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Dr. Rao has successfully supervised five M.Phil. and seven Ph.D. scholars, with two additional Ph.D. candidates currently under his guidance. He has authored and published books and scholarly articles in the areas of Political Science, Social Exclusion, and Inclusive Policy. He has also led research projects funded by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi. A regular participant/delegate in national and international academic events, Dr. Rao has presented papers at numerous seminars, conferences, and workshops. He has also visited the National University of Singapore (NUS) as part of his academic engagements.

His areas of academic interest include Democratic Decentralization and Empowerment (PRIs), Research Methodology, Public Policy, Social Exclusion and Inclusion, Human Rights, Social and Political Movements in India, and Comparative Governments and Politics. Dr. Rao actively contributes to academic governance as a member of various bodies, including the Academic Council, School Board, Board of Studies, Departmental Research Committee, and Research Advisory Committee.