



K.R. MANGALAM UNIVERSITY
THE COMPLETE WORLD OF EDUCATION



Report on

Workshop on ‘Social Impact Ventures: Entrepreneurial Opportunities within Humanities’

Date: Monday, 21st October, 2024

Time: 10:30 AM onwards

Venue: A213, K.R. Mangalam University

Event Type: Workshop

Mode of Activity: Offline

Target Group: Students from K.R. Mangalam University

Resource Persons: Dr. Christine Samandari-Hakim and Dr. Kazem Samandari (Co-Owners, L’Opera)

Faculty Coordinators: Dr. Minhaj Ahmed Khan and Dr. Kaveri Khound (Assistant Professors, SOHS)

Student Coordinators: Maahi Saini (B.A. Hons Economics), Anushka Thapliyal, Keshav Agarwal, Shivam Mishra (B.A. Hons Political Science)

Organised by: School of Humanities (SOHS), K.R. Mangalam University

Collaborating agency: K.R. Mangalam Entrepreneurship and Incubation Centre (KEIC)

Number of Participants: 141

The School of Humanities (SOHS) at K.R. Mangalam University, in collaboration with the K.R. Mangalam Entrepreneurship and Incubation Centre (KEIC), hosted an insightful workshop titled "Social Impact Ventures: Entrepreneurship Opportunities within Humanities." The event featured distinguished speakers Dr. Christine Samandari-Hakim and Dr. Kazem Samandari, who shared their extensive experiences in social entrepreneurship and business leadership.

Dr. Christine Samandari-Hakim holds a Ph.D. in Social Psychology from the University Paris VII, along with an MA in Anthropology and an MA in Sociology from the University Paris X. From 1988 to 2008, she served as the Head of the European and Francophone Branch of the Bahá'í International Community's Office of Public Information in Paris, France. Her work involved coordinating educational, social, and humanitarian programmes across Europe. Dr. Samandari-Hakim has authored several articles, research papers, and a book titled "Les Bahá'ís ou Victoire sur la Violence" (The Bahá'ís or Victory over Violence). In 2008, she moved to New Delhi, India, where she co-founded L'Opéra, a prominent French bakery and pastry operation.

Dr. Kazem Samandari possesses a Ph.D. in Industrial Economy, an MS in Electrical Engineering, and a Business Degree from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Switzerland. With over 45 years of professional and entrepreneurial experience, including six startups, Dr. Samandari has worked in more than 60 countries across all continents. He has held executive positions in several high-tech companies and is the co-founder and Executive Chairman of L'Opéra since 2008. In 2022, he co-founded the Trajectories of Hope Foundation, dedicated to society-building endeavours.

The programme commenced with an introduction by Dr. Minhaj Ahmed Khan, followed by a welcome address from Prof. Tania Gupta and a short address by Dr. Anshika Prakash. Dr. Samandari-Hakim shared her impactful work with the Bahá'í International Community, highlighting how she has maintained these principles in her entrepreneurial venture, L'Opera. Her presentation emphasised the importance of integrating social values into business practices.

Dr. Kazem Samandari offered a compelling narrative of his diverse entrepreneurial experiences across multiple continents and industries, ranging from nuclear energy to the culinary world. He focused on core humanitarian values that can be integrated into business, including:

- Gender equality
- Reducing economic disparities
- Fostering global unity and harmony
- Eliminating prejudice

As the final segment of the workshop began, Dr. Samandari introduced the concept of the Magic Wand Thesis. He explained that this exercise was meant to push the boundaries of conventional thinking and inspire truly transformative business ideas. Participants were asked to imagine they possessed a magic wand capable of solving any global issue or creating any business without limitations. This premise was intended to free their minds from practical constraints and foster truly innovative thinking.

The exercise commenced with a brief brainstorming session. Attendees were encouraged to jot down their wildest ideas for businesses that could change the world. After the initial brainstorming, Dr. Samandari guided the participants through a refinement process. He encouraged them to consider how their magic wand ideas could incorporate the humanitarian values discussed earlier:

- How could the business promote gender equality?
- In what ways might it help reduce economic disparities?
- How could it foster global unity and harmony?
- What aspects of the business could work towards eliminating prejudice?

Participants were then given time to prepare a brief presentation of their refined ideas. Each participant or group had the opportunity to present their Magic Wand Thesis to the entire workshop. The presentations were dynamic and diverse. After each presentation, fellow participants and Dr. Samandari provided constructive feedback. This led to lively discussions about the feasibility of implementing these ideas in the real world and how they could be adapted to overcome potential challenges.

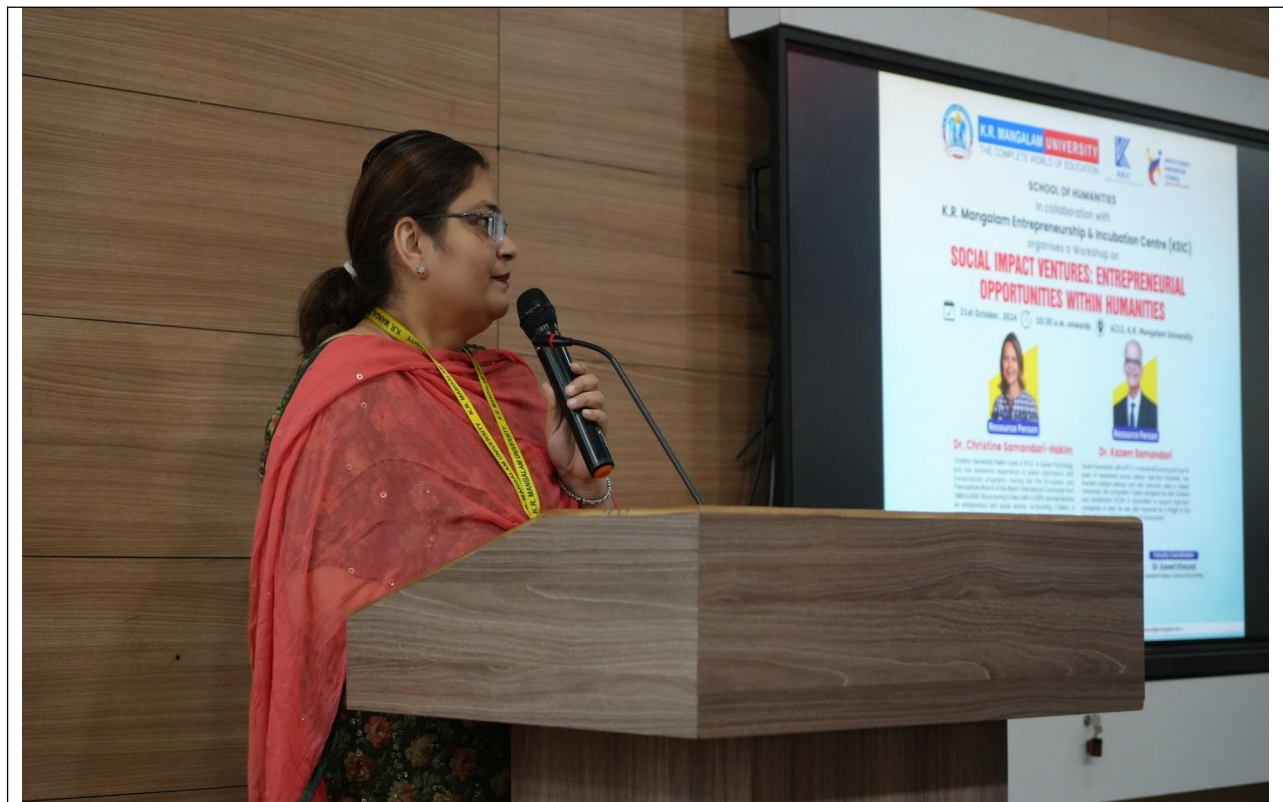
To conclude the exercise, Dr. Samandari facilitated a group reflection. Participants shared what they had learned from the process and how it had changed their perspective on entrepreneurship and humanitarian values. The Magic Wand Thesis exercise proved to be a powerful conclusion to the workshop. It not only allowed participants to apply the concepts they had learned but also inspired them to think beyond conventional boundaries. This creative and interactive approach to learning ensured that the workshop's teachings would have a lasting impact, encouraging participants to continue thinking innovatively and compassionately in their pursuit of entrepreneurial success.

The workshop was convened by Prof. (Dr.) Tania Gupta, Dean of SOHS. Also present were Dr. Anshika Prakash, Director of KEIC, and Dr. Rahul Sharma, Registrar of K.R. Mangalam University. The faculty coordinators were Dr. Minhaj Ahmed Khan and Dr. Kaveri Khound, Assistant Professors, SOHS. Student coordinators included Anushka Thapliyal, Shivam Mishra, Keshav Agarwal (all from B.A. Hons Political Science), and Maahi Saini (B.A. Hons Economics).

The workshop successfully bridged the gap between humanities and entrepreneurship, demonstrating how social impact can be achieved through business ventures. It provided students with valuable perspectives on creating enterprises that not only succeed financially but also contribute positively to society. This collaborative effort between SOHS and KEIC exemplifies K.R. Mangalam University's commitment to fostering socially responsible entrepreneurship and interdisciplinary learning. The event concluded with Dr. Rahul Sharma, the Registrar, presenting memento gifts to the guests, which included two sapling plants. Dr. Kaveri Khound delivered the vote of thanks, bringing the enriching workshop to a close.



Dr. Kazem Samandari and Dr. Christine Samandari-Hakim



Welcome address by Prof. (Dr.) Tania Gupta



Dr. Christine Samandari-Hakim sharing her insights



Photo 4: Dr. Kazem Samandari sharing his insights



Photo 5: Dr. Rahul Sharma, Registrar, KRMU, offering saplings to the guests

