

## PREFACE

This special issue is the outcome of an international Conference organised jointly by KIIT University, Bhubaneswar, India, Operational Research Society of India (ORSI), Bhubaneswar chapter and ICSSR – IMPRESS project of KSoM, KIIT, on a theme, “The ‘**new-normal**’ life in virtual world: Issues, Challenges & Way forward”, held on June 28, 2020, on digital platform.

It was attended by over 350 delegates, from 7 countries, where 28 research papers and 12 invited talks were presented. Subject experts had affiliation from leading Universities and Institutes of India, Nepal, Bangladesh, UAE, Sri Lanka, Maldives and the USA.

The Conference covered the issue of ‘effectiveness and impact of ‘Digital Medium’ on ‘digital-life’, particularly during the COVID-19 lockdown, in all fields, business, academics or social networking. It was research based ‘experience sharing’ by the ‘stake-holders’, to understand the issues relating to the ‘virtual life’, in this ‘different’ virtual-world, ‘working from home’ (WFH) during lockdown. Along with experts and researchers, concerned stakeholders, like, examinees, examiners, and the service providers, who attended this conference.

Out of 26 research papers, presented during the conference, only top 12 papers were selected based on their merit. All these selected papers had undergone stringent and rigorous peer review process involving a series of reviews by both internal, external reviewers as well as from the prestigious Horizon journal.

We would like to thank all our esteemed contributors, as well as the reviewers for their commitment and patience, which had made the publication of this special issue possible. We sincerely hope that the articles published in this issue will be of great academic help to all the researchers, working in related areas, in expanding their knowledge and in publishing more articles of higher quality and standard.

We would also like to thank Editor-in-chief, Chief Executive Editor, Professor Nayan Kanwal and other editorial and production team members of Horizon Journal, for their trust and support and for their tremendous efforts and dedication to improve the quality of the articles published in this issue. We also thank Horizon journal editorial board for supporting the conference, since its conceptualization and also for publishing first the ‘Book of Abstracts’ of all papers, at the time of conference.

Guest Editor

**Rabi Narayan Subudhi, Ph.D.**

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