

A note on the 4th Global conference on Pluralism, Inclusion and Citizenship

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The 4th global conference on Pluralism, Inclusion and Citizenship organized by the Interdisciplinary net was held at Salzburg, Austria from 31st November to 2nd December 2008. A total of 42 participants – a mixture of young and senior academics – from different parts of the world attended the conference.

According to the organizers over 350 abstracts were received out of which only 42 papers were selected for the conference. The aim of the conference was to explore the 'new developments and changes to the idea of pluralism and the implications these have for the social and political processes of inclusion and citizenship in modern societies'. The focus of the conference was to bring together people from different disciplinary backgrounds to initiate discussions and dialogue on these concepts and their changing perceptions.

The conference was organized into 5 plenary sessions and 8 concurrent sessions. The various themes included – Unfolding Recognition; Images and representation; Identities; Political membership; Political contest and negotiation; Voices from the migrant experience; Identity, Diversity and Politics; Plural citizenship; and Democracy and Ethics among others.

My paper entitled 'Pluralism in practice: Stories of political bargaining and selections from rural South India' was presented under the session titled 'Political contest and negotiations'. There were a total of four papers presented in this section with case studies from Ireland, Mexico and Singapore in addition to my paper. The interface between the formal and informal governance institutions that evolves in the process of political contestations and negotiations emerged as a common theme running through all the four papers. The feedback was positive with a number of questions and comments directed at my paper.

The outputs from this conference are two-fold. All the papers that were presented at the conference will be included in an e-book with ISBN allocation which will not become active until publication. In addition the participants of the conference were asked to nominate papers for the hard copy with justification for their nominations. My paper has been nominated and will be included in the hard copy later this year by Inter-disciplinary-net.