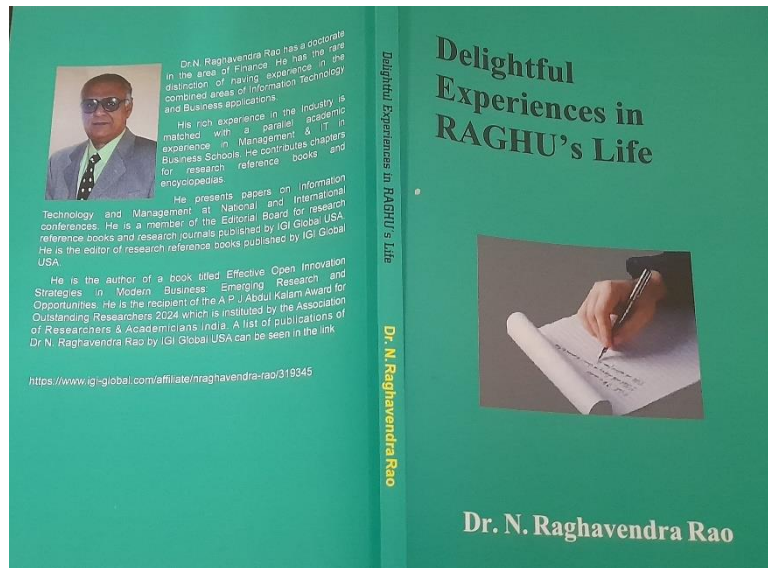




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**Dr. N. Raghavendra Rao** has a doctorate in the area of Finance. He has the rare distinction of having experience in the combined areas of Information Technology and Business applications. His rich experience in the Industry is matched with a parallel academic experience in Management & IT in Business Schools. He contributes chapters for research reference books and encyclopedias. He presents papers on Information Technology and Management at National and International conferences. He is a member of the Editorial Board for research reference books and research journals published by IGI Global USA. He is the editor of four research reference books published by IGI Global USA. He is the author of a book related to Open Innovation Strategies in Modern Business. He is the recipient of the A P J Abdul Kalam Award for Outstanding Research 2024 which is instituted by the Association of Researchers & Academicians India. A list of publications of Dr. N. Raghavendra Rao by IGI Global USA can be seen in the link <https://www.igi-global.com/affiliate/nraghavendra-rao/319345>

**Foreword by N. Meera Raghavendra Rao (Author, Feature Writer, Poet, Blogger)**

I deem it my privilege to write a foreword to “Delightful Experiences in Raghu’s Life” where the author includes incidents in his life that are both amusing and exciting. Normally we find experts who are widely recognized for their knowledge and research in their respective fields, who prefer to confine themselves to their specific area, but here is an author who has made his foray into writing a totally different genre from his specialization. I am amazed at his close and keen observation of the way people, animals, and birds behave in different situations. Apart from recording them, he also narrates these in a very lucid, reader-friendly style. I am sure readers will find this book quite entertaining and engaging apart from relating themselves to most of the situations in their life as well .



(Dr. N. Raghavendra Rao with N. Meera Raghavendra Rao)

(Photo Credits: N. Ravi)

## **Author Interview: Dr. N. Raghavendra Rao**

**Interviewer: Hema Ravi**



**(Author, poet, reviewer, educator)**

Namaste, Sir. It's a privilege and honor to talk to you, to gain more insights this evening about this book titled “Delightful Experiences in Raghu’s Life,” Most of us know Dr. Raghavendra Rao as a soft-spoken gentleman, an exemplary writer with innumerable edited technical books and research papers to his credit, "Well-known among the Academic and Research community across the globe"..... We also know that beneath the deep thinker with quiet fortitude is someone who can roar with the courage of a lion when pushed into the deep.

This evening, however, we would like to learn more - about Raghu, the protagonist, who as a fly on the wall or through tete a tete has discerned much about people, animals, birds, among others.... Fully aware that the canvas of life is not just a physical space, It includes the emotional, cognitive, and spiritual dimensions of human experience, all of which are present in this book.

My first question: What triggered you to write this book? How did you manage to record all these anecdotes?

Answer: I got into the habit of writing the points for my lectures at the universities and colleges. I am also in the habit of recollecting what I have noted in my notebook for my lectures, and I write again in another notebook. Then I compare it with lecture notes.

Ensuring that I do not miss any points during my lecture. Libraries were closed during the lockdown period due to COVID-19. My research was affected by the closure of libraries. During this period, I tried to recollect the behavior of the people in shops, restaurants, and roads. I also recollect the behavior of animals and birds at different places around my house. My writing habit helped me to write all these incidents in a notebook. Later I narrated them as episodes and published them as a book. Once on my way to my sister’s place in Mylapore, I happened to see a van with a board saying, “We carry delicious sweets”. This slogan encouraged me to name my book “Delightful Experiences in Raghu’s Life”.

Let’s dive deep into “Delightful Experiences in Raghu’s Life” Let us first talk about Raghu, as the COMMON MAN who has his eyes and ears open! The anecdotes are unadulterated and

engaging, what may seem ordinary to a prosaic person is extraordinary in this book.... Seated comfortably in this hall at Woodlands, let us begin with the anecdote “An evening at Woodlands Hotel.’ While Raghu waited for his TAKEAWAY, he watched people gathered there.... Please tell us more ....

Answer: I happened to see a senior lady sitting with her son, daughter-in-law, and other relatives of her son's age group next to my table. None of them bothered about her. They placed the order for her also before she completed going through the menu card and choosing the item. They were busy talking over their smartphones. The senior lady felt that their family did not bother to choose her food item.

I felt bad about the plight of the senior lady. On my frequent visits to this hotel, the manager has become friendly with me. I requested the manager to serve the dish she wanted. She was very happy that I helped her to get what she wanted. Her family members never bothered to know what was happening around them and were busy talking over their smartphones. I feel the menace of mobile phones is spoiling the relationships among family members.

To the common man the tiny birds in his garden, the ubiquitous crows in various postures atop buildings, dogs and cats and the surprising entry of a peacock are material for an engaging narrative..... In adulthood, most people lose their childlike innocence, curiosity, and sense of wonder.. What are your thoughts?

Answer: Making life interesting or uninteresting depends on one’s attitude.

In the Snippet on Animals, you’ve brought out AI, not the AI where machines think like human beings but AI -Animal Intelligence, in other words training a dog to understand human language. Can you elaborate further?

Answer: If a dog is trained to understand human language, it is known as Animal intelligence. If a machine is trained with a computer language (Coding) it is known as Artificial Intelligence.

Raghu’s nonchalant remarks at the end of each of the episodes offer great food for thought. Likewise, his sense of humor in many of the episodes is infectious too-after all, Laughter is the best medicine!

“The cat’s body language indicated its birthright of occupying one of the chairs...” is sure to regale the audience...can you recall that incident?

(Dr. Raghavendra Rao narrates the incident once again.)

(Hema talks about a video she watched some time ago)

<https://youtu.be/jZ8OtzQjBBI?si=hAkIO1FMiNIPHLVT>

My reading has given me insights into Raghu’s empathetic side as an advocate of the downtrodden, he highlights their cheerful behaviour and attitudes. In one of the episodes, Raghu observes youngsters getting out after attending a yoga class. The group always looked

tense. They would go to the tender coconut seller, have a drink, get on to their respective vehicles and move off without talking.....

In contrast, he observes a group of gardeners enjoying their tea in an immaculate lawn, indulging in casual talks, they offer a cup of tea to Raghu, the Teacher Next, Vasanthi, the neighbors' domestic help who offers to carry Raghu's heavy bags with a pleasant smile. Again, the relaxed attitude of women labourers just minutes before boarding their truck-their light-hearted banter on catwalk and stylish clothes.

It would be nice to gather more insights.....

Please tell us about the coconut seller's words: (Please tell us the same in Tamizh and then in English).

Likewise, tell us about that salesgirl who painstakingly arranged the mangoes on the display shelf.

Answer: The coconut seller explains climate change and pollution. According to him, people who listen to news channels in English are likely to get a virus.

The salesgirl took pride in her job.

Human Idiosyncrasies is always a hot topic for discussion, I take the cue from your anecdotes. You have recorded with precision the shopping attitudes of women, their sartorial choices, preferences, picky attitudes, the plight of salesmen....and more. Oh, I also read about the Peshawar dhoti and the demeaning remark of the salesmen..... Could you recollect that incident for the benefit of the guests?

Answer: When I go along with Meera. I always find a place to sit till Meera asks to make the payment for her purchases. While sitting I keep observing the people who come to shop and overhear their conversation. Once I observed a young girl of age around six years running around reciting nursery rhymes and dancing to her rhymes. While watching her I pretended to recite her rhymes and danced from the place I was sitting. Her grandfather sitting next to me called her and said "You should not behave the way you behave at home. Sit next to me on this chair". The girl immediately replied, "You look at this uncle reciting with me and dancing. At least learn from him to encourage me." Her grandfather was upset with her reply. Meanwhile, Meera finished her purchases. When we were about to leave the shop I saw Peshwari dhoti displayed at the entrance. I wanted to buy it, but I shouted at the salesman when he said that this type of dhoti was for youngsters. I forced him to show the dhoti and purchased it. I wrote the attitude of the salesman in the complaint book.

"Mediocrity is the enemy of excellence." Even today, people don't use their talents enough. Through the anecdote of the rabbit and the porcupine in Almighty's creation, you've brought out some subtle truths... I wish to pick your brain on this.

Answer: Making life pleasant or unpleasant is the outlook of an individual. Once a person is in a pleasant mood, he/she can use one's talent in a better way.

Music Concerts in Different Styles- Whether the music attracts or the food, I leave it to you all to decide.... (Hema looks at the audience)

Raghu's observations about the ostentatious display of jewelry by the male performers is bang on! (Hema shares a story narrated by Sri Ramakrishna about a kirtani)

Please tell us a little about the Software Swami and codes. Also about the sickly look, constipated look and the dejected looks

Answer: An M. Tech graduate from BITS Pilani who worked with him in a software company migrated to the USA. He was not happy with the working conditions in that country He happened to attend a religious discourse meeting at Dayananda Saraswati Ashram in the USA. Later he became his disciple. According to him "Coding" in software projects is writing a program as per the requirements given to the programmer. In the religious context "Code" is referred to as a code of good conduct and is mentioned in Religious Scriptures to lead a disciplined life.

Before we move on to Raghu's intellectual disposition, specializations, his accolades and achievements let us have a glimpse into the lives of Raghu and Meera, who are role models for many around them....The cliched words: behind every successful man is a woman! The contra is true as well as we observe in the life of two eminent personalities Meera and Raghu, who complement not compete, to bring out the best in each other. "Poovodu serndha naarum manakkum" literally translates to the "Twine used to make a garland is fragrant because of the flowers." In other words, association with certain people help to develop certain characteristics and character. Please highlight the importance of husband-wife compatibility, which is quite on the decline in today's NEEYA NAANA scenario. Is there a mantra for success in marriage?

Answer: There is no mantra. If the give-and-take principle is observed there will not be any hitch in their relationship.

Let us also talk about the good old days of Raghu's growing up in the GROVE, the magnificent marriage celebrations, the vintage cars and amidst all that opulence, has remained grounded and humble. This persona intrigues me a lot.....

Answer: My parents and grandparents used to say that we should thank god for his blessings. Their advice is one should be content with what is given to us by Almighty.

As an achiever in varied fields, you don multiple hats with ease; please share insights about the IGI Publications experiences, Machine Learning, AI, Social Media, Cloud computing and newly emerging concepts.....the opportunities, challenges, and others. In this part, you've mentioned Agri scientist Dr. MS Swaminathan as your role model too.. please highlight some instances for us about Dr MS and about Dr Sharma as well.....

Answer: When I was working at Hindustan Motors, I happened to be the president of a Lions Cub. Dr M.S Swaminathan was a chief guest at one of our club's functions. I was impressed with his speech on that day. He was recognized for his in-depth knowledge in the area of agriculture. I felt that I should also specialize in the area that I am familiar with. This mental decision helped me to involve myself in pursuing research in the discipline of Information and Communication technology. Now I am very well-known in the research community across the

globe. I was impressed with Dr. Sharma's way of teaching the subject related to finance. I adopt his method of teaching while taking classes at the universities and institutes. I am happy to say I received encouraging feedback from the students.

Please let us have some insights into Riding Two Horses with Confidence!

Answer: I happened to work with Gujarati and Marwari directors. Their advice to me is that I should accept any kind of assignment given to me and be involved with passion. Even today I follow their advice. That is the reason I am recognized for teaching and research work.

One last question – before going back to the Woodlands episode- do you think the art of conversation, storytelling and interactions have taken a backseat in this techno-savvy world?

Answer: I feel addicted to smartphones provide the opportunity to connect with people across the globe and disconnect contact with physical presence.

In your episode titled Discussions over breakfast, you have expressed appreciation for the construction worker who could identify all the characters of the Ramayana ... His knowledge gained by watching street plays...

Answer: Students, salesmen, and party workers who were having breakfast at the food cart were talking about their daily activities. Whereas the construction workers were talking about the characters in Ramayana

“Knowledge Never Retires.” The keywords from this book, I think one can learn pretty much from everybody if one lives in the moment, and has the curiosity of a child....I thank you, Sir, for patiently answering my questions, and reminiscing about these delightful experiences once again. Thank you, Meera ma'am.

Before we open the floor to the audience, let us applaud Dr. Raghavendra Rao for the acknowledgment(albeit late) from Indian soil - He is the recipient of the A P J Abdul Kalam Award for Outstanding Research 2024, which is instituted by the Association of Researchers & Academicians India.