as well. Operating within the different domains and across the intersections, we can see how the scholars ascribe value to their research.

4.1 THE RESEARCH LANDSCAPE

Operating in this intersection of local, national and global landscape, IR researchers in India traverse through uneven terrains. While they face an inherent disadvantage in the global system of knowledge production, they also navigate a challenging local/national environment that places limitations on their research capacity.

4.1.1 The Global System

They are three main ways in which the global system places an inherent disadvantage on their writings.

1. The 'Western' as 'Scientific'

The scholars explained that the global publishing system hinges on the criteria of scientific rigour as the basis for accepting research. The concept of what is considered as 'scientific' epitomises Western ways of writing and thinking. As scholar G pointed out, Mahatma Gandhi for instance, "was neither a Westerner nor a scholar" but in his book, *My Experiments with Truth*, put forth a "scientific method in his own style which was perfectly rigorous but he was not doing it in a generally acceptable style and manner we are used to". The Eurocentered-ness is also reflected in the discipline of IR. Scholar N argued that in the study of IR, "the authors we refer to, countries or examples we give and so on are still more Western oriented" (N). G thus explained that, to be an academic in India, one has to be trained in Western thought and style not just to know "what they are saying, but how they are saying it before we can investigate our own systems and societies." The IR researchers thus carry this dual burden of requirement - training in Western thought and an understanding of their own society.

2. The Western-centric 'conceptual tools'

The scholars' inputs highlight a disconnect between the realities that they aim to capture and the disciplinary tools they have in place. The "theories that formed the cannon" were developed in the West (Scholar D). The toolkit also consists of other "mid-range theories"

(Scholar E) or conceptual understandings derived from literature that is predominantly concerned with analysing the Western experiences.

> "Normally when we study IR, we begin with Peloponnesian war between Athens and Sparta, and then we go on to discuss the 30 Years War. Then the whole idea of urbanisation, industrialisation, capitalism, it's export to non-Western parts of the globe…. We never pay attention to alternative modernities. what was happening in other parts of the globe?" (Scholar P).

Scholar P outlined "All the theories that we had were inspired by western historical, political, sociological realities. And those were explained using western theoretical frameworks, philosophical resources, or the ideas generally expressed by western scholars" (P). G felt that early writings of Indian scholars hinted that "there is something to Indian IR which is beyond what the West has theorised and conceptualised and says is the practice". According to G, the understanding of Gandhian non-violence, for instance, had no room in the conceptual language of IR.

3. Implications for research in India

Even today, with dozens of examples of literature by Indian scholars, G felt that this Eurocentrism has not been challenged. "If anything, they are just trying to replicate and copy what the West have done, in a very traditional sense, of the colonised trying to play the same game as the coloniser and trying to beat them at it" (G). As scholars B and K expressed:

> "So if you study peace and conflict studies and you are not a realist or a hardcore defense analyst who tries to rationalise violence and aggression, you are not taken seriously. You're being seen as maybe he or she is not meant for security studies or this subject matter" (B).

> "There are different ways of looking into IR as well, but it is generally preferred to, you know, give more importance to the realist perspective like we do not have permanent friends and permanent enemies, but only permanent interests" (K).

The participants generally felt that the focus on canonical literature was also prevalent in the research landscape in India.

4.1.2 The National/Local Research Environment

While trying to conform to the 'global' standard of scientific rigour, the scholars navigated a difficult home terrain where they faced financial precarity, lack of institutional support, insufficient resources, and other real-life challenges, alongside their research pursuits.

1. Financial Precarity

Scholar C expressed that in India, academia "is not considered a very prestigious occupation". Since the focus domestically remains on information technology and other technological advancements, social science is not considered a viable career path. "Jobs are scarce, even with the expanding university system" (C). A mid-career scholar revealed that her family, to an extent, supports her fieldwork and other endeavours[10]. Scholar M felt that lack of adequate funds also leads to compromise of the quality of research output. "One has to cut short a lot of things, at a lot of places and then the final result is compromised. I think that is another reason why research and development outside (of India) is given salience" (M).

The PhD student scholars in this study, awarded the highly competitive Junior Research Fellowship (JRF)[11] felt that the JRF was inadequate to cover research expenses like high-priced books, travel to academic conferences, fieldwork and additional online courses. Engaging in fieldwork overseas thus becomes improbable. One of the scholars[12], currently a sole-earner in the family, confided that she was saving money to meet her family expenses. Scholar J felt that students who are not granted the JRF, and come from financially weaker backgrounds, find it even more difficult to fund their expenses. "Even if my paper gets selected, I do not get the funds and as a result of which I have to withdraw" (K). While the early and mid-career scholars in private universities had access to professional development funds, funding for other scholars remained scarce. In India, also, the allocated funding tended to get lost in the bureaucratic system. "I went somewhere as on a particular fellowship, and I was paid half the amount. The other half never came" (I). For J, knowledge of funding and networking opportunities constituted a 'hidden curriculum'.

2. Think Tanks and Constrained Space for Academia

Given the rise of think tanks, the universities experience constraints of space in the field of research. The think tank "universe" has exponentially expanded and "overshadows everything else" in the public domain (C). The funds for social science research are also channelled to think tanks that are more oriented to policy-relevant research. These think tanks provide a research hub for both academicians as well as practitioners in the field. They usually have strong ties with the government or the corporates. One scholar revealed that a think tank she worked employed ex-diplomats and military officers who had some degree of "real-life experiences with policy-making". These practitioners hold high degree of public influence. The behind-the scenes insights provided by practitioners does provide some data on recent events and their perspectives reveal on-field dynamics.

[10] The quote has been anonymised as it reveals personal details of participant.
[11] A fellowship granted by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in India to students who clear the competitive UGC- National Entrance Test (NET). The JRF awardees are entitled to receive an emolument of Rs 31,000 per month for two years following which they can transition to the Senior Research Fellowship (UGC, 2020).
[12] The quote has been anonymised as it reveals personal details of participant.

However, academically, the institutes aimed at studying a particular aspect and "putting it out there" instead of honing academic scholarship. N stated that most think tanks have a particular orientation that is reflected in the outcome of their scholarship. "I would never consult that work. In the sense I know what their conclusion is" (N). While think tanks occupy a prominent space in the research landscape and public sphere, their work largely does not feed into academic scholarship.

The think tank culture has impacted the academic landscape in that students are now increasingly interested in topics that are currently "fashionable" in the landscape, like the "Indo Pacific" and other IR topics currently garnering attention (D). These trends and associated funding limit freedom in academic spaces to undertake theoretical studies and other lines of research with little immediate policy relevance.

3. Lack of Institutional Support[13]

As one scholar pointed out, with respect to the universities, UGC and ICSSR, the system seems far too centralised to encourage good academics.

This scholar believed that being influenced by global science, UGC aimed to incentivise academic publications. While this did lead to some positive change in terms of adoption of anti-plagiarism tools and peer-review systems, their approach to rigour had largely been "mechanical". As one participant outlined, the UGC requirement for a minimum number of publications in its curated list of peer-reviewed journals for promotion in academic jobs provided space to "fly-by-night operators". These operators get their journals listed through influence and other unsavoury means. The journals supposedly provide peer-reviewed articles but in fact don't employ peer-reviewers at all. In that sense, the goal of academic rigour is not implemented "in spirit".

These fly-by-night operators essentially fill the void that exists between the global journals and Indian journals. While academic promotion is increasingly hinged on research publications, the number of Indian journals has not expanded significantly. One scholar outlined that some of the journals based in India are in such a "sorry" state that it may sometimes take five years for the journal to reply to a submission. One scholar suggested that more universities in India should take the initiative to develop journals to provide more opportunities for scholars even outside India.

Some scholars felt that institutions like the ICSSR that fund and support research initiatives are riddled with political inclinations and bureaucratic tendencies. One scholar believed that the ICSSR project he was working on was useful and valuable in charting an Indian perspective in IR. But given the "size" and "stature" of the organisation, was largely

[13] All quotes in this section have been further anonymised for ensuring safety of participants.

unaware of its other such endeavours. The scholar implied that there was a lack of common platform for interaction to yield quality results on projects even though they are of significant importance. Another scholar who had also worked with ICSSR felt that "they are just too bureaucratic and centralised to be able to do very much in terms of actually promoting good research". The support decisions are often influenced by personal connections. "It is very much like 'who knows who' kind of a thing". One scholar claimed that it is "hijacked" by the government research agenda. This agenda constitutes excavation of "ancient historical realities". "They recast those historical, ancient knowledge forms in a very unscientific way". These projects however stem from political motivation rather than academic orientation. It leads to endorsement of research that is not very productive in terms of output.

Scholars also voiced concerns with regard to politicisation of the university space. A scholar revealed that, new departments were being set up for "faculties who are friendly to this current dispensation." Other scholars were also sceptical of the recruitment procedures at universities. "They are just holding the position because … somebody in power was known to them or they had a particular political linking". The political influence on selection of significant positions impacted the research orientation and related policies in the university.

Moreover, there was absence of national academic collective. One scholar noted, "We don't even have in India an International Studies Association". This leads to an absence of collaborative frameworks, or academic dialogue with other academics in the nation. "Amongst the Indian scholars, I don't think there is any common research project which has been developed". Thus, scholars rely on global interactions. Moreover, with the busy teaching schedules and lack of research environment, scholar felt "there is not even a space for you to sit down with the colleague and have a discussion".

4. Infrastructural Deficits

Outside of a handful of research universities, there is a persistent lack of teaching, learning and skill enhancement for research. Universities in India maintain high entrance criteria to attract best talent but provide them with little avenues for learning. J and K confided that their prior undergraduate universities failed to provide adequate knowledge or skills. G pointed out that these are first order issues that need to be resolved. "We do not need to go into what kind of theory and what kind of concepts are to be taught. If you are going to a university where you don't have the books and the professors are not teaching you, then you know those are the basic things that need to be fixed" (G).

Even in the top universities, scholars expressed concerns with regard to deficits in research infrastructure. Library facilities provide only limited access to reading material. Scholar L claimed that even access to basic journal databases like JSTOR is challenging. As G questioned "simply put, without the research labs, how can you do the research"? Additionally, J revealed that water scarcity was a common issue faced by researchers in university

accommodation. Scholar I felt that despite the narratives of a "Growing India" and "Super India" even access to clean washrooms is not taken for granted in a public university in India. As centres for academic research, the lack of basic infrastructure in universities means that scholars are required to navigate through real-life challenges alongside research pursuits.

In summary, to chart their own space in the global knowledge and science system, the IR researchers in India attempt to conform to Western standards of 'rigour', navigating through Eurocentric knowledge structures of the discipline. Moreover, they face a challenging national and local environment which constrains their space for research. The national system mainly relies on individuals' independent capacity and resilience to overcome the systemic limitations and produce research. In the sense, the greatest asset of India's research landscape lies in its people. As G outlines when questioned about the system, "I suspect that what has been the case until now is that it hasn't been so much the institution or the organisation, but you know, a bright person comes along and that bright person will succeed regardless". There is thus therefore little "value addition" done by the system. As G expressed it, given the scant resources, one cannot expect a researcher based in India to work with the same level of efficiency as in the developed countries.

4.2 Making The 'System' Work

Despite the limitations highlighted above, the researchers of IR were seldom heard complaining about the prevalent inequities in global science. Instead, they adopted different mechanisms to 'make it work'. As erstwhile outsiders of the discipline, they attempted to communicate the essence of their lived realities and in the process expand the boundaries of the field. The following section puts forth the different ways in which they tried to navigate the global terrain of knowledge production. In engagement with the global, the national and local dynamics are considered.

4.2.1 Gathering Evidence for the Alternatives

Scholars recognised the need to collect primary data as evidence to counter or mould Western conceptualisations in the field. As Scholar O outlined, "It helps also to be able to illustrate that theory with the solid empirical work". The need for empirical work is therefore greater in India "as there is more to prove" (O).

In India, primary information is often hard to source for IR researchers. "IR is a very complicated field in India especially because the government doesn't declassify a lot of information" (M). For D, working with traditional security issues where information is scarce and requires intensive searches, accumulated knowledge is helpful.

> "You have accumulated a lot of knowledge and information over the years. And if you keep adding on to that, it then becomes a database that you can depend on" (D).

J, investigating from a feminist standpoint in security, found it difficult to track women-related records in the national archives. “My study is going to be heavily interview-based because there is not much sources about them.” For O, accessing archival material on India was easier in her previous institute abroad than in India, as centres in India provided limited access. “You have to go through several hoops and even then sometimes the archives are not maintained properly” (O). She sometimes relied on colleagues overseas for data collection.

Scholars emphasised the importance of fieldwork to be able to document the life experiences of people on the ground. “Existence issues are something that you have to view for yourself” (Scholar I). They felt that this provided the most authentic form of evidence given that other sources in India and the region could not be trusted. G, in search of documentary evidence for decisions on foreign policy found that the government records merely convey the bureaucratic process.

> “Written records, especially the written records of government, are completely meaningless. At best they just tell you process and at worst they may even mislead you” (G).

Among the scholars, there was a recurring idea of the disconnect between official records and reality. One scholar working on regional connectivity stated that the reports cited the existence of a 20 km long corridor between two regions. However, in reality, the condition of the roads meant that it took 6 hours to cover the distance, making commerce difficult in the region. But more so, fieldwork is considered a necessity by the scholars to experience the situations at a personal level and perhaps capture the emotions of people on the ground. As scholar I noted:

> “It is very easy to imagine sitting in our rooms here, but when you actually go physically there, you see what it takes for the troops living under those conditions and talk to people who are actually part of that particular landscape. I think that is extremely important. And kind of internalising the whole thing that is developing which is impossible to get through just second hand using secondary or even primary documents” (I).

Scholars could access archives or communications with Indian diplomats held by institutions overseas. However, the prospects of engaging with actors or conducting fieldwork internationally were difficult. For C, access to international organisations based in global North for field studies was challenging.

> “In India, at least I was able to reach out to the organisation that I'm focusing on and they allowed me to become an observer in their proceedings. But to do the same in international organizations is near impossible” (C).

He received no responses to the email requests sent. Investigating an organisation overseas, K felt her research might suffer from credibility issues because of her lack of on-the-ground experience. “I would have tried to gain a lot of experience in terms of traveling and knowing more than bookish knowledge” (K). She relied on many non-conventional sources, like organisational newsletters. She felt on-field research would also have brought added perspectives “When you are visiting, when you are being one of them, you tend to know a lot” (K).

While all scholars valued their role as teachers, L stated that teaching and other administrative duties made it difficult to find time for fieldwork. She added that faculty members would have to take a sabbatical in order to do research. It was also especially difficult for women scholars who had to balance time between caring duties, research and teaching.

4.2.2 Methodological Choices

For one of the scholars, the conventional approach relied too much on pre-existing theories. The understanding of reality was neglected in the quest to the test the theory. There was a lack of focus on empirical information in IR. It merely focused on “theorising about theory and then testing whether that theory actually works with some case studies”. The scholar advocated for a more producer-centric approach to “begin with the case study and then try and figure out the theory behind that case study.” Since policies in IR are made by bureaucrats and policymakers, understanding the reality from their perspective was important. It was likely that , in this pursuit, analysts fall back on the pre-existent theories. “They have to stop themselves from doing that and actually find out about the people that they're studying and theorise what they do”. In this process, he implied, one could provide greater voice to those people being studied in the research rather than echoing the pre-existing colonial mindedness.

Many scholars in India continued to resort to the traditional IR approach. Nonetheless, they intended to supplement their methodology with elements of fieldwork. In this way, they attempted to capture the voices of people on the ground.

However, methodology training was relatively new to field of IR research in India. As a professor recollected concerning his own period of study, “I basically copied my seniors in terms of how they approach the problem.” However, knowledge of diverse methods including appropriateness and pitfalls had expanded in India. Researchers with experience overseas had also added to the knowledge. Scholars emphasised the need for greater training. “Scholars that I have interacted in from (a research-based university), they also are not very specifically conscious about methodology” (B). N felt that universities in India placed more emphasis on theory than methods. While being overseas, you were expected to “guide the evaluator or teacher, how you went through and so there they have to train themselves on the method part and lay it out” (N).

4.2.3 Drawing from Theory and Conceptual Tools

Most of the participants expressed interest in theorisation of IR. At the same time, most of them explicitly and implicitly emphasised the need to counter the 'Western' bias in the theory. As O pointed out, a theory is a "lens of looking at the reality that sharpens the vision and focuses on certain relationships while other aspects are blurred". While most scholars in the study, believed that their realities fall on the blurred side, some attempted to correct the lens while some focused on the need to build other lenses.

1. Making theory work

Instead of critiquing IR theory in and of itself, some scholars critiqued certain aspects of the theory and attempted to make it conducive to the Indian experience. For C, the purpose of a theory was to "explain to my satisfaction the world that I am living". Therefore, he placed less attention on the geographical location of theory. For C, the theories in IR, however, were mostly American dominated and focused on great powers. These theories therefore did not apply to middle powers like India. "It is not a specifically Indian problem. It is a theory problem." (C). He felt that the theory does provide the space for correcting this 'natural bias'. Therefore, more literature from non-superpowers can help make the theory more conducive for them. The Western bias in theory has to be corrected within the theory, expanding the vision of the lens.

Even scholars who worked with mainstream theories, felt that the conceptualisations of Indian foreign policy were inadequate. They said that through engaging with these theories, they were also countering the dominant perspectives on India.

> "I think that India is always been actually quite pragmatic, contrary to what a lot of Western scholars have given them credit for or who said that India never actually had a grand strategy" (M).

M pointed to the dualism that existed in the theories which meant that experiences of the states in between the dual categories could not be sufficiently explained. "I think we, we read great powers and we read see the rogue states, right. But we actually don't study a lot about the middle powers in general in West or in East." In her research, she intended to "build a or understand India's grand strategic vision better". In the process, her research would also highlight the 'inbetweenness' in the dualism.

> "I think this would also help us understand how middle powers navigate through this very fine balance that they have to maintain and fine line that they have to walk on between, say their great power aspirations on one side, but also not offend, you know, the neighbouring powers or the greater powers. (M)"

2. Outside the 'mainstream' cannon

Most of the Indian scholars interviewed felt greater resonance with critical theories of IR like feminism and post-colonialism or even constructivism. While these were relatively new, they were in some ways greater inclinations to it in the South.

> "It depends on where you are placed in the discipline. Are you placed in the core which is United States? Where a majority of research on political science is still within conventional frameworks, where even constructivism is also probably a radical idea, you know. But if you are placed in something like the global South, then these ideas are not exactly new or controversial right now" (Scholar A).

The critical IR theories had been at the "forefront of listening to voices from different forms of margins" (D). This accommodation of diversity was "reflected" in the work of scholars from the global North as well (D). In that, there was greater space within these lenses to find representation for Indian realities. This was also because of the fact that most of these theories had been drawn from other disciplines that have a greater history of recording Indian experiences. For example, while the IR we knew of today was "foreign" (D), women's studies or feminism was strongly rooted in Indian theories. So experiences of Indian women had very much been part of it. Notwithstanding, scholars of the global North held the greater symbolic space in these disciplines as well.

One scholar, trained in traditional security studies, felt that national interests were considered the "benchmark" of security. However, she found greater resonance with the then emerging field of non-traditional security. This field viewed security from a more "humanitarian" aspect. It considered "soft issues" like access to water to conceptualise security at a community level. "I think I could in terms of my own personality or understanding of the world view, I was placing myself more on the non- traditional security aspects." Another researcher, looking at a particular group of women, stated "I feel they are going to have insights about security because they know insecurity in a very different way than the state knows it". In this endeavour, she felt her study would "open" the field of security studies and broaden its outlook to consider what security means for these women".

3. Highlighting differences between 'theory' and 'practise'

For some scholars the distance between Western-oriented theories and Indian realities was the distance between theory and practice.

For instance, O argued that theories could be conceptualised as mere "idealisation" of reality and do not capture the reality as such. For F, theories had emerged over time and were universal in nature. These theories did not take into account the influences of technology or social media on society. Thus, the study of theory needed to be supplemented with "case studies" to understand the reality (F). N highlighted the primacy of research topics in the search for theories. Certain topics came to be associated with certain frames of thought and that is how

you engaged with them. For E, the application of theories depended upon the research questions. For questions of Internet governance that involve non-state actors, the applicability of the "grand" theories of IR was limited. Studies of these recent phenomena drew from literature in other disciplines and formed the interdisciplinary research part of IR.

4. Alternative conceptualisations

Three of the scholars developed or employed a framework of non-Western origins to analyse IR. L felt personally connected with Gandhian philosophy and thought. While Gandhian philosophy was more theorised, she traced the thought in conversation with other leaders of the Indian freedom movement. "The way I have the read Gandhi, it's always also been in conversation with Bhagat Singh or with Patel and Nehru. So you know Gandhi is not somebody in isolation" (L). More so, with the Gandhian thought, she felt that there was more space for critical evaluation, questioning and engagement on different levels. In that sense, L felt that she could engage with multiple viewpoints that conceptualised the school.

> "I think Gandhian thought is attractive also because with Gandhi it is just you know you are naturally so in a conversation with him. You can be critical, you can be talking to Gandhi. You can be engaging with him or reading his book, and there are questions" (L).

This revealed the flexibility that Gandhian philosophy as a conceptual tool provided to L to capture the reality. This freedom to question and mould the toolkit perhaps distinguished it from the established tools in IR.

For P, the need to draw from non-Western theories emerged from difficulties of analysing a conflict situation. The scholar felt that the relative positions of all parties involved could not be studied using the dualistic categories of Western theories. "By dualism I mean that in a knowledge situation, the Western centric theories generally presume that the subject or the theorist would essentially be separated from the object of study". However, she felt that looking at Indian knowledge sources, one need not have to create further dualism of West and non-West, colonial or post-colonial. "Not only in in the sense of explaining the realities as they existed within the borders of Indian nation state, but alternative knowledge forms could be applied to explain the global realities." She analysed alternative knowledge sources in terms of ontology, epistemology and methodology to create a different understanding of reality.

While these knowledge sources have always existed, playing the role of an interlocutor, she attempted to bring these into the IR conversation and also bring to focus other non-Western knowledge sources. "It's like fusion music, you know, like mixing Carnatic music[14] with Western music. Then you have something new."

[14] A classical form of music traditionally emerged from a Southern province in India

For G, the need to develop an alternate conceptualisation also stemmed from pragmatic concerns. “The problem that I had just reading the text that we had to read is that it all seemed to me like the writers were saying what the practitioners should be doing or are doing”. The practitioners’ voices, “be it American, European or Asian” were missing from the research. Thus, in study of Indian practitioners and theorising their practise, the scholar found Indian traditional texts most appropriate. These practitioners in India had been acquainted with the texts early in their childhood and it formed a component of their worldview. Therefore, through understanding the world from the lens of the practitioners, G attempted to create a more-grounded conceptualisation for IR.

4.2.4 Interdisciplinarity in IR as a Tool for Subversion

IR was broadly an interdisciplinary field, with main influences from political science, economics, geography. Some scholars had prior experience with other disciplines. This helped them navigate the discipline of IR as they were not previously aware of its boundaries. Scholar O said, “I think partly why I could choose this topic is also because I don't have a background in IR and so I had not really been schooled to what was mainstream”. Having no preconceived notions, they brought perspectives from former disciplines of what they believed constituted the ‘international’. For scholar A, constructivism as a school of thought came about from the study of the South Asian region. “Because I've not studied any formal IR theory…. I thought, like, isn't that fairly obvious?”. Scholars also often borrowed literature from other disciplines in the course of study.

> “I would always suggest that xxxxxx *(specific information redacted for anonymisation*) as a topic that should be done from an interdisciplinary sort of lens and you should be open to going beyond the theories of international relations or insights of international relations” (E).

4.2.5 Power of a ‘Global Collective’

1. Collaborations

IR scholars in India looked forward to collaborating with their counterparts elsewhere. “It's such a globalised scene now and there is an interest on all sides to, you know, kind of work across borders and across continents” (D). Some scholars benefited from the space. As P said: “I was simply trying to do something which was not fashionable at that point in time but I happen to meet very exciting scholars in the West primarily and they were very keen about publishing my work” (P). Participants felt that collaborations provided an avenue to counter Western centrism in the discipline. “So there are internal critics in the West, right? if you can form an alliance or so it kind of helps to translate your theory from here to there” (O).

However, the geographies still mattered. “If you are based in certain countries, Western Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand, in some ways, you know you have stronger networks compared to if you are in the global South” (D). Scholars with prior international study experience felt they could be “more fluid into international networks” but felt that others could also benefit from it. Scholars found the sense of community in research stronger in the West.

2. Conferences

The importance of connecting with other researchers through academic conferences was highlighted by almost all scholars. Due to the absence of a national association in the discipline and lack of collaborative framework, scholars mostly resorted to go to conferences overseas. J felt that she benefitted from interacting with renowned researchers in her field abroad when attending international conferences.

> “She knows about my project and I keep asking for readings and all that kind of stuff and directly getting it from a scholar like who knows the field…(another researcher) She gave me tips about taking interviews and how I can go about it or connecting with people. So that happens when you go to these (conferences), It is just like moving up the ladder…There is information which you won't get very easily, though Twitter has democratised the space a lot” (J).

Connecting with other researchers helped participants overcome their own limitations within the national environment and also acquaint them with research elsewhere.

However, apart from scarce funding, travelling to conferences involves other logistic issues. “So most of these conferences, for example, are held during semester breaks in North America or in Europe, and here it would still be during the teaching semester” (O). Meaning, it would involve faculty members having to take leave and reschedule classes. Moreover, overseas travel was hindered due to the documentation and bureaucratic processes involved: “The visa process is too hectic, the paperwork, everything is very bureaucratic in India” (K).

4.2.6 Participating in the ‘Global’ Conversation

1. Access to Global Publications

While access to global literature helped scholars to be “well versed in those theories” to counter them (O), there was limited access to digital libraries in universities in India. Scholar H felt that with global science, “you can get into ResearchGate and ask the scholar for a soft copy of the article, because you cannot access it as it is under pay wall” (H). As H explained,

> "You know that resource crunch is there because if I have to get a few books for the library or appoint a new faculty, then obviously I will appoint a new faculty rather than, you know, getting new books, postponing it unless it is very compulsory" (H).

One scholar revealed that professors often scan purchased books and share with students. Another scholar confided that they would often have to resort to dark web to locate scholarly material. M and P felt that due to the archaic syllabus in universities in India, students and professors alike were often not exposed to "cutting-edge research" (P). P said, "If you are not aware of the cutting-edge research, then how would you, you know, expand the boundaries of any discipline?" She felt there was a huge time lapse in India in acquaintance with innovative forms of global research.

> "While there might be a core that you know asks the same old questions, there is a lot of exciting research that is happening (elsewhere) and this is a result of the diversification of the people who are doing this kind of research" (P).

2. Contributing to 'Global' Design

As B highlighted, the complex dynamics of the South Asian region meant that study of the region could serve as a model for learning different parts of the world. "Think deeply about these countries and then maybe if that model is created, you can use those kind of modalities on other countries also" (B). B aspired to contribute to the global dialogue,

> "I'm not much of a big fan of division of scholarship and I think if I write something on India or Afghanistan, I think that should be equally interesting for people in Germany, UK or the US for that matter. And so if there's something interesting that I write, I would like that to be recognised or accepted, debated or discussed by followers across the world" (B).

However, despite their great efforts by Indian scholars in pushing the boundaries of the field, their research is considered on the margins. D argued that the study of partition, for instance, should have had transformative impact on the study of refugees or migratory movements. N argued that there seems like a "global bias" in the field in relation to what constituted 'theory' and 'area studies'. Quoting a famous scholar, he expressed "People in the South know that they are doing area studies, but those in the Western world don't. They think they are doing theory" (N). Scholar F also pointed out how foreign scholars are interested in knowing India's stance on a specific topic and do not stress on IR theorisation in India. "Indian IR experts are expected to provide an analysis of Indian foreign policy. For example, "What is India's position with regard to China or how is India going to deal with China?" (F). C, highlighted that:

“Being in India and working on (Indian) international relations, one does often get cast into this role of sort of the India explainer to outsiders. It added for the size of my CV, but not really to the quality of my CV.” For C, it constrained the space for working on in-depth theory related publications.

L highlighted that while there was a burgeoning interest in understanding India, Indian scholars were not yet considered to have the authority to comment on Western issues.

> “They would be keen on looking at work coming on India. However, how are Indians thinking about, let's say American issues or European issues may not draw so much of traction. They may still consider you to be on the margin. So to make inroads and speak authoritatively on Europe, all of America would I think still be tough” (L).

P aspired to work overseas and teach but believed that her opportunities were limited to specific topics in global IR. Opportunities in regular courses were likely be offered to nationals. As N said, “wherever you are, you will be regarded an area study specialist”. And there are lesser chances that institutes overseas would want to teach about South Asia.

> “As I told you, things have started changing, but it's still pretty new. It has not taken a deep seat, the realisation that Indian IR can meet global IR, that Indian IR scholars can generate text which can make sense to audiences living in other parts of the globe. So I think the conditioned reflexes are still there. Some of the big shots happen to come from another era of IR” (P).

Some scholars felt that being part of the global conversation was easier when pursuing work of topical interest. This was true nationally as well. As one scholar claimed: “There's also, the fad, you know at a particular point in time, a certain topic takes off. Let's say by 2014, you just had to label everything ‘Xi Jinping thought’ and that would have been considered as valuable”. N felt that the global influence hinders the “organic development of ideas”. In that sense, researchers were drawn to follow the global trend. “In that sense we are following the world rather than charting our own path, right?”

As O pointed out, “I think a lot of the mainstream theories present themselves as the only perspective in some ways” (O). Thus, the non-mainstream in the discipline was positioned as critiques of the mainstream and not as independent positions. This has influenced their global positionality.

4.2.7 Influence of Global Domain

The scholars felt the influence of global competition. N had reminded students in class, “In a sense, your competition is not, you know, the rest of India, it's actually the world”.

As a result of competition, O felt there was a convergence in the assessment criteria of research in India and abroad. She highlighted that commonly research (and researchers) were evaluated on the basis of publications in 'top' journals usually based abroad, and also funding grants received. She felt particularly in India, international collaborations also mattered. The criteria favoured researchers working on topics of 'global' interest at the expense of contextually relevant topics.

> "So if the criteria you are judged by is publication in a high rank journal, for instance, then you would do the kind of work that is publishable there, rather than perhaps what might be of interest (to you and to your context). So I think there is a lot of alignment in the way in which it is judged here versus elsewhere which is why, I think there is a greater need to focus on our own needs rather than copying models elsewhere".

Researchers in India were also influenced by the pressures to publish. N said:

> "Academic research, writing, has also become a little bit instrumental. So you have to publish in this kind of a Scopus listed, well recognised journal and so on".

Scholar A believed that, in a way, evaluation was homogenous for different groups of scholars. The "game" of publishing favoured scholars from the conventional domain.

> "The recent fashionable trend is decolonise. Decolonise this. Decolonise that. But look, you know, you write a paper and yeah, it's brilliant and it's incisive. But what are you doing in terms of your societal outreach? Because that is the terrain at which you kind of fight those battles".

Scholar also found that the system favours more conventional forms of research. B felt that this focus on numbers (of publications for individuals, PhD students for universities) causes researchers to stay in a "comfort zone". In his university, he found supervisors not interested in more complex research endeavours.

> "They would not want to be provocative. what they often feared is that what if his or her thesis is not approved? There are too many questions asked by the external examiners? Supervisor plays it safe for you… We also fall in that comfort zone. I think that's one of the reasons that despite having so many PhD students here, the good research or good published publications are mostly missing" (B).

He felt that this constrained the space for researchers to explore topics of greater interest.

4.2.8 Peripherality as Agency

Some scholars felt that their distance from the Euro-American research core sometimes provided them with greater agency to carry out research on their own terms, provided they were willing to forego mainstream recognition. As O outlines, "part of the endeavour should also be to not want to be part of the club in some senses. Because that means their concerns become your concerns". In delinking oneself from the global conversations, one could focus on matters relevant to oneself. As scholar A pointed out: "If you are comfortable in your periphery and you are comfortable in talking to other peripheries like yourself and you kind of ignore the core, then it's fine." However, he admits that this agency comes at "professional costs". "We were also given subtle hints during grad school that it's probably going to be tougher for us to break into the North American job market, right? That is just the thing". Researchers aspiring to be in North American or European circles would want their voices to be "heard".

As G pointed out, researchers in India did aspire for Western universities for financial and other reasons, which perhaps limited their ability to delink from the mainstream conversation. "If you are going to go to the West, then you have to be able to speak their language and perhaps even practice their kind of politics". He believed that in doing his research, he was aware of the costs. "Certain doors will be closed to me or that certain avenues will not be available" (G). On challenging the mainstream conventions of topics in IR, O said "I've been lucky enough to not be able to care about it. I don't have a stake in being recognised there" (O).

4.2.9 Personal is Academic[15]

As the adage in IR goes, "the personal is political" (Enloe, 2004). For researchers in India, the personal was also academic. Many scholars drew their interest in academia from personal stories and experiences. The knowledge that stemmed from personal experiences and understanding helped them navigate the mainstream knowledge of the field.

For one scholar, seeing his grandfather as a soldier inculcated an early interest in the discipline. For another scholar, appreciation for non-violence stemmed from the learning about violence witnessed by family at the time of Independence. "They (family members) came as refugees. One has seen violence, you know, from very close quarters as a family" Another scholar revealed that her family had to migrate overnight due to the conflict. "You've grown up listening to all of that (history of the migratory movement) because the hardship that they went through, the whole lot of stories, narratives of how your friends saved you and looked out for you while they were also the horror stories which we hear about even now." This partly helped in developing a compelling need to understand the movements better. Despite the conventional approach that viewed conflict from above, the scholar could explore a more on-

[15] The quotes in this section have been anonymised as they reveal personal details of the participants.

the-ground people's perspective. "I looked at it from a different lens, which is why I think I was able to kind of draw in from, you know, different peoples experience".

The personal experiences also formed a learning in scholars which they were then able to transform to academic dialogue in the course of their research journey. One of the scholars revealed that she had informally engaged with the philosophy and concepts that she later used in research. "I didn't know that there will be a point in my career or learning experience where I'll be able to merge what was being taught to me formally with my informal learning".

While I could recognise the reflection of personal experiences in most studies, some personal stories were also left unsaid.

4.2.10 Awareness of Other Marginalities

In the process of traversing through their own marginalities, the scholars were also aware of other marginalities in the research landscape. D found that in discussions of South Asian politics, Indian voices were dominant. "when we say South Asia but mean India. So you have maybe one token non Indian scholar but otherwise just Indians kind of ruling the roost" (D).

Due to the nature of the discipline and academia in India, they were also conscious about limited access to diverse groups in the community. Reminiscing about her lived experience outside of the centre of Delhi, K says that IR was itself not a widely-known course in her own city. The people that pursued IR themselves mostly came from privileged backgrounds. "It's a very elitist thing to pursue in India, actually" (K). A also outlined how IR as a discipline was perceived as "close to the state". "So you know there is this kind of socialisation or filtering that takes place, where you have to talk a certain way, where you have to know someone. Its linked to that idea of the think tank policy world" (A). In this sense, the system privileged elite individuals and pre-existing connections of these individuals.

4.3 Finding Value

Due to the "bureaucratic" nature of policymaking in India, academicians had little influence on that policymaking (E). So both HEI and government worked in their respective "silos". "So in a way there are two worlds and these two hardly meet" (A). While some scholars preferred the American model of closer interactions with the government, others believed that the academicians should play a different role. They aimed to contribute to the public debate and thus distance from policy making was crucial.

Scholars also felt that while their work could not receive recognition in the global academia, they were also not appreciated by Indian scholars. G claimed that: "What surprised me was the way in which a lot of Indian academia responded to my work." He felt that critiquing the Western modernity project antagonised Indian academicians who believed in it.

He criticised the “things that they that are very dear to them” (G). For P, while her research was included in the syllabus in top foreign universities, she found universities in India still reluctant to teach Indian conceptualisations.

> “And when it's taught in foreign universities then the Indian university think in terms of including that article in their curriculum. Otherwise that inferiority complex is still an obstacle. So I think Indian researchers need to get out of that hangover, the ingrained inferiority in terms of their ability to contribute to research that's missing” (P).

If they were considered marginal in both the global landscape and the national sphere, how did they attribute value to their research?

4.3.1 Personal Relevance

As highlighted earlier, for many of the scholars the ‘personal is academic’ and so they derived their value from their own personal indicators. E held his own standards of quality for evaluation of his work. “I'm not really concerned about who reads it, who does not read it, it’s just something I'm interested in and I want to get to the bottom of it”. For Scholar A, “It's a labour of love and I want it to be out there in the world, right. So I think that it is very important to me more than anything else”.

For N, his best piece of writing was a reflection piece about his professor who had a positive influence on his learning journey. “Several things that he [the professor] said continue to resonate even today”. While most of N’s other writings would be insightful for specific audiences, this piece he says would be insightful for anyone who reads. This piece of writing had a wider reach and impact. Scholar I also remarked that she was appreciated by an official for publishing, “a reader friendly book” on a subject that “we’ve all been grappling with.” Because the subject of the book was emotive, she aspired for a larger audience.

4.3.2 Teaching

Teaching formed an essential component of knowledge exchange for researchers in India. For D, teaching was one of the most cherished experiences. “Sometimes when it's just like, OK, what's the point of doing any of this?” They sometimes did not see a tangible impact from academic work. Thus, equipping the young generation with the acquired knowledge and skillset gave one a sense of purpose. “Mentoring students to, you know improve their academic skills as well, I think that is very fulfilling” (D). Scholar A also found personal satisfaction with teaching and with the relative autonomy of designing the course curriculum. N aspired to teach at a public university where perhaps his ideas could reach a wider student body.

L also felt that teaching provided an avenue to transgress the Western-centrism of global knowledge production. “I find the best of my teachers, and I take cues from them, have always managed to transgress that framework and go across to your own indigenous resources”

(L). Despite the salience of this form of knowledge, scholars felt that it was not valued in the global domain.

> "I suppose this would be valid everywhere in the world that teaching should also be given significance. While it takes major chunk of the work, it does end up being marginalized and a lot of people then end up, you know, just going through the matter rather than teaching because that's not really valued when one is promoted for instance" (O).

4.3.3 Depicting Reality

These scholars did gain a sense of value of rightfully portraying the community they sought to research. G found that the community he researched provided the most nuanced feedback on his work. "They criticize small parts of it, but they don't criticize the overall thrust of it because I do portray them as actually what they are" (G). For O, it was important to depict the realities to counter the prevalent presumptions of India. "I would hope that it reaches people beyond the Academy. It makes them re-evaluate what they think about India or what they think about a particular religion….about inequalities. I would just say that if it makes people think twice about their assumptions, I would think that as an impact" (O).

4.3.4 Enhance Access

Scholars found that with critical school of IR, there was relatively lesser theorisation. This made it more difficult for other scholars to work with these tools. They attempted to acquaint students as emerging scholars with these perspectives. Interviewees recognised a need to introduce the topics at earlier stage and not just at final Masters or PhD level. "If you don't do that, then it becomes difficult to, you know, reorient students in terms of thinking differently" (P). As a teacher, N intended to create readings lists and introduce examples from East and Southeast Asia to acquaint students with the experience of other nations. While they may not make novel contributions to theory, he believed their specific interpretations was valuable. O, in her classes, tried to flip the sequence of the conventional IR structure, beginning with the critical school of IR and then teaching the canonical literature. This helped students get acquainted with the critical literature as individual schools of thought. "If you start with them, I think it's helpful because then they no longer just critiques, but also perspectives" (O).

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

In this section, I provide a summary-reflection on the findings in relation to the research questions of the study.

5.1 NAVIGATING THE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

RQ1: How do IR researchers in India navigate the research environment, including the global research system?

The Indian scholars in experiencing this disconnect between realities and conceptual toolkit are delinking from the 'global' designs of the discipline. They are thus located in the borders of the terrain. In their research they intend to embed local ways of knowing and knowledges via fieldwork. There is a lack of interest for reliance on "bookish research" and an enthusiasm for seeing the reality for themselves. Their understanding of the local stems from their close engagement during fieldwork and personal experiences that help in pushing the borders of the discipline. They thus bridge the gap between the knower and the known, the personal and the academic. While some scholars are conscious that existing methodologies rely too much on theories, most scholars follow these methods and templates to communicate their local knowledges. In this hybridity, they attempt to engage with the global terrain in the same dialogical space (Das, 2018).

In this hybridity, the researchers invariably alter the 'global' designs to accommodate their own 'lived' experiences. Thus their attempts cannot be seen as mere acculturation but indeed are reflective of disidentification. The strategy of neither assimilating nor opposing the dominant ideology (Aldama, 2000). This represents a third form of response to the hegemony, different from identification (assimilation) and counter-identification (oppositionality in attempt to break free) (Tlostanova et al., 2016). In navigating the discipline of IR and its Eurocentric concepts, they feel a "discrepancy between having to live in the colonial matrix and never really belonging to its memories, feelings and ways of sensing" (Tlostanova et al., 2016, p.217). This discrepancy is reflective in most scholar experiences.

Even, first group of scholars, using theories of the cannon, mould the theories and challenge the embedded 'dualism'. As Harding argues, a "realistic assessment" of all knowledges (Western or non-Western) requires serious consideration of the achievement of other cultures and the need to "talk about it in 'our' terms rather than 'theirs'" (Harding, 2008 as cited in Reiter, 2018, p.2). Thus, they are not just adding empirical information as "flesh" to the European "skeleton" (Chakrabarty, 2000) but in this process transform this skeleton or "format" which is European by implicitly or explicitly questioning its 'global' design presumptions.

Second group of scholars operating 'outside the mainstream cannon' use knowledge from other disciplines, to bring newer insights and mould the mainstream disciplinary toolkits. They thus challenge the coloniality of the existing theories. This point to the fact that different disciplines have different paces to accommodate the voices of global South due to their respective traditions. As pointed out by the scholars, "being not inculcated into the discipline" gives greater room for them to question the boundaries. As argued, the "delinking" from the universal is a difficult task (Mignolo, 2018, p.x). Therefore, drawing on knowledge and conceptual understanding of other disciplines, helps these scholars to translate their lived experiences. They also benefit from the breadth of toolkits from other disciplines as well. Scholar G felt IR as a discipline was specifically backward in responding to change. "It's very 'closed' compared to other disciplines. If you just look at it statistically, IR is constantly absorbing ideas and concepts from other disciplines. The best example is constructivism, but no one takes any idea or concept from IR" (G).

Another, third group of scholars neglect theory as an abstract concept that is different from practise. They thus focus on other forms of non-disciplinary knowledge like case studies.

A fourth group of scholars attempt to create new designs to conceptualise their reality that could perhaps be one of the 'global' designs. They thus directly attempt to participate in the dialogical space of global designs that was the realm of the global North.

In doing so, scholars engage in different contours of "border thinking" where they delink from the universalising imaginary of the system of knowledge production (Mignolo, 2012, p.23). Scholars believe that researching on their complex local realities, they have potential to contribute to global design. However, they experience the colonial difference in the reception of their research. Their work is perceived as subaltern or area studies rather than included in the disciplinary domain of global designs. This colonial difference is evident not just in the global space but also local terrain where other Indian scholars are hesitant to view the global designs stemming from own histories, philosophy and tradition. As Quijano (2007) argues, coloniality as a practise spans traditional political boundaries of colonialism and is embedded in local regions of the world.

While on the borders of disciplinary terrain, the scholars also find themselves at the borders of the global science structures. For some scholars interacting with the global environment can help them navigate the absence of national research environment. They can attend conferences, connect with other scholars globally and foster collaborations. They thus benefit from the global 'collective' which is absent at the national level due to inadequate numbers of scholars, association, conferences and environment for partnership. However, they still feel limited by their local geographies which is distant from the 'global' domain of North, lesser access to funding and face bureaucratic procedures. The local infrastructural deficits like libraries also create distance between local and global.

In challenging the coloniality of global designs, they however, express a 'desire to belong' to the global science system that privileges existing modes of knowledge production (Shahjahan & Morgan, 2016). Not being recognised in the dialogical space of global designs, some scholars feel the need to delink from the global science system that does not adequately value their work. This paradox exposes the limitation of the established global knowledge system and its ability to account for their local experiences.

5.2 The Value Mismatch

RQ2: How do they perceive the 'value' of their social sciences research in the system?

The scholars of IR in India challenge the coloniality of disciplinary knowledge but also and seek to be a part of the global science system. In navigating the global science and knowledge system, the researchers experience a paradox between locally relevant knowledge that depicts on-ground realities and globally relevant knowledge which fits in the global designs of the North. The global science with publications indexed in the global citation indexes mainly situated in the North are complicit in the production of globally relevant knowledge, as was discussed in chapter 2 and is evidenced in the interviews. In this paradox, some of the researchers value local knowledges and choose to delink from the forces of academic dependency of global science.

In this unique intersection of global, national and local forces, scholars are also able to exercise their agency in choosing to be peripheral to the global. In this manner, they manage to retain their autonomy at the cost of benefits of global participation like greater visibility in the global North and access to research funding. They thus delink from the imaginaries of the forces of globalisation.

Sen (1999) describes an agent as someone "who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives, whether or not we assess them in terms of some external criteria" (Alkire, 2008). When values of the scholars in India (personally-relevant, contextually-relevant, depicting realities, teaching) are not reflected in the values of the global science (citations, collaborations), some researchers exercise their agency and choose to delink themselves from the global dialogue. This delinking helps them engage with research that coincides with their own value system. In exercising their agency, the researchers also question the distinction of spaces between the disciplinary terrain and subaltern, local realities and global designs, the personal and academic and translate their lived personal experience into reality.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This dissertation provides a novel vantage point for understanding the global dynamics of knowledge production, drawing on the example of International Relations (IR) in social science research in India. While the scholars publish research in the global language of English, they are still placed on the margins of the dialogical space for the global designs. They also delink from the forces of globalisation that foster academic dependency. Drawing from standpoint theory (Harding, 2018), I argue that understanding the journeys of these scholars provides a comprehensive account of the structures of global science. For these scholars, these structures are also enmeshed in the global and national terrain. Therefore, the understanding of the global, national and local terrains, and their interactions, should also accompany the analysis of the global.

6.1 LIMITATIONS

In scope of this work, I could not further delve into other local factors that influence research in India, like caste background and socio-economic status.

Given the word limit, I could not explore the interaction of IR with political science and other disciplines.

6.2 FUTURE WORK

In the scope of this research, I chose to explore the most pertinent issues as articulated by the researchers. However, there were other insights that could be potentially developed in future studies. For example, the influence of politicisation on research. Future studies should explore possible IR research trajectories in India outside the capital region.

Further, some scholars expressed interest in engaging with other Asian countries for research. Scholars noted that studies of other Asian countries do not really feature in India curricula. This dimension could be realised in further studies in exploring the potential and possibilities of "Asia as a method" (Chen, 2010).

Global HE has become a universal phenomenon, and for this reason alone, future studies should aim to capture the perspectives of globalisation from actors that have limited access to global mobility like home students in public universities in global South, academics in these universities or leaders that shape its policies. It could further help in understanding ways to build a pluriverse knowledge system and ecologies of knowledge. The 'personal is academic' is a novel take of the study and can be considered for future works on research systems.

APPENDIX-I RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL STATEMENT

SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES
INTERDIVISIONAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

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Ms Vedika Kedia
Department of Education, Social Sciences Division
University of Oxford

4 May 2023

Dear Vedika,

Research ethics approval

Research title: Social Science Research in India: Viewing the 'Center' from the 'Periphery'

Research ethics reference: EDUC_C1A_23_197

The above application has been considered on behalf of the Education Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the University's procedures for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to confirm that, on the basis of the information provided to the DREC, ethics approval has now been granted for this study.

Please note the following:

Personal data: It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure that all personal data collected during the project is managed in accordance with the University's guidance and legal requirements.

In-person activities: Any data collection involving in-person interactions with participants must have an up-to-date fieldwork risk assessment in place; further guidance is available from the Safety Office's website.

Amendments: Please notify the committee if you intend to make any amendments to the information in your ethics application as submitted at date of this approval, as all changes must receive ethical approval prior to implementation. The amendment form is available on the SSH IDREC webpage.

We welcome feedback on your experience of the ethical review process and suggestions for improvement. Please email any comments to staff.curec@education.ox.ac.uk / student.curec@education.ox.ac.uk or ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely

DREC Dr Jenny A. Wynn

APPENDIX-II SAMPLE LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions About the Scholar:

1. What factors motivated you to pursue International Relations (IR) and research?
2. What inculcated your interest in (research topic)?
3. What sources do you find to be the most informative for your research?
4. What drew you towards the (particular theory and research)?

Questions about the Research Landscape:

1. How 'international' do you think your research is?
2. What are the major characteristics of the research landscape in your field? In India?
3. What do you think is the role of IR academics in India?
4. How is research evaluated or judged in the field?
    - What is good research according to these evaluation criteria?
    - What is good research for you?
5. Are there any differences between the research field in India and outside India?
    - If so, what are the differences?
    - If not, what do you think about this situation?
6. To what extent do you think the field has been influenced by research or research communities outside India?
    - In what ways? (Can you give me some examples please?)
    - What do you think about the situation?
7. What do you think is the role of Indian academics in Global IR?
8. What changes would you suggest to improve the research landscape in your field? In India?

Concluding Questions about the Scholar:

1. What would you regard as your best work till date? Why?
2. What are the key takeaways from your work?
3. What changes do you think you could have done retrospectively to your research career?
4. What are your plans for research for the future?
5. If given a chance would you rather chose another field of research?
    - Another site for pursuing research?

APPENDIX- III

A. ICSSR YEAR-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF TRAVEL GRANT (ICSSR, 2022)

Year-Wise Distribution of Travel Grant

Year	Travel Grant for Participation in Seminars/Conferences	Data Collection Abroad
1971-1990	342	116
1990-2010	547	64
2010-2011	35	06
2011-2012	50	03
2012-2013	101	06
2013-2014	120	32
2014-2015	146	48
2015-2016	202	57
2016-2017	197	59
2017-2018	54	23
2018-2019	178	22
2019-2020	172	22
2020-2021*	-	-
2021-2022	06	03
Total	**2150**	**461**

*Due to Covid-19 Pandemic related constraints, Travel and Data Collection Abroad Grants could not be provided during 2020-21.

B. ICSSR LIST OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT AGENCIES FOR GRANTS AND PROJECTS (THORAT AND VERMA, 2018)

Ford Foundation; IDRC; Department for International Development (DFID); Rockefeller Foundation; Water Aid; United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS); International Labour Organization (ILO); Asian Development Bank (ADB); UNDP; United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); United States–India Educational Foundation (USIEF); Institute of Developing Economies (IDE), Japan; Asia Foundation; South Asia Network of Economic Research Institutes (SANEI) (Global Development Network [GDN]); South Asian Network for Development and Environmental Economics (SANDEE); Oak Foundation; Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Sussex; International Institute of Social Studies (ISS), the Hague;

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI); IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, the Netherlands; British Library; Population Council; International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD); ESRC; European Union (EU); Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR); Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation, New York; Migrant Forum Asia; Norwegian Embassy; Global Health Strategies Emerging Economies Pvt. Ltd; Siemenpuu Foundation, Finland; etc.

C. ICSSR List of International Universities For Project/Grant Funding (Thorat and Verma, 2018)

Columbia University; Massachusetts University; Greenwich University; Emory University, Atlanta; Monash University, Australia; Harvard Law School; Manchester University; National University of Taiwan; Roma Tre University, Italy; Stanford University; Universidad de los Andes; University of Oxford; University of Portsmouth; University of Wisconsin; University of Amsterdam; Uppasala University, Sweden; York University; etc. Apparently, these collaborations have largely come from the initiatives taken by individual faculty members at these institutes as well as the repute of the respective institutes in undertaking research in specific thematic areas.

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