



Jain Academy of Scholars

Ahmedabad, India

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Objectives, Structure, Accomplishments & Vision (2021-2026)

Preamble

The Jain Academy of Scholars was established in June 2020 with the vision that it will act as a 'Think Tank' and carry out research in Jain philosophy. Its primary objective is to carry out and promoting study and research in Jain philosophy by "supporting concepts of Jain Darshan with scientific methodology and logic" and "enriching scientific theories by introducing Jain concepts".

In early deliberations amongst the scholars, it was realised, that although Jain doctrines, life style and dietary habits have the potential of resolving most of the global problems at international, societal and personal levels, Jain doctrines are barely known to people the world over and absence of providing Jain concepts with modern logic and scientific basis are leading to rapid shrinking of the Jain followers. One estimate is that if the present trend of fertility rate continues, Jain community, which is about 5 million at present, will reduce by a factor of 50, that is to 100,000 in 40 years. Jain scholars are few in number and Jain samaj is not supporting study and academic activity or research on Jain scriptures, but have very successfully popularized ahimsa and promoted dietary practices and rituals. Thus there is a need to reinterpret the Jain concepts in modern context and make them relevant to the modern era. The Jain Academy of scholars has taken upon itself to fill this void of study and research in Jain philosophy.

JAS has grown into a unique forum where exchange of ideas related to Jain philosophy and its practical applications take place between scholars globally. Currently about 60 renowned Jain scholars from India and abroad are involved in this academic activity of JAS. Among them are well known personalities like Padma Bhushan Dr. D. R. Mehta, Padma shri Dr. Sudhir Shah and Padmashri Dr. Kumarpal Desai, amongst other authors and proponents of Jain doctrines, like Dr. Narayan Lal Kachhara, Dr. C. Devakumar, Dr. Sulekh Jain, Dr. Shugan Chand Jain Dr. P. Snchetee, Dr. Viney Jain and Dr. Anil Kumar Jain. Several Saint scholars, sadhus, sadhvis and samanias representing different Jain sects are Mentors of the Academy. Dr. Narendra Bhandari, a space scientist, associated with ISRO, who designed the scientific experiments on India's first mission to moon is founding President of JAS and Dr Surendra Singh Pokharna is the current Executive Secretary.

Programs

The Academy carries out several courses in Jain scriptures, lecture series, and has carried out some research projects. Some main programs and results are listed below:

Weekly lectures

1. The Academy holds weekly on-line lectures by world renowned experts on various aspects of Jain philosophy and science. Round Table Discussions on controversial issues like Lokavad, Atmavad and Shrishtivad were held to examine and integrate different points of views to arrive at some logical consensus. Results of these discussions have been published (see list of publications)

Some of the lectures are available on

YouTube Channel: https://youtube.com/c/JainAcademyofScholars_SSRI

& JAS website : <https://www.jainscholars.com/>

2. Proceedings of JAS

JAS publishes a technical Journal called **Proceedings of JAS** containing original research papers related to science and Jain darshan. The articles are peer reviewed to maintain the highest standards. The inaugural issue deals with topics like modern view of Jain philosophy, physical structures of matter, violence and non-violence in daily life and effect of meditation on aggressiveness by accomplished professionals. It also brings out latest scientific news about Jain concepts. The second issue is an attempt to resolve the conflict between Jain Loka and modern cosmology and geography. The third issue is devoted to Gyan Mimasa.

Courses/Tutorial on scriptures/science

1. JAS has completed two courses/tutorials in the past: one on 'Jain philosophy and its scientific foundation' and the other on 'Basic science for philosophers', both by Dr. Narendra Bhandari.

Three virtual - online courses (once a week) are currently going on or are planned for 2022 by JAS/SSRI.

- (i) Samayasara: by Pt. Romesh Bhai Shah, since January 2020.
- (ii) Pannavana sutra: by Dr Samani Chaitanya Prajnaji w.e.f. 13th Jan 2022
- (iii) Gommatsar by Dr. C. Devakumar w.e.f. June 2022

These course are free of charge and open to all.

2. A Q&A series was conducted in which Dr. Bhandari posed 45 questions on Jain tattva gyan which were answered by the Jain saint scholar Munishri Mahendra Kumar ji.

International conference.

3. JAS was a knowledge partner in organising an **International Conference on Science and Jain Philosophy-2** on consciousness which was organised by Florida International University, Miami, USA.

4. The Academy has instituted several **JAS awards** for outstanding contributions to Jain philosophy, namely Life time / Outstanding achievement, Excellence and Appreciation awards to recognise scholars globally.

Research Projects:

The JAS/SSRI fellows are willing to guide in Study, Teaching and Research on potentially promising topics, if suitable students are available and funds for scholarships and for executing the project are provided.

Some of these problems are appropriate for experimental or theoretical work for fulfilment of M.Phil. or Ph.D. Degrees in a university.

The following projects are in progress or have been completed:

1. Jain theory of Matter and its comparison with Standard Model of Particle Physics: Narendra Bhandari. The paper based on this study has been submitted for publication.
2. Shrishtivad and Darwinian evolution: Narendra Bhandari, Anil Kumar Jain and Mahaveer Singh Sisodia: The results have been published in Jain Journal, July 2022 issue.
3. Study of consciousness in Jainism and science: Dr Surendra Singh Pokharna : the report has been submitted to Indian Council of Philosophical Research, July 2022.
4. Titius Bode law of planetary sequence. It has been shown that this law arrived at by Bode in 1776 is the same as mentioned in Tiloy Pannati: The paper has been published in Proc. Jain Academy of Sciences, vol1 (2).
5. Sensory capabilities of Vanaspati Kaya: Ashesha Parikh and Narendra Bhandari, Study in progress. This work has shown that vanaspatikayik jiva have more than one indriyas (like seeing, hearing, smelling), and exhibit many emotions (like affections, love, hate, anger etc), are the only species who do not commit any violence for their food or survival and need to be classified in a special class and not confined to ekindriya (one sense) jiva.
6. Physiological and Psychological effects of dietary habits and other Jain penances: Dr Pratap Sanchetee, Ankita shah, Ashesha Parikh and Narendra Bhandari: study of 250 Tapasvis who did varshitap for one year ending May 2022 is in progress. Similar work on other tapasvis during ensuing Paryushan is being planned.
7. Development of Daily Violence Counter: Mobile App (also useful for daily Pratikraman) has been made by Narendra Bhandari, Ashesha Parikh and Nikhil Shah. The App gives quantitative (but relative) number for violence committed by an individual during his daily routine and not only makes one aware of the violence committed by him/her but also gives comprehensive number which includes contribution to greenhouse effect, pollution etc. and gives hint for improvement of life style without compromising on comfort. The app is compatible with android and iPhone. (details are given at the end of this report).
8. Defining life by Narendra Bhandari: Entropy based definition of life has been developed for distinguishing Jad, Achitta, Sachitta and Sajiv: air, earth, water and electricity etc. The research has been published in Proc. Jain Academy of scholars JASP-2.
9. Ajiva ahimsa: A concept of **ajiva ahimsa** has been developed (by Narendra Bhandari), which goes beyond the jiva himsa which is the main thrust of Jain philosophy (see list of publications). The immediate effect of Ajiva himsa has been emphasized. Efforts are being made to popularize ahimsa on

global level by observing a non-violent life style. This effort was initiated since the past 7 years and is led by Dr Surendra Singh Pokharna

The following topics are being planned for research: short-term plan:

1. Physiological and Psychological effects of meditation. Dr Pratap Sanchetee
Consequences of laboratory grown meat and unfertilized eggs.
2. Ecological effects of Jain life style: quantitative evaluation of environmental effect if 70 million or 1% of global population adopts proper life style. Narendra Bhandari
3. Parasparopagraho Jivanam and quantum Entanglement: To resolve the dilemma between self-effort (Purushartha) and kram baddha paryaya (sequential transformation of modes) or determinism. Narendra Bhandari
4. Quantum complementarity and Anekanatavad
5. Purusharth (free will) and Krambaddha Paryay (determinism): quantum and classical mechanics
6. Pathways of Ghati and Aghati Karmas: electrochemical and neurological pathways
7. Scientific doctrines of Jainism and western science
8. Lokakash and modern cosmology
10. Jain model of Particle physics and standard model of Particle Physics
11. Application of anekantavad
12. Development of Jain logic (Sapta bhangji and its applications in day to day life, in machine logic, in computers etc.
13. Aparigrah: and its quantitative effect on climate.

Structure:

The Academy has an administrative structure which is without sectarian consideration, open to all Jain sects and non-Jains, is democratic, in which all Fellows and members have equal rights, not dominated by any leader or Acharyas in which office bearers are appointed by election or consensus and is run by contribution from fellows and other donors. JAS has acquired the required infrastructure. Furnished office space, with a library containing all Jain Agams of all sects and relevant books on modern topics of science and philosophy. It has all modern digital facilities (internet, phones etc) have been made available gratis by Logus Technologies, at Ahmedabad. JAS is registered as a trust with the Charity commissioner, Ahmedabad (E/23135/Ahmedabad of 1st April, 2021). A bank account exists with ICICI bank.

Presently the Academy has 3 Trustees (Dr Narendra Bhandari, Dr Surendra Singh Pokharna and Shri Nikhil Shah), four mentors, 4 Patrons, 18 Founding Fellows and about 50 Fellows and members. 2 Research scholars and 2 administrative/ editorial staff members.

Vision (2021-25)

1. Jain Knowledge centres (Gyan kendra)

The Academy wants to build a few Knowledge centres in India

The Concept of a Jain knowledge centre is relatively new. It should bridge a long standing gap in Jain academic studies, which has existed for many centuries. The

knowledge centre is proposed to be a dynamic hub of Jain scholars, where scholars visit, stay and go away after accomplishing their objective and new, young crop of scholars is prepared, by training and research. It is NOT just an information centre on Jain philosophy but It is where knowledge about Jain philosophy is created. A temple, a library, a museum, or a digital hub containing all information about Jain philosophy, its history or geographical distribution and scriptures does NOT make a Jain knowledge centre. It should be a hub of Jain studies where scholars should gather together from all over the world to discuss and clear their concepts, reinterpret the scriptures in modern context, develop them further, publish new findings, publish its own research journal, and is able to attract people of other faiths to come and study and learn about Jain philosophy.

The concept of Jain knowledge centre has arisen as a realisation of some of the Leaders of the Jain community (samaj) that knowledge or Gyan, which is the main pillar of Jain philosophy, has not been given its due importance in Jain activities. For this reason, in spite of vast potential of Jain philosophy and practices in resolving modern day problems related to environment, stress at personal, social and international levels, violence, harmony in the world etc, it has become irrelevant to modern life style and new generation. This is the main reasons for decline of the popularity of Jain philosophy that it does not have much following, is limited to 5 million. It is gradually losing its relevance in the modern times and Jain followers are rapidly shrinking. A comparison is usually made with Buddhism, since Baudhha and Jain darshan are similar in many respects and were at their peak at about the same time, 2600 years ago, but now the situation is quite contrasting: Whereas Buddhism (6.6% of world population, 5th largest), was followed by half of the world at one time, has taken roots in many countries of the world and is in great demand in the West even now, Jainism has reduced to 0.4%, and a lowly position (does not figure in first 10) as far as faiths of the world are concerned.

It should have well defined objectives some of which are listed here as examples:

1. it should publish a summary of each Agam written in the modern context. For example it can be a series titled "Jain Sutras as I understand it": e.g. Nandi sutra as I understand it, Pannavana sutra as I understand it, etc. written by some modern scholars. There are 45 Agams of September sect and many of Digambar sect. Each one should be covered in this way in a period of one year, with modern examples and scientific logic where possible. Concepts which can be developed further and questions which can be answered by research must be identified. this will need as many scholars to work on them as many standard texts have to be studied.
2. There should be a jain-science series in which scientific ideas contained in the agamas must be summarised, developed further to guide modern scientific studies and research.
3. Experimental and theoretical research must be carried out on concepts from scriptures which can be established- mathematically formulated, experimentally proved, logically argued, applied in personal, social and national spheres. There are topics like consciousness, Karma theory, Jain logic applied in machines, dietary practices, meditation practices, life style etc., environmental aspects to name a few.
4. An annual or two yearly international conference must be held at the site covering different aspects of Jain philosophy.

5. Scholars must prepare for the whole year and present their findings at this conference.
6. There should be provision to provide scholarships to students who want to do research and visiting Fellowships for 1 to 6 months for senior scholars and experts of various subjects and faiths to visit this centre and work there.
7. A Research Board should be constituted with some funds at its disposal who will invite research proposals, scrutinise them, approve them, provide suitable grants and resources, monitor their progress and help publish the findings in standard journals.

Selected Publications by JAS Scholars:

A selected list of books and research papers published by some JAS Fellows are given below:

Books:

1. Jinatava ka Path (Hindi) by Narendra Bhandari
2. Jainism: A Universal and eternal Path to enlightenment, by Narendra Bhandari, Prakrit Bharti, Jaipur
3. Scientific Perspectives of Jainism edited by Samani Chaitanya Prajna, Narendra Bhandari and N. L. Kachhara, (Eds) Jain Vishva Bharati Institute, Ladnun
4. Jain Philosophy: A scientific approach to reality (Proceedings of the 1st International conference on Science and Jain Philosophy) edited by Samani Chaitanya Prajna, N. L. Kachhara, Narendra Bhandari, K. P. Mishra (Eds) Jain Vishva Bharati Institute, Ladnun

Journals

1. Proceedings of Jain Academy of Scholars 1 (1), Narendra Bhandari, Chief Editor, Oct.2020
2. Proceedings of Jain Academy of Scholars 1 (2), Narendra Bhandari, Chief Editor, Feb, 2022.

Research Papers:

1. Narendra Bhandari, Theory of multiple manifestations (anekantavada), Jinvani, 27-33. (2019)
2. Narendra Bhandari, Engaging Jainism with Scientific Research, in Jainism on Modern Issues, Samani Chaitanya Prajna and N.L. Kachhara, Editors. Jain Vishva Bharati institute, <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0847SZB69> (2019)
3. Narendra Bhandari, High Impact potential of Jainism: realization and Application, Proc. of conference held at Ahmedabad university, January, 2020
4. Narendra Bhandari, Anekanta philosophy as a way of Life, Jinvani (2021).
5. Narendra Bhandari, A Modern View of Jain Philosophy, Proc. Jain Academy of scholars Vol. 1, (2020)
6. Narendra Bhandari, (2020) Jambu Dvip related description in Jain Agams and its identification based on features of the solar system, Proceedings of Jain Academy of Scholars, 1(2).

7. Narendra Bhandari, (2020) Content and Structure of Jain Lokakash, Dodecahedron Universe and Living systems, Proceedings of Jain Academy of Scholars, 1(2), 2020.
 8. Narendra Bhandari Existential Dilemma Of Jain Society – Options And Consequences JAIN AVENUE, April, 2021
 9. Narendra Bhandari, The Jain Model of Particle Physics, paper presented at the Lok-Alok symposium, Nov, 2021 To be published in the Proceedings.
 10. Narendra Bhandari, Anil Kumar Jain and M. S. Sisodia Speciation model based on Jain theory of Shriṣṭivāda and limited intra-species Darwinian evolution, Jain Journal, July, 2022
 11. Narendra Bhandari, Theory of Matter in Jain philosophy, Indian Journal of History of science (submitted)
 12. Narendra Bhandari, Scientific foundation and practice of Ahimsa (in press), Prakrit Bharati Institute, Jaipur.
 13. Narayan Lal Kachhara (2020) Intelligent Subtle Forces and Fields Decide Human Performance: Jain Perspective–I, Philosophy Study, October 2020, Vol. 10, No. 10, 622-636.
 14. Narayan Lal Kachhara (2021) Jain Concepts of Prāṇa and Paryāpti: Two Essential Conditions of Life, ISJS – TRANSACTIONS, A Quarterly Refereed Online Research Journal on Jainism, April 2021, No. 1 - 16.
 15. Narayan Lal Kachhara (2022) Matijnana (Perceptual cognition) and Shrutijnana (Articulate Knowledge) in Scientific Perspective.
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