

EDITORIAL

BALAGANAPATHI DEVARAKONDA
University of Delhi
India

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3412-5931>
bdevarakonda@philosophy.du.ac.in

VIKAS BANIWAL
University of Delhi
India

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2186-7431>
vikas.cie@gmail.com

‘The world needs philosophy more than ever before.’ This prophetic statement is heard often in the post-COVID-19 world, given the significance of self-care and self-reflection that were necessitated during the lockdowns and isolations of pandemic life. The concern here is not to debate on whether the world needs philosophy, but rather what form of philosophy is required for the people to have peaceful coexistence if at all required. Is it the form of philosophy presumed to be the sole prerogative of academia, or something much more profound and broader than that, that the world needs? Focus on the acute intellectual pursuit of metaphysical and epistemological paradigms has restricted the domain of philosophy to a few academically qualified philosophers. The privileged academia largely ignores contributions from and to the non-academia. The need of the post-covid world percolates into the domain beyond academia in the form of contributing to the actual life of the people by taking resources from the concrete living experiences of human beings.

Understanding this need prompted us to provide a platform for discussing philosophical counselling as a significant form of philosophical practice that effectively deals with the human predicament.

For the past fifty years, various forms of philosophical practice have spread around the globe. Philosophical knowledge can be applied in multiple ways, including, but not limited to, Counselling, Philosophy Cafés, Philo plays, and so on. An International Conference on Philosophical Counselling was held under the aegis of the Indian Council for Philosophical Research (ICPR) in collaboration with the Department of Education and Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, to strengthen philosophical practice in India.

The central attempt of the conference was clarification and analysis of significant debates about the concepts and methods in Philosophical Counselling. Along with conceptual clarifications and methodological formulations, the speakers deliberated upon the possible foundations and forms that Philosophical Counselling may take in India, along with the potential use of Indian philosophies and literature in Philosophical Counselling. Some of these presentations are being published in this volume, hoping scholars and practitioners will find their deliberations helpful in their work.

The first paper, *Rethinking Prison Training in Colombia from a Philosophical Perspective* by Ingrid Victoria Sarmiento Aponte, studies the human rights crisis in Colombia. Because of COVID-19, overcrowding has become a significant concern in prisons and penitentiaries during the health crisis in Colombia. The paper deals with the issue of the violation of the human rights of inmates and the impact that it may have on persons and society. The exploration then is focused on moral character and moral education based on John Dewey's social and educational philosophy. Finally, the paper proposes that moral education be done in prisons to improve conditions and inmates' moral judgement.

The paper ‘Building a Bridge between the Worlds of Counselling and Philosophy – Lessons from the World of Karl Jaspers’ by Shanti Jones builds upon the case study of a thirteen-year-old girl cutting herself. The paper demonstrates the usefulness of Jaspers’ four ideas: limit situations, meaningful connections, symbols, and freedom. In addition, the paper successfully demonstrates the effectiveness of philosophical counselling and the interface between psychiatry and philosophy. Papers like this are significant in establishing philosophical counselling as a reliable, professional practice.

Similarly, Andre de Almedia’s ‘Core issues in the Philosophical Counselling of business executives’ explicates the need and relevance of Philosophical Counselling in business settings. Some philosophical ideas he finds relevant are responsibility, integrity, and autonomy. Engaging existentially with these ideas, Almedia attempts to illustrate that counsellors could understand the concerns of the counsellee best through existential philosophy and concludes with the notion that philosophical counselling is helpful to make sense of the challenges of our lives.

Taking philosophical counselling to the legal system, Nayha Acharya’s ‘Philosophical Counselling Applied to Conflict Resolution via Mediation: A Pathway to Justice’ shows its relevance to conflict resolution via mediation and civil justice. She argues that Philosophical counselling can provide mediators with an empathetic and dialogical method of helping parties think critically and rationally and to cultivate clarity, depth, and coherence in their worldview and value system. She demonstrates that several essential principles of philosophical counselling align precisely with the values, goals, and needs of just mediation. Her paper opens up a new avenue for Philosophical Practitioners to contribute to people’s lives by facilitating them through the conflict resolution process.

Lou Marinoff's paper 'Philosophical practice during the pandemic: Dancing in the noosphere' presents a broader framework of consciousness in which the various philosophical practices get aligned. Specifically discussing the pandemic, Marinoff presents explanatory frameworks for interpreting the pandemic from Indian philosophy, Greek mythology, Victorian literature, Kabbalistic lore, and cosmo-biological speculation. In addition, his paper highlights the cultural variations in interpreting phenomena and the possible role that Philosophical Counsellors may have in enriching our individual and collective lives.

In his 'Anekantavada and Syadvada as Tools for Philosophical Practice to Mitigate Cognitive Biases', Saathvik Devarakonda reflects on the usefulness of Anekantavada and Syadvada in Philosophical Counselling. He proposes the blend of Syadvada and Narrative Therapy – the "Syad-Narrative" method – to attenuate cognitive biases and thus yield productive outcomes in Philosophical Counselling. His paper is an excellent example of how methods from different traditions can be clubbed to evolve innovative counselling approaches and methods.

This issue finished with two book reviews of Félix García Moriyón's *La educación moral, una obra de arte* published in 2021 and Ana Isabel García Vázquez's *Aprendiz de Filosofía* published in 2022.

The editors hope this volume will further the discussion of the methodological and theoretical concerns in philosophical counselling. There is a lot of scope for developing philosophical practices, such as Philosophical Counselling, in countries like India, which has a rich philosophical and ideational heritage. Journal volumes such as this are intended to stimulate conversations to engage philosophically with the various facets of everyday life.