



SCHOOL OF
SOCIAL & BEHAVIOURAL
SCIENCES
AMRITAPURI

CAN BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN POLICY AND PRACTICE IN RURAL INDIA?


JOIN OUR
Ph.D. PROGRAM

Ph.D. RESEARCH PROJECT

In rural development, infrastructure is only half the battle. People often know what to do, but for various reasons, they can't or won't sustain the change. Closing that gap is the ultimate challenge in applied behavioral sciences.

We are looking for a Full-Time Ph.D. Scholar to join an ambitious project led by Associate Professor Victoria Ustenko. This isn't just an observational study—you will design, pilot, and evaluate real interventions across domains like: Safe drinking water access, Coastal seaweed-based livelihoods, and Environmental stewardship.

SWIPE RIGHT 

A photograph showing two men in a rural setting. The man on the left is wearing a light blue shirt, a purple tie, and dark trousers, with a grey bag slung over his shoulder. The man on the right is wearing a light-colored kurta and a light blue shawl. They are both looking at a document held by the man on the left. In the background, there are several brown cows and a wooden structure.

RESEARCH FOCUS

This research project focuses on one of the most pressing challenges in development today: bridging the gap between policy intent and human behaviour as meaningful change depends not just on infrastructure—but on people.

WHAT YOU WILL DO:

Operationalize the Daya-Dama-Dana model (Compassion toward living beings, Restraint in consumption, and Generosity toward the commons)

- Diagnose behavioural and social barriers in rural communities
- Co-design and implement targeted interventions
- Work directly in the field across diverse domains such as water safety and seaweed-based livelihoods
- Evaluate impact using rigorous mixed-methods research
- Contribute to policy-relevant insights that can scale

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WHY THIS Ph.D. STANDS OUT

- **From theory to practice:** Design and test interventions in real communities
- **Global collaboration:** Emerging partnership with TU Delft (Netherlands)
- **Flexible focus areas:** Water safety, livelihoods, environmental sustainability, and more
- **Policy relevance:** Work directly connected to government programmes, CSR, and development partners

WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

This is a hands-on, impact-driven PhD—not just about observing problems, but actively solving them. We are looking for candidates with a Master's degree in psychology, behavioural science, economics, public health, development studies, or related fields, along with strong quantitative research skills.

SWIPE RIGHT



1 Full-Time Position

Application Deadline: **14th July 2026**

Ready to shape the future of rural livelihoods?



**READY
TO
APPLY?**

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