



NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME

Shri Ram College of Commerce

presents

THE ANNUAL MAGAZINE

PRERNA

LIFE IN PROGRESS:
From an Anxious Generation



13th EDITION

13th Edition



*LIFE IN PROGRESS:
From an Anxious Generation*

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Prof. Simrit Kaur

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

-Mahatma Gandhi

This profound insight from the father of our nation perfectly embodies the ethos of the National Service Scheme (NSS) at Shri Ram College of Commerce. Our college has always emphasized the importance of compassion and service alongside academic excellence. It is truly inspiring to witness the unwavering dedication of our students as they earnestly endeavor to create a positive ripple effect in society.

Throughout the year, Team NSS through its several laudable activities promotes, the deeply ingrained motto of *“Heart For Service”*. The diligence and courage to initiate positive, social and cultural transformation are reflected in their noble deeds, awareness campaigns, and wing activities.

Throughout the year, the NSS team lives out our motto, *“Heart For Service”*, through various impactful initiatives. From raising awareness to organizing blood donation drives and setting up free dental check-ups, their dedication and courage continue to spark positive change. Their selfless actions inspire not only our stakeholders but also the broader society to unite in the name of humanity.

Under the capable guidance and support of Convenor Mr. Ashwani Kumar, the NSS team has been instrumental in nurturing socially responsible citizens. Their tireless efforts serve as a beacon of hope and inspiration, guiding others towards a path of service. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the team on the release of thirteenth edition of *'PRERNA'*, our annual magazine. This year's theme, *"Life in Progress: From an Anxious Generation"*, is particularly relevant during these transformative times. I hope the insights shared in this magazine will enrich and inspire its readers.

I wish the NSS team continued success in all their future endeavors, as they continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

**Mr. Ashwani Kumar**

“The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence.”

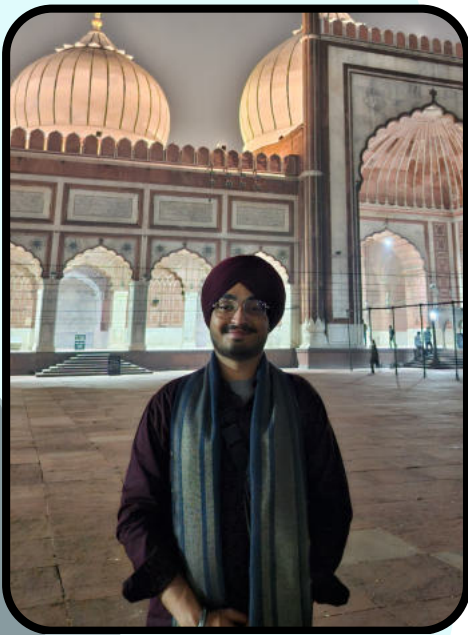
— Rabindranath Tagore

Education means little if it focuses only on personal success and neglects social welfare and community development. In today's competitive world, individual achievements often come before the well-being of society. The National Service Scheme is a platform where we try to develop a sense of social service among young minds through engagement in social welfare activities. We believe our students have the capability and potential to become key decision-makers in policy formulation for the country and the various community engagement programs undertaken by NSS help them understand the various problems in society and eventually find their probable solutions at the grassroots level.

It is my privilege to be associated with the NSS unit of Shri Ram College of Commerce. Teaching and guiding the best minds of our country is certainly a great feeling. I am proud to say that our volunteers are admirably adhering to the NSS Motto of “*NOT ME BUT YOU*” and trying their best to bring positive changes around them through their work.

The NSS unit of the college is the most active student unit in and outside the campus; it starts from the first day of admissions and goes on till the last working day of the session. Their zeal to continue working, despite the limitations that came with the shift to digital platforms, and again to physical mode was particularly admirable. Today I can confidently say that the contribution of our NSS volunteers is not limited to some specific celebrations; instead, it has now become a daily affair. Their work reaches different horizons of society with several wings and projects working on a diverse range of social issues.

The office-bearers and volunteers have played a crucial role in elevating the social contributions of NSS SRCC. I express my sincere gratitude to them for turning the objectives of NSS into tangible realities. Additionally, I would like to congratulate the editorial team for bringing this thirteenth issue of PRERNA to our readers. We hope it will provide you with a fresh perspective and inspire you in many respects.



Mr. Jashanpreet Singh

Not even a single face in the team did I know before the day our NSS cabinet was announced and I became the R&E Head. Cut to today, as I write my wishes for the 13th Edition of the heart of my team—PRERNA—I now have a bhaiya and di whom I can ring anytime for guidance, and a dozen friends with whom I've shared countless memories.

I've been witness to the passing on of the legacy of "familyness" for two generations of NSS—first as a recipient, and then as a bestower. It is in the very heart of NSS that we experience and learn the essence of family as volunteers, nourish and help it grow under the guidance of the Senior

Cabinet as cabinet members, and finally, as SC, supervise whether the work culture is moving in the right direction. Hardly any other society in SRCC can boast of a culture as loving and cohesive as what NSS offers. More than that, my two years in NSS SRCC—especially my second half as a cabinet member—have been a wholesome mix of learning and self-growth, which will definitely help me in my future, both in my career and as a human being.

This year, PRERNA unfolds what we—the students, the just-adults, the youth—feel and believe. Of course, we are the great anxious generation, but what makes us different from other generations? It's the massive influx and exposure to social media, the internet, and awareness of our surroundings—things we are not fully prepared to handle. Here in SRCC, most of us live in PGs and hostels, away from family, spending more time on LinkedIn than conversing with anyone. Living in FOMO, learning from it, and working on yourself to improve eventually makes you better off, but in the meantime, an entire youth is spent in anxiousness.

That's just one aspect of what we, in the 13th Edition of PRERNA, are trying to explore. This year, we bring together school students, college adults, and experienced authors to discuss our theme.

As an individual, the opportunity to conceptualize and lead an entire research internship program—Samshodhana—was my favorite. It was my moment to connect with schools across the country, explaining the curriculum and learning opportunities to stakeholders, while also inviting eminent scholars from some of the best institutions in India. The process and results have been showcased in one of the sections of this magazine.

This entire initiative taught me the power of volunteerism. We conducted this program at a minimal cost while still providing the best possible experiences for our learners. However, it would be unjust to ignore one important learning from this journey: the rigidity of bureaucracy in welcoming beneficial opportunities for students—particularly in government schools.

We were keen to involve as many government school students as possible. So, my team and I went to market the free-of-cost opportunity at no fewer than four different government schools, but we were disappointed to find that we weren't even given the chance to explain. We were told nothing could be allowed without prior permission from the ministry. We even requested that schools simply inform their students so they could contact us individually—but that, too, was refused.

Our visit to the District Education Office near Vidhan Sabha was another disappointment. An entire day was spent moving from one room to another, waiting for hours, and finally being told we could prepare a file and submit it—but we shouldn't expect any help.

In contrast, private schools responded instantly. Just sending an official mail would result in calls from their administration, eager to have their students selected for the internship. We did succeed in bringing in a good number of government school students through informal networks. But the question remains: how can the world's fourth-largest economy call itself *vikshit* when its public schools are not even open to change?

In the end, I am deeply thankful to everyone who takes the time to read the wonderful work of our interns during Samshodhana, our in-house writing team, and the career authors who, despite their busy schedules, contributed to this magazine.

Signing off

Jashanpreet Singh

Research and Editorial Head



Mr. Ansh Gupta

Prerna—a word that signifies inspiration—feels especially meaningful this year. With the theme "Life in Progress: From an Anxious Generation," we reflect on the uncertain yet evolving nature of our generation's journey. It is within this context of constant change that I find myself looking back on my three years with the National Service Scheme, Shri Ram College of Commerce, with immense pride, warmth, gratitude, a touch of nostalgia, and a heart full of emotions. Over the past three years, NSS has been more than just a college society — it has been my safe space, my purpose, and above all, my family.

I began in my first year as a curious and hopeful volunteer with Project Sanskar, unsure of what to expect, but soon moved by the impact of small, heartfelt actions—listening, showing up, and caring.

And finally, this past year, I was entrusted with the role of President. The transformation it inspired has been profound and lasting. Leading a family of like-minded individuals, across ten unique projects and wings, each with its own story, mission, and impact, yet all driven by a shared spirit of service.

From Project Sanskar's transformative work in education to Project Kali's outreach, from Project Ankush's commitment to feeding the underserved to Project Vishwas's empowerment of the Mahila Mandal in Solan — every initiative has been a world of hope, effort, and change.

Beyond these projects, the dedication of our wings- Social Support, Environment, and Social Empowerment has been inspiring. Whether it's advocating for the specially-abled, prioritising mental and physical well-being, nurturing our environment or empowering women, each wing has added depth to our identity. And the silent engines behind our operations — Technical & Marketing, Finance & Outreach, and Research & Editorial — have ensured that every step we take is supported, documented, and amplified with care.

But the unwavering spirit of our volunteers who consistently chose service over rest, commitment over convenience, kept me going. It is this relentless spirit of giving that defines us. It's what makes NSS not just an organisation, but a movement.

More than anything, NSS has made me more human. The NSS motto, “Not Me But You”, and our SRCC unit's guiding belief, “Heart for Service”, have become values I carry within me. I have come to appreciate the quiet strength in humility, the beauty in shared purpose, and the lifelong friendships forged in the spirit of service.

As I pen this note in my final days as President, I don't just see an end—I see continuity. Preparing to pass on the baton comes with a bittersweet ache in my heart. Gratitude for all that we've achieved together. Sadness in leaving behind a role that became so central to my identity. And unshakable hope that the future of NSS SRCC is even brighter.

Because I know: as long as places like NSS exist, kindness will prevail.

To everyone who has walked beside me on this journey, I owe you a lot. Thank you for the memories, the lessons, and the love. Perna is not just a reflection of our work; it is a celebration of who we are.

To the next generation of changemakers—our progress may be uncertain, our anxieties real—but when we come together with purpose and compassion, we find direction. We find hope.

Here's to a life in progress.

With deep love and pride,
Ansh Gupta
President (2024–25)
National Service Scheme, SRCC



Ms. Tejal Sharma

NSS has been a sanctuary for me in my college life. While everything else would get tough, I knew that I had a set of people to come back to, where everyone would look at me smiling. The three years of my NSS journey have been about three different things.

The first year was about exploring what I really liked. My journey at NSS started with my love and dedication to Project Vishwas and, more precisely, for Dastaan. When we went on a trip to Solan and visited the Mahila Mandal, I knew that we had the capability to impact individuals. It is truly empowering.

In my second year, it wasn't just about NSS and its work; it was a whole new chapter where I found my cabinet. Everyone came from different backgrounds, had different stories, and NSS meant different things to everybody. Through so many definitions of a common thing called NSS, you see different angles, and so did I, and so did my attachment to NSS increase.

The third year was always a tough choice to make between college opportunities and societal responsibilities. But amidst all the chaos, NSS has truly been my safe space. Here, everybody doesn't just work; everybody cares if the other one is doing well or not. This is what truly makes NSS different. I got my co-head, my cabinet, and my lovely juniors. At the end, I just know that NSS has always been the place where I belonged in college. Over these years, we have tried to create NSS as a safe space – a place where you find your home, where you feel belonged. It was one for me, and I hope it will always be one for the coming people in SRCC.

Signing off

Tejal Sharma

Secretary (2024–25)

National Service Scheme, SRCC

A hand-drawn scroll with a fountain pen and ink splashes. The scroll is unrolled, showing a central area with text. The edges of the scroll are irregular and hand-drawn. In the bottom left corner, a fountain pen is shown with a yellow band, and there are blue ink splashes and a greyish trail leading towards the center of the scroll.

**LETTERS
TO THE
ANXIOUS
GENERATION**

TO,

LETTER TO THE ANXIOUS GENERATION

To my mind you are not only anxious but agitated too, and, in this letter, I am going to call you A@2 generation

Thanks to the internet, the world with all its beauty and warts, has reached your young and impressionable minds while you were still in your diapers. So, you are 'know all' and often at logger heads with persons of my vintage. Now do not get angry but listen to me carefully and read till the end before you jump to any unpalatable conclusions.

Because you are anxious and agitated both, I feel you will be the harbingers of positive change in India and the world. While my generation got stuck in pompous, placid words with little effort against evils like corruption & mediocrity, I hope you will fight against both. Most of you have understood that the path ahead is full of struggles, so you are ready, unlike us, who tread with too much caution, averse to risks. Once a generation clearly identifies the challenges ahead, it is better equipped to meet them, unlike us who shut our eyes when the big cat like the climate change confronted us. A generation is, of course, not a homogeneous lot. But the common impatience with status quo, and being vocal for speedy change is what separates you from us, the old foggies.

In the meanwhile, let me remind you that though the old frameworks do not work anymore, hard work and integrity are consistent across generations. If, after defining what you wish to achieve in life, you follow it with sincerity and commitment, you are bound to reach your goals, which however, would keep shifting at different stages of your lives. We too worked hard but many times were not smart enough. At least I can say that about myself. I hope you work hard and smart both and with full honesty.

Emotional upheavals are bound to be there along with unexpected challenges. Once you are aware of their looming presence, you will handle them much better than if taken by surprise. Having feet on the ground will reduce the anxiety you are currently facing. And as they say, 'You grow through what you go through.'

It's not going to be all smooth, we all know it. Does it mean that you lose the very vital strand of humour or forget to appreciate good jokes, cartoons, and stand-up comedians? A@2, whatever happens, don't let humour out of the window. Seek company of those who make you smile and laugh. Remember, 'What if life is full of care, we have no time to stand and stare'! Do stare long and hard, holding on to your famous 'swag' and 'tashan'.

If your generation channelises its anxiety for realising their personal growth and agitates for the wellbeing of the society, it is worth it. But if they lead only to high blood pressure and unwanted conflicts and confrontations, they are best avoided. So, my dear A@2 generation, steer your anxiety and agitation towards personal and social good. Let it be 'Me & You, both'.

My generation stands firmly with you, ~**Dr Meeran Chadha Borwankar**,
cheering your every single (A retired but not a foggy cop)
achievement!

ABOUT DR. MEERAN CHADHA BORWANKAR



Dr. Meeran Chadha Borwankar is a former IPS officer and Fulbright Scholar with over three decades of service in Indian law enforcement. She has held senior roles, including Commissioner of Pune Police and Director General of BPRD and NCRB. A passionate advocate for justice and gender equality, she is the bestselling author of *Leaves of Life* and *Inspector Chougule*. Dr. Borwankar continues to inspire youth through her writing, leadership, and public service.

Not Quite Haiku, Not Quite Senryu...



Let's begin with some statistics.

Today, 398 million young people use social media in India. According to a study compiled by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) in 2023, teenagers spend more than 2-3 hours on platforms like Instagram and YouTube.

Probably the most alarming characteristic observed in a young Indian student is social media addiction. Reports indicate that 27% of teenagers in India develop features of social media dependency leading to a lack of concentration, poor academic output and mental health conditions, according to a recent report from the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore.

Continuous demands of checking notifications, posting updates, and scrolling feeds form a pattern of instant indulgence, thereby causing reduced productivity and increased alienation. Overexposure to screens also triggers sleep disorders; more than 40% of the students in India say that they have not managed to get a good night's rest because of extreme late use of social media.

Beyond the academic and the physical aspects, social media addiction most commonly destroys youth's self-esteem.



●●●

There's a new book out
Studying my tribe, observing, calculating,
calibrating
I'm feeling exposed.

●●●

Dadi says I ought to invest more in religion
That faith will show me the way
Except, I don't know what way I am
supposed to be seeking.

●●●

So much discussion on being wired
Connected yet disconnected
I've left my charger at home, my phone's
dying, and I'm frantic.

●●●

Exams to pass, courses to take
Jobs to land, a lifestyle to carve out
These days, I wake up gagging.

So much dinnertime talk extended
 On that TV show dealing with adolescence
 When was the last time anyone asked me
 11:05 ✓ how I was doing?

Not my child. I hear my parents say
 Words like self-harm, depression, bullying
 float in the air
 And I marvel at their blind confidence.

11:06

Go back to play-based childhood, they say
 Go out for a walk with friends, go play some
 basketball
 How to tell them I'm always excluded from
 11:07 ✓ these activities?

Learn from life. Papa says
 Learn from experiences. Mama says
 Well, if these are life lessons, I want out!

11:08

●○○

Yesterday, Mom went on a coffee date with me
It was fun, we were able to chat about a lot of
things
Let's get real, I tell myself; knowing Mom, this could
well be a one-off.

○○●

We are going to control your screen-time, they
said
It's for your own good, they said
It's good they don't know about my other phone.

●○○

Parents and teachers ought to be role
models, I read somewhere
They ought to be our support systems
Except, they are busy fighting their own
battles and doing a bad job of it.

○○●

Kick back, chill, relax, they tell me
This is the time to enjoy your childhood
Yeah, right. I've seen what happens when I
bring home an F.

You need to work on your Math. Mrs Bhalla says
 You need to work on your conversation skills. Papa
 says
 You need to make better Reels. my friends say.
 11:13 ✓✓

Greta is anxious about the environment
 My father is anxious about the sliding
 economy
 Me. I'm anxious about well, everything.
 11:14

If I hear one more time
 That childhood is special
 I'll snap. My shoes are feeling very tight.
 11:15 ✓✓



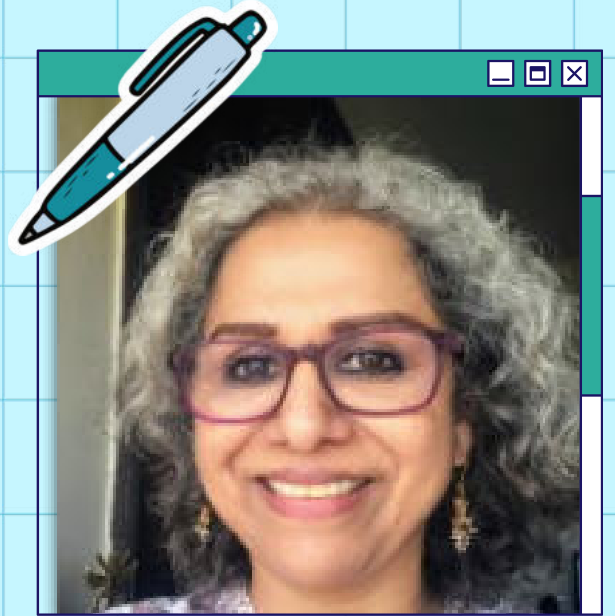
You feel me...

???

U there?

anyone

Author Bio

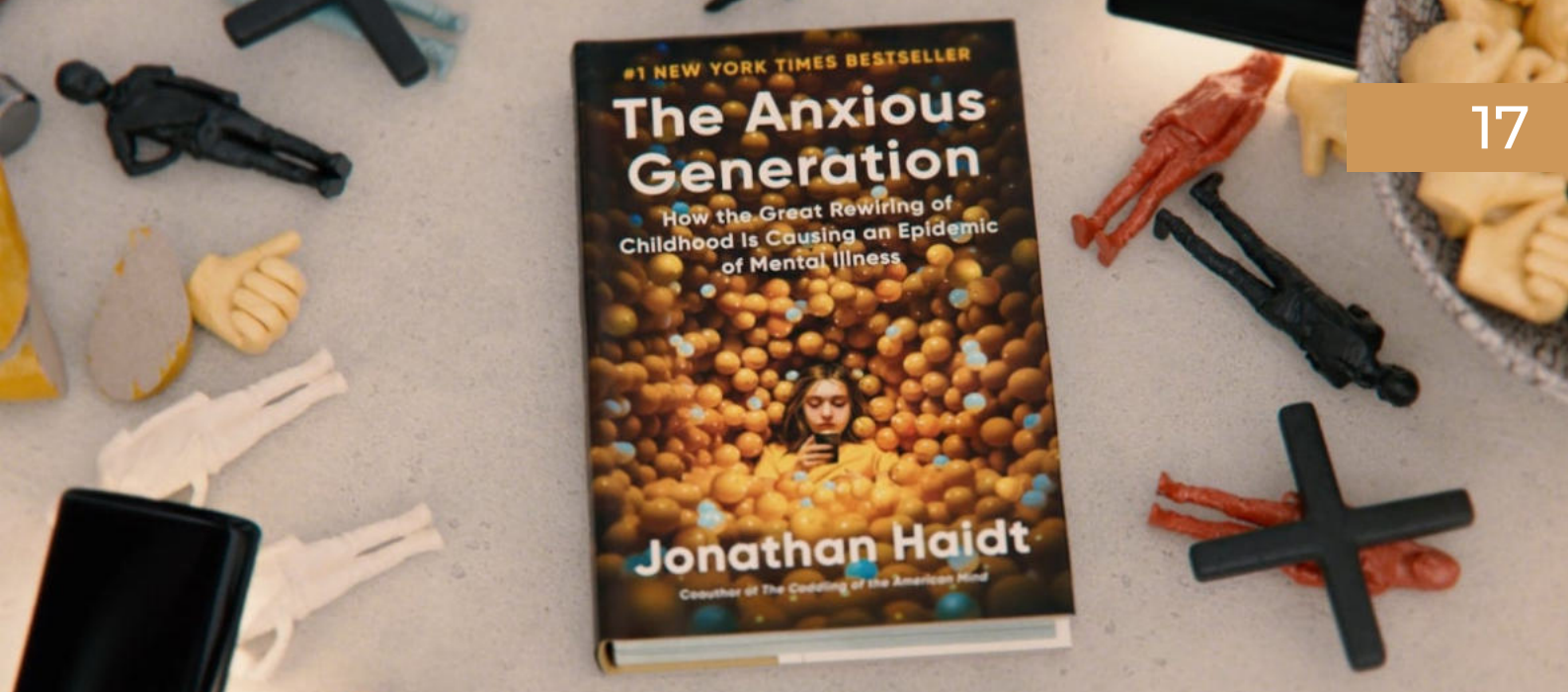


Ms. Sheila Kumar



Bangalore-based Sheila Kumar is an independent writer and manuscript editor, as well as author of a collection of short stories titled *Kith and Kin* and *Chronicles of a Clan*, two relationship novels, *No Strings Attached* and *Our Start-Up Affair*, and co-author of the non-fiction work *A Gluten-free Life*. She worked for the Times of India Group in Bangalore and Delhi, and then at Femina, for over a dozen years before turning freelance. Now she writes for a wide range of newspapers and magazines, on a wide range of topics, and regularly reviews books for three national newspapers.

The link to her webpage Comfortably Numb is www.sheilakumar.in



In the early 1970s, a young Bill Gates could often be found immersed in books, tinkering with electronics, or simply walking and thinking alone. There were no smartphones, no dopamine-fuelled scrolls, no constant pings of likes and comments. His world was filled with real-life exploration and unstructured play, where imagination had free rein.

Fast-forwarding to today. Gates, in a recent article titled “*The Anxious Generation*”, reflects on how drastically the childhood landscape has changed. What he once had - freedom from digital noise seems like a distant dream for today’s youth, and it's costing them dearly.

Jonathan Haidt, in his eye-opening book ‘*The Anxious Generation*’, draws from global data to show how the widespread use of smartphones and social media since the early 2010s correlates with a sharp increase in anxiety, depression, and loneliness among teenagers.

Between 2010 and 2020, there was a 134% rise in depression and a 106% rise in anxiety among college students in the U.S. Suicide rates for teenage girls have nearly doubled.

And this isn't just a Western problem. In India, too, mental health professionals have reported a growing number of adolescents battling stress and low self-worth linked to screen time and social comparison. A recent study reported that the overall prevalence of depression and anxiety among Indian adolescents was 25.92% and 13.70%, respectively.

Why is this happening?

Because we've swapped play for posts. We've replaced dialogue with digital likes. A generation that once grew up on swings and street cricket now grows up with selfies and Snapchat streaks. Face-to-face conversations are now filtered emojis. The constant buzz of validation has numbed the art of introspection.

Here's a small, powerful story that deeply moved me.

In a village in Japan, an old potter was asked why he still worked with clay daily at 80. He smiled and said, "Because when my hands are in the mud, my heart is at peace."

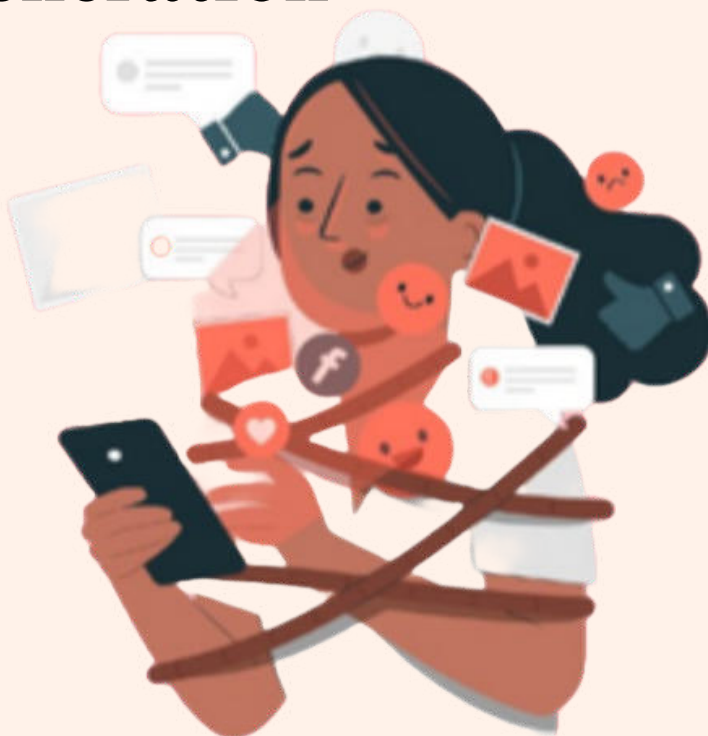


This, I believe, is what's missing in our young generation: stillness - the ability to be rooted, to be present, to find peace in simplicity.

As a storytelling coach, I've seen the transformative power of reflection and narrative. When we help young people turn their personal experiences into meaningful stories, we help them find their voice, build identity, and foster resilience. It connects them to their values and reminds them of their inner strength.

The Anxious Generation

God's most precious creation
 Now scrolls without hesitation
 Caught in gadgets and fixation
 Gripped by digital intoxication
 Fuelled by instant gratification
 Driven by curated validation
 Is this connection - or isolation?
 A slow, silent disintegration
 Masked as participation
 Can we pause for contemplation?
 Timely steps and intervention
 Need conscious regulation
 To restore the foundation
 And save this anxious generation



-Poem by Monika Tandon

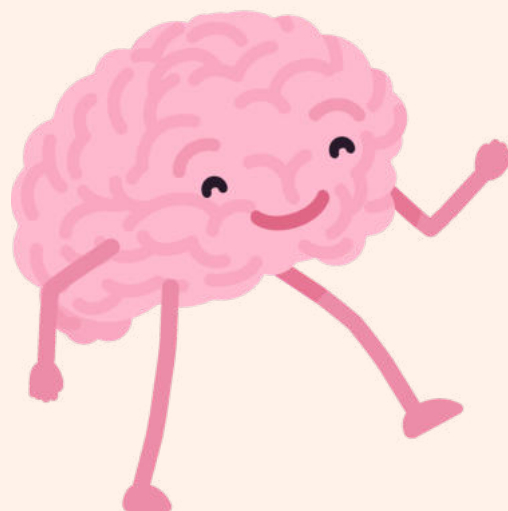
So, what can we do?

Here are 3 tips to help today's generation reclaim balance:

- Delay digital dependency: Encourage device-free hours. Tech-free dinners, nature walks, and reading time can be powerful resets.
- Foster real connections: Replace screen time with story time. Encourage in-person conversations, journaling, or family storytelling nights.
- Empower with storytelling: Shape experiences into stories. This builds empathy, identity, and confidence.

As a storyteller, I've learned that growth doesn't happen with more content - it happens with more context. By fostering environments that encourage real-world interactions and storytelling, we can build a more balanced and fulfilling life.

The anxious generation doesn't need saving - it needs slowing. Listening. Living. Because life isn't a race to be won, it's a story to be told.



Review By:

MONIKA TANDON



Delhi-based Business Storytelling Coach and Executive Communication Specialist, Ms. Monika is the founder of Katha Pachisi – The Story Bank, a storytelling training organization. With over 17 years of experience, she empowers professionals and organizations to communicate with clarity, confidence, and impact through storytelling.

A certified storyteller and MICA alumna, she has authored two books—Connect Through Storytelling and The Storyteller CXO. She has conducted 165+ workshops, trained over 8000 professionals, and worked with clients including Microsoft, KPMG, IBM, HCL Tech, Delhi Police, IIM Nagpur, and more.

When Children Start Carrying the Weight of the World

-By Anupama Dalmia

They are 11, maybe 14. Sometimes 9. They enter a writing class with nervous laughter and worn-out eyes. You ask them to write about joy, and they pause. You ask about dreams, and they look unsure. Like they once had some but misplaced them between math tuition and anxiety. This is not how childhood was meant to feel. I work with young people through words - letters, poems, stories, and more. And increasingly, I meet children who carry invisible weight. Perfectionism masked as discipline. Fear disguised as ambition. A need to be 'good enough' before they have even figured out who they are. Somewhere, a soft part of childhood is vanishing. In its place grows a surreptitious, constant pressure to keep up.

They are anxious, but not always able to name it. Some write about the disruption caused by volcanoes and at times, it's really their anger. Some describe the melancholy in rains and at times, it's really their loneliness. There are those moments when their metaphors tell the truth long before their mouths do.

This generation is not fragile, contrary to what is perceived about them. They are deeply aware, often more than we give them credit for. They see what's happening around them. The news is rarely off. The adults around them are rarely calm. They know about war, rejection, and climate despair before they know how to ride a bike without falling. But here's the thing - they want to talk. They want to write it out, sketch it out, cry it out. They want to be heard without being fixed. The children of today are asking us, quietly but urgently, "Can I be seen as I am? Before you correct me, before you guide me, can you just sit with me here?"

Through my years of experience working with the young minds, I have learnt that helping a child write is not about building better sentences. It's about creating safe pauses. Places where they can feel without fear. Where being 'in progress' is not a weakness but a way of being. Where they learn that not knowing, not fitting in, not excelling all the time is not failure. In their raw, unfiltered voices lies the truth of a generation growing up too fast. And also, the hope. Because every time they return to the page, the canvas, or the song, they are choosing expression over suppression. That, too, is courage. We owe it to them to slow down. To listen better. To model peace and patience in a world that thrives on panic.

Because life is in progress. And so are they.

AUTHOR BIO



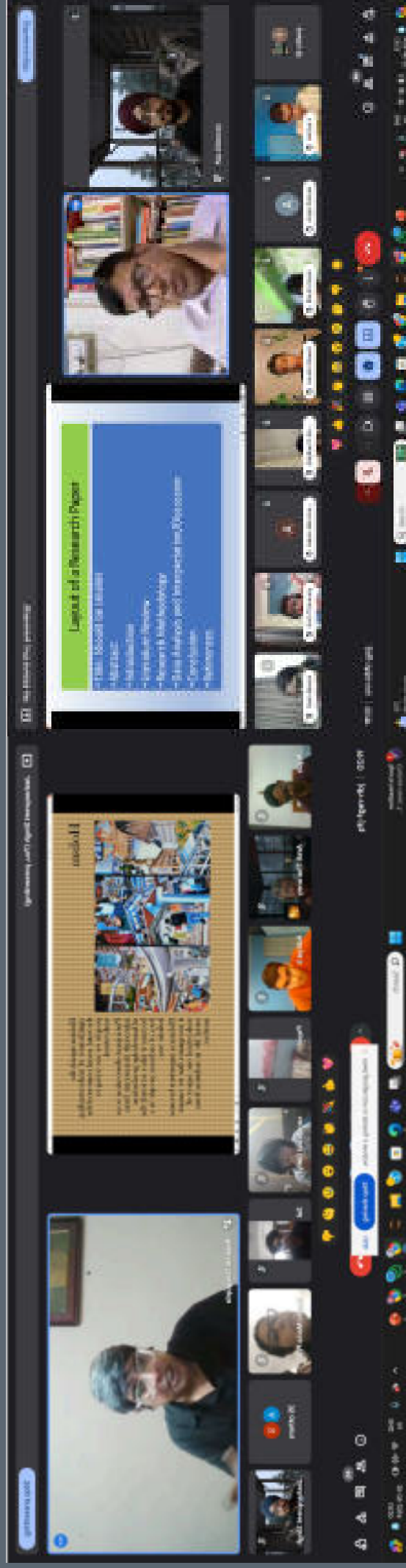
Anupama Dalmia is a multiple award-winning blogger, author, digital content creator, serial entrepreneur, and writing mentor. A Karmaveer Chakra Platinum Awardee, a global civilian honor presented by the International Confederation of NGOs in association with the United Nations, she has been recognized on numerous prestigious media platforms,

magazines, and newspapers as one of India's top bloggers, influencers, and entrepreneurs. Last year, she was named among the Top 18 writing mentors globally by the coveted Himalayan Writing Retreat. She also holds position as the National President of the Holistic Child Development Council at WICCI, India, and is a Sheroes Champion. She has mentored more than 10,000 kids and teens across the globe through her classes and workshops, and has helped 350+ women setup their small businesses through her non-profit Building Bridges Foundation.



Samshoodhiana:

Student Research Programme



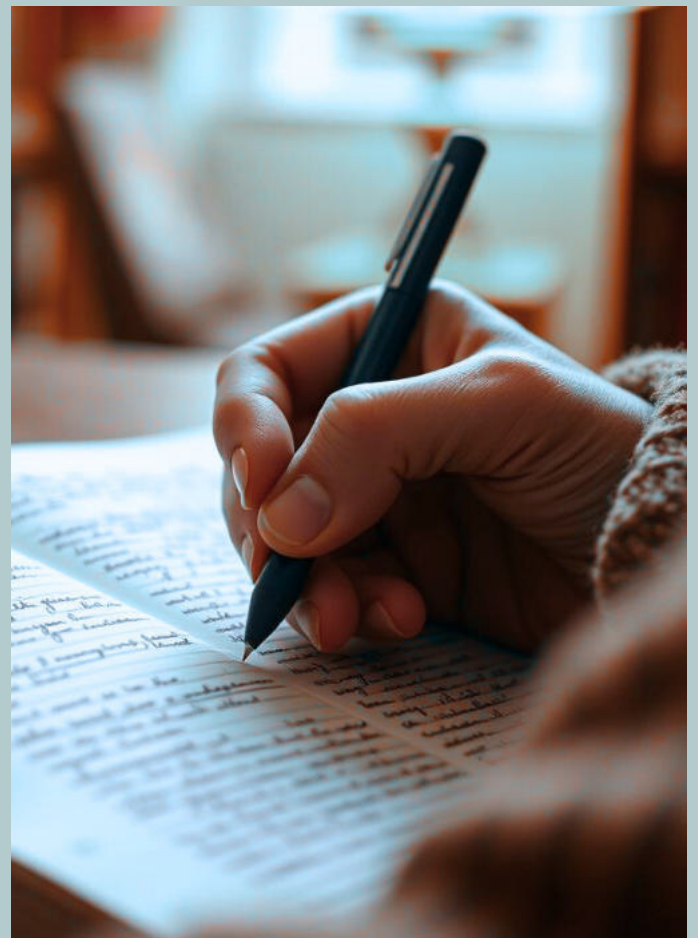


Introduction

Samshodhana is a one-month online student research program internship. This initiative was undertaken by **NSS, SRCC**, in the tenure 2024-25, and conducted from Sept 1 to 30, focused on inculcating research aptitude in the students and striving towards developing the necessary skills to highlight community issues through a literary lens. It's also a platform aimed at improving or refining knowledge and understanding of the interns.

The selection process was conducted in two rounds. In the first round, interested candidates filled out application forms for the internship, applications were received from across India and the second round was the personal interview round. Based on their interest, academic potential, and alignment with the program's objectives 50 interns were chosen from a pool of 120+ candidates.

Multiple speakers sessions were held, featuring various researchers and academicians. Additionally training sessions were also provided to help interns in ideation process, clarification of doubts and fostering creativity.



Dr. Rajarshi Dasgupta, Assistant Professor, JNU- He did his MA and M.Phil at the Centre for Political Studies, JNU. Awarded the Felix scholarship to pursue D.Phil at the University of Oxford. recruited at the Centre for Studies of Social Sciences in Kolkata. conducted independent research on refugees from the Partition of India living in Dhaka, Bangladesh and West Bengal, during his time in CSSSC.



Dr. Nishant Kumar, Associate professor, JNU/CPS- Ph. D. from King's College London as a Commonwealth Scholar. Completed a research project sponsored by ICSSR (Indian Council for Social Sciences Research). Have been actively involved in developing course content/syllabus revision and preparing question papers for various papers at the University level

Dr. Santosh Kumar, Associate professor. SRCC- With teaching experience in the College for over two decades, his subject and research areas of specialization are Macroeconomics, Money and Banking, Economic Development, and Indian Economy. Membership of Professional Association(Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, Dakar, Senegal, International Development Economics Associates, New Delhi)



Dr. V Sujatha, Professor, Centre for the Study of Social Systems, JNU- specialises in the fields of sociology of knowledge, science and technology studies and health, culture and medicine. Visiting Professor at University of Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona. Lead Collaborator in a project with University of Cape Town, South Africa.

Rootless Roads: Migration and the Anxious Pulse of Punjab

Abstract:

The research highlights the migration trend across socio-economic classes in Punjab and the objective is to analyse migration trends and the emerging reverse migration phenomenon. The hypothesis developed in the report is “Migration trends in Punjab exhibit a dual movement”.

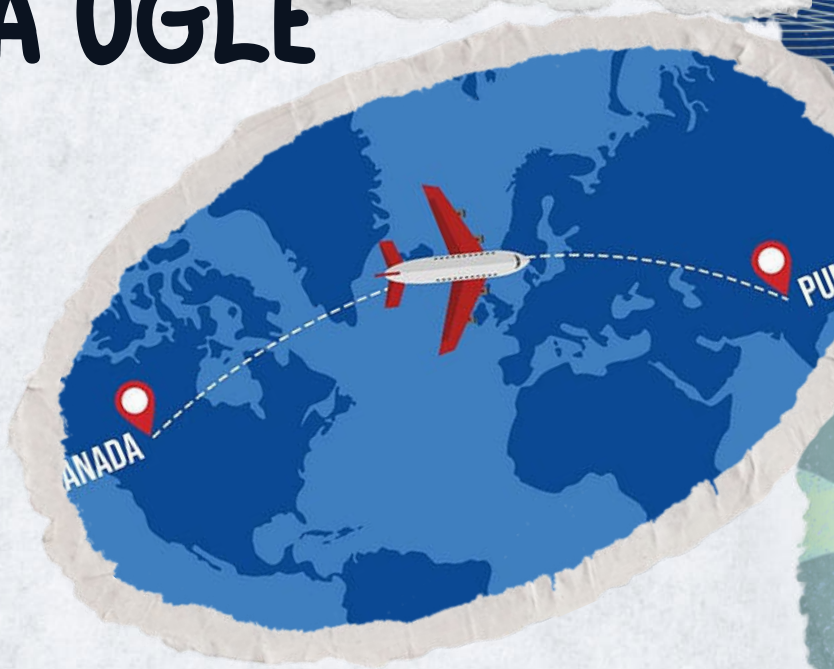
The key Research questions: Despite numerous government efforts, why are people still eager to go abroad? What were the primary drivers of migration post-independence? Is reverse migration truly beneficial for Punjab’s long-term growth, or merely a temporary shift driven by personal dissatisfaction with life abroad?

Research methodology:

This study examines the key factors influencing emigration and reverse migration in Punjab. A questionnaire was used to collect primary data, supplemented by secondary sources such as literature reviews, statistics, and citations. The target respondents included emigrants, returnees, family members, local leaders, IELTS and study visa centers, career counselors, and immigration offices.

"MERE DESH KI MITTI SONA UGLE UGLE HEERE MOTI"

But why is a land so deeply cherished by its people, the one they are eager to leave behind? Migration has long been interwoven with the identity of Punjab, with its history marked by successive waves of emigration stretching back to the colonial era.



Post-independence, Punjab experienced further waves of migration in the 1970s and 1980s driven by the allure of higher earnings, better education and economic freedom.

For decades, this migration primarily consisted of the middle and lower-income classes. These families saw leaving Punjab as the only way to escape the cycle of poverty; for them “going abroad = all life sorted”. Places like Canada became synonymous with ‘Mini Punjab’, providing a higher standard of living, and opportunities for personal and professional advancement, creating a robust Punjabi diaspora around the globe. Amritsar’s rich culture and the irresistible taste of its food once thrived with bustling food stalls. But today, it seems there are more IELTS coaching centres than food stores, each promising to sell the dream of a better life abroad.



The craze for migration has reached such a height that including obtaining fake certificates and engaging in illegal practices, to make their dreams of living abroad a reality. Migration from Punjab is driven by socio-economic factors, mainly the search for better opportunities abroad. Rural indebtedness, declining agricultural profitability, and limited industrial growth have forced many to emigrate. High emigration rates continue due to the appeal of better living conditions in countries like Canada, the UK, and Australia. Punjab is one of the most highly indebted economies among the Indian states with a per capita debt of Rs 1 lakh.

In some financial parameters, the state is similar to Sri Lanka. Vulnerable families have been disposing of their properties to send their children abroad for studies and jobs. NRIs also stated the rising drug problem and crime rate as their primary concern. "Crime is rising. Brutal attacks are commonplace, and incidents of looting and snatching are also being heard every day. Petrol pumps are being looted; shops are burgled... "Where is the law and order? It is nowhere," tells US-based NRI Neeraj Singh.

Political corruption remains a concern in Punjab, with allegations of illegal land grabbing involving political figures. Media intervention has played a crucial role in addressing such issues and ensuring justice. Furthermore there is a deepening concern in the context of free speech because citizens do not feel safe articulating their political views due to the possible consequences they may have to face.

An educator from Punjab expressed concerns about political interference in school textbooks, claiming that important historical events are being omitted to favor a particular party. Due to these factors in addition to several other push- pull factors responsible for moving abroad, among these the youth migration rate is the highest. Pull factors like lack of employment opportunities, decline in Industrialisation, and the increasing rate of population growth in Punjab has further intensified this issue.



Rootless • roads •

“Bhed Chaal” - blindly following the mass trend; they witness their kins and musketeers going abroad and having lots of fun,

Many students in Punjab migrate abroad due to lack of quality education facilities and limited university seats. Amritsar, for example, has only GNDU, but numerous immigration centers. College admissions become increasingly complicated due to the growing competition and population, causing deserving students to struggle in securing college seats. Moreover, While reservation policies are



helpful for backward class students, they are forcing some students to migrate abroad in search of better learning and employment opportunities.

Punjab's textile industry has also taken a setback due to increased rates of wealth tax and initiatives such as the 45 days payment policy. Family and kinship network is another reason as at least 40% of the population of Punjab is settled abroad in developed countries doing good and having a successful business there. To join the family and kinship network in these countries is also a major reason for the migration of youth from Punjab.

The Bhagwant Mann government is committed to promoting reverse migration and stopping the brain drain. "The NRIs were losing faith as the previous government did not pay attention to their grievances. We held district-wise NRI meets for the redressal of the problems being faced by NRIs," says Malwinder Singh, chief spokesperson of AAP. Most Punjabis go to abroad not due to political or profitable reasons, but because of “ Bhed Chaal ” - blindly following the mass trend; they witness their kins and musketeers going abroad and having lots of fun,



Reverse Migration in India

living their stylish lives, earning a lot, having the golden period, impacting others to believe that if they would go abroad, they would achieve the same. But what they don't know is that all this luxury is only one side of the story.

The other side of the coin is a less-discussed phenomenon that has been emerging in recent years is 'reverse migration'. This new wave of movement consists predominantly of upper-middle-class, affluent families and students, a class of well-educated professionals and entrepreneurs who had once left India in search of better opportunities but are now choosing to return.

The reason being a deep sense of cultural disconnection in their adopted countries, longing for the sense of community they left behind, the very earth on which they were born. Isolation and alienation is most common in emigrant Punjabi youths who find themselves alone for the first time in their lives and have to be completely independent, all of this adversely affected their mental health.

Many are suffering from the increasing cost of living abroad which is one of the key factors of coming back to India. Additionally, many migrants see opportunities in the growing Indian economy, particularly with the rise of entrepreneurship and the potential for local economic development, which makes returning an appealing option. This emerging trend of reverse migration is reshaping the socio-economic fabric of Punjab. On the brighter side where it offers potential for revitalization—returnees often bring with them global perspectives, skills, capital, and networks that contribute to the state's development, playing pivotal role in sectors like education, healthcare and technology, driving innovation and bringing in new practices. Furthermore, reverse migration counterbalances some of the negative impacts of brain drain via reintegration of skilled human capital back into the economy. On the not so pleasant side, reverse migration comes with its own set of challenges for Punjab- which already has a significant population of over 30 million according to Indian Census Net. Now, if people from abroad come back, then these numbers will eventually increase, in turn increasing the demand for job opportunities. Despite government's efforts, Punjab's infrastructure, health services, education and sanitation is still not well equipped to cater to the need of this large influx of returning migrants, thereby, threatening a degradation in the quality of lifestyle, Punjab's industrialisation is still low and economic policies may not be fully equipped to accommodate or sustain the demands and expectations of these returnees. The state's growth has been hindered by prolonged social and economic unrest, agricultural distress, and political turbulence.



Conclusion

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This research sought to provide useful insights with respect to the future of Punjab in the context of its migration patterns. Although, there is some reverse migration, it takes place at a much slower rate in comparison with emigration. The government needs to grasp what the citizens require, take actionable steps to retain the youth, control other forms of migration, and make sure Punjab is in a position to accommodate returnees. If these policies cannot help them, there is no assurance of them residing in Punjab permanently.

Review and Feedback



“ I sincerely thank NSS SRCC for this enriching and inspiring program. It offered valuable insights into real-world issues, especially through engaging research opportunities and thoughtful discussions. I’m grateful for the guidance, supportive mentors, and the platform to represent my city. This experience has truly broadened my perspective and strengthened my commitment to social responsibility.

”

Author: Kishnav Kandhari

Institute: The Millennium School, Amritsar



SHAPING MIND

33

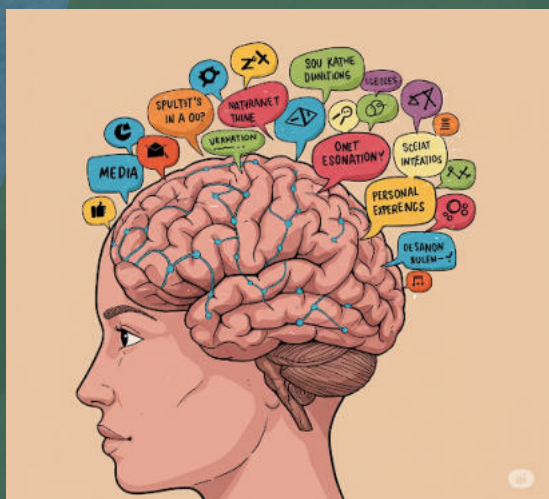
SHAPING OPINION

*The influence of
peer pressure on
teenagers'
ideological
formation*

Abstract: This research highlights the social phenomenon how peer pressure affects a teenager's social self concept, especially how their values, beliefs and attitudes get shaped by social influence over time. It explains how vulnerability factors are also few of the possible long-term effects and even positive ones, most especially how teachers and parents can help guide adolescents in the right direction. The hypothesis formed is that peer pressure is one of the major influences on youngsters' ideological beliefs, especially in political and social areas, more than in personal decision-making. Parents and teachers can fight back against this influence by teaching youngsters to think critically and make informed decisions.



Research Methodology: This study examines the significant influence of peer pressure on teenagers' ideological formation. A questionnaire-based survey was used to collect primary data, analyzing data through statistical and descriptive. The target respondents included school and university going students.



Peer pressure is that feeling which develops in people, the necessity to share the activities and ideas of the people around them if they wish to be appreciated and tolerated within a social environment. The intrinsic relationship between peer pressure and the formation of an ideology is key, since, it is only lately that this phenomenon has received significant attention despite existing for so long. In this new era it is difficult to distinguish between right and wrong. In most cases, people end up compromising their principles and integrity due to peer pressure. It is a concept that plays a very significant role in the ideologies of the future generations. This study focuses on understanding the perspective of teenagers on peer pressure and how they believe it affects them. It also provides a better understanding on how teenagers are more vulnerable to be coerced into something considering how critical adolescence is in an individual's life. I have also tried to comprehend in which areas are teenagers more susceptible to falling for peer pressure.





There are several areas in which teenagers are more susceptible to falling under peer pressure and how it impacts their personal lives. I have also tried to ascertain the positive impacts of peer pressure and how educational institutions and parents prepare teenagers to understand about this phenomenon better. The majority showed a very distinct opinion that peer pressure influences both the development and change of teen's beliefs largely. The opposing view is relatively smaller in percentage, as a segment believes that their personal beliefs have nothing to do with peer pressure. In the author's opinion, peer pressure plays a crucial role in framing one's ideas and value system, especially in adolescence, since it is a period in life where one is most vulnerable to external pressures. Speaking about its relevance, it is actively present in all regions, and the majority of individuals have faced peer pressure at least once in their lives. Just like every coin has two sides, every phenomenon has its dual nature. Peer pressure can influence a person to do something that is relatively harmless or something that has more serious adversities as in harmful behaviours as in substance or alcohol usage, bullying, negative body image, lack of self-assurance or giving unlimited emphasis on external validation, distancing oneself from family, and conformity. It leaves teenagers feeling stressed, anxious and depressed leading to serious mental health repercussions such as inculcation of self-harm or suicidal thoughts and as a result, they might deliberately distance themselves from the outside world. As Jim Rhon accurately stated, "We are the average of the people we surround ourselves with.". Peer pressure can also act as a motivating force in young adults. It can instill in teenagers, a sense of healthy competition which will help them to achieve academic success or validation and might encourage them to actively participate in extracurricular activities.

Peer pressure can occur in various environments such as schools, social media platforms, workplace, college, university, and social gatherings. The key finding is that peer pressure faced by school-going students is due to the setting of schools. It can be very vividly noticed in school-going students, and for instance, many school-going students pick up the habit of smoking or drinking alcohol as a result of peer pressure. Even when someone denies such usages, the peer group can convince that person to do otherwise, which might become habitual and can result in serious health issues. Peer pressure in school is highly relevant and has a significant impact on students' behaviour, academic performance, and emotional wellbeing. According to Pew research, 75% of teens experience peer pressure in school, and as per the CDC (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention), 50% of students report feeling pressured to conform to peer norms. It is a pressing necessity to initiate strategies to mitigate peer pressure through school counselling programs, peer mentoring initiatives, teacher training on peer pressure, parent-child communication, inclusive and diverse school environments.

Conclusion

Peer pressure profoundly impacts teenagers' ideological formations. To promote resilient, informed and empathetic individuals, we must provide critical thinking skills, emotional intelligence, and moral guidance, empowering them to navigate social influences and develop a strong, authentic sense of self.

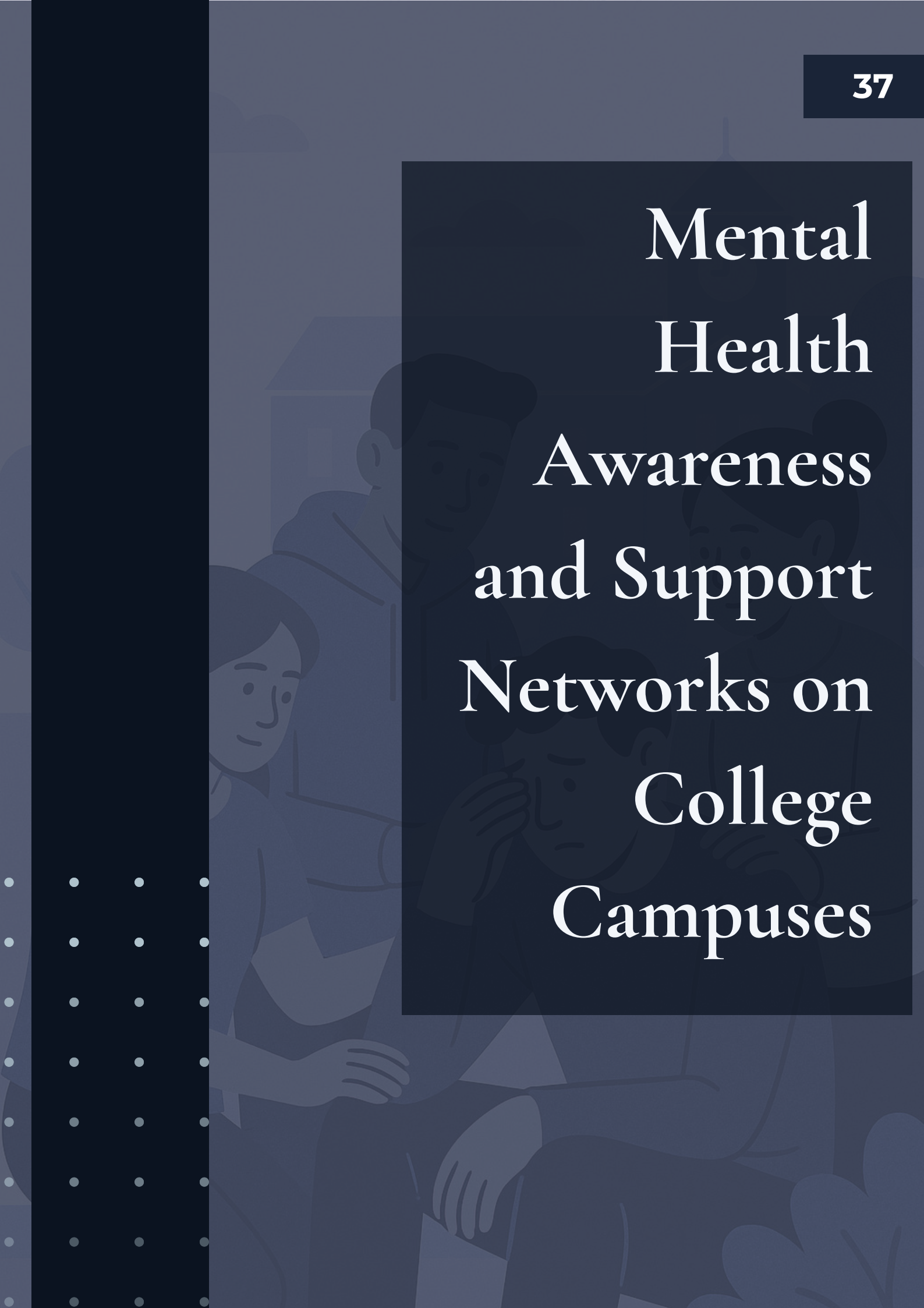


Naomi Maria Prasad

Institute: St.Thomas Central School, Thiruvananthapuram

Review and Feedback:

“Participating in this internship was an enriching academic experience. I’m truly grateful for the opportunity to learn from professors associated with renowned universities, their insights added immense value to our discussions. Engaging deeply with a topic I’m passionate about, helped me grow both intellectually and personally. I would highly recommend this programme to students interested in research and critical inquiry.”

The background features a stylized, muted illustration of a group of diverse college students. In the foreground, a young man is seated, looking down with a somber expression, his hand near his face. Behind him, several other students are visible, some looking towards him with concern. The scene is set outdoors with a building and foliage in the background. The overall tone is supportive and empathetic.

Mental Health Awareness and Support Networks on College Campuses

Abstract

SRCC- often called the “Best Commerce College of Asia”- while accompanied with laurels and much praise, one finds an environment where mental health is often left behind shadows despite the intense academic and social pressures. Thus, this report explores the level of mental health awareness present among competitive student bodies like the one at SRCC and thus assesses the accessibility and effectiveness of the support systems available to them. “The mismatch between the resources provided and needed”. Key research questions:



How aware are SRCC students of mental health issues and campus resources? What mental health challenges do they face due to the college's competitive culture? How effective and accessible are the current support systems like your DOST?

Research Methodology

To explore student perceptions of mental health at SRCC, 30-40 students from different academic years and departments undertook a survey. The purpose involved assessing their level of awareness and experiences regarding support networks.

Introduction

The discourse surrounding mental health in higher education has markedly progressed. But at premier institutions such as SRCC, students continue to face unique challenges in the realm of mental health and emotional care. Due to its esteemed reputation, SRites have achieved prominence across various fields. However, beneath the facade of achievement, numerous students contend with unacknowledged mental health issues, often exacerbated by the very prestige associated with being an “SRite”.



SRCC's Mental Health Landscape: Between Awareness and Action

Over the last decade, mental health awareness in India has gained momentum. Institutions like SRCC have acknowledged the need for mental health support, implementing initiatives such as on-campus counselling through yourDOST which offers individual counselling.

However, students are hesitant to use them, they often distrust its effectiveness or find the notion of seeking help intimidating. There is a widespread belief that admitting to mental health struggles is a sign of weakness—something that could tarnish their image as high achievers. This corresponds with the conclusions of the Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine which suggests that reluctance to use the available mental health services is due to the fear of being judged and stigma.



College students encounter significant stressors impacting mental health. For SRCC students, these concerns stem primarily from the following areas:

- These concerns, while common across various college campuses, are exacerbated at places like SRCC which is highly competitive and has a student population of overachievers.

Challenges Unique to SRCC+

The SRCC experience comes with a set of challenges. The academic demands are unrelenting, and students are expected to maintain not just good grades, but an impeccable resume brimming with extracurricular achievements while also maintaining their attendance.

Many students report feeling trapped in a vicious cycle where every decision feels like a stepping stone. Furthermore, SRCC students tend to hold onto some self-defeating story: “If I got this far, there is no way in which I should not be able to shoulder this.” Such a belief is likely to prevent students from recognizing when they actually need assistance.

In addition, the peer networks at SRCC, while strong in some respects, often contribute to this pressure. Moreover, the peer networks at SRCC often add to this pressure funnel. Students are surrounded by other high achievers which creates a situation in which, reflection and rivalry are omnipresent, where one struggles to find meaning in their lives.



Support Networks: Gaps and Opportunities

The Counselling Centre at SRCC, despite being a significant resource, is not fully utilised. Even though yourDOST has a lot of helpful resources, students feel disconnected from these services. One student said, “I didn’t even know where the counselling centre was until my third year,” and others didn’t even know yourDOST was an initiative. Furthermore, several students have indicated that while the counselling services offer assistance, they fall short in addressing many of the mental health challenges encountered by students at SRCC.

Therefore, there is an urgent requirement for more peer-to-peer proactive mental health initiatives that allow students to freely and frankly talk about mental health without fear of judgement. Students prefer sharing struggles with friends or peers, indicating a need for Peer-led mental health initiatives, strengthening peer support systems instead of technical approach

Through my observations of the mental health dialogue at SRCC, coupled with my personal experiences, I recognize significant opportunities for improvement. SRCC has the tools in place—workshops, counseling centers, peer mentors—but these need to be integrated more seamlessly into the everyday experiences of students. Mental health support should not be perceived as a standalone service but embedded in orientation programs & academic advising. Additionally, Instead of applying a generic solution to mental health challenges, the college could adopt tailored strategies that address the specific needs of different student demographics—first-year students, high-achievers, and those struggling with the transition from academics to the professional world. Rather than merely establishing systems for the sake of compliance I advocate for the development of initiatives that genuinely connect with and assist students in fostering meaningful personal growth.



Conclusion:

Mental health at SRCC remains a complex and evolving issue. While awareness is increasing, the gap between knowing and doing persists. To bridge this divide, SRCC and all the students must foster a culture where mental health is prioritized just as much as academic success. The real test lies not in academic achievement, but in building a support system that honours the holistic well-being of every student.

Author's Review:

Having freshly entered college at that time, NSS SRCC's internship was truly a delight and a great learning experience. Interacting with experienced researchers, drafting my own paper and honing my skills is something I'm grateful to have gotten a shot at. Rest said, it helped me groom my writing skills a lot and will definitely help me in the future as well!



Angel Gupta
Shri Ram college of Commerce, Delhi

FROM PAST TO PRESENT: UNDERSTANDING GENERATIONAL TRAUMA

-Niharika Goyal

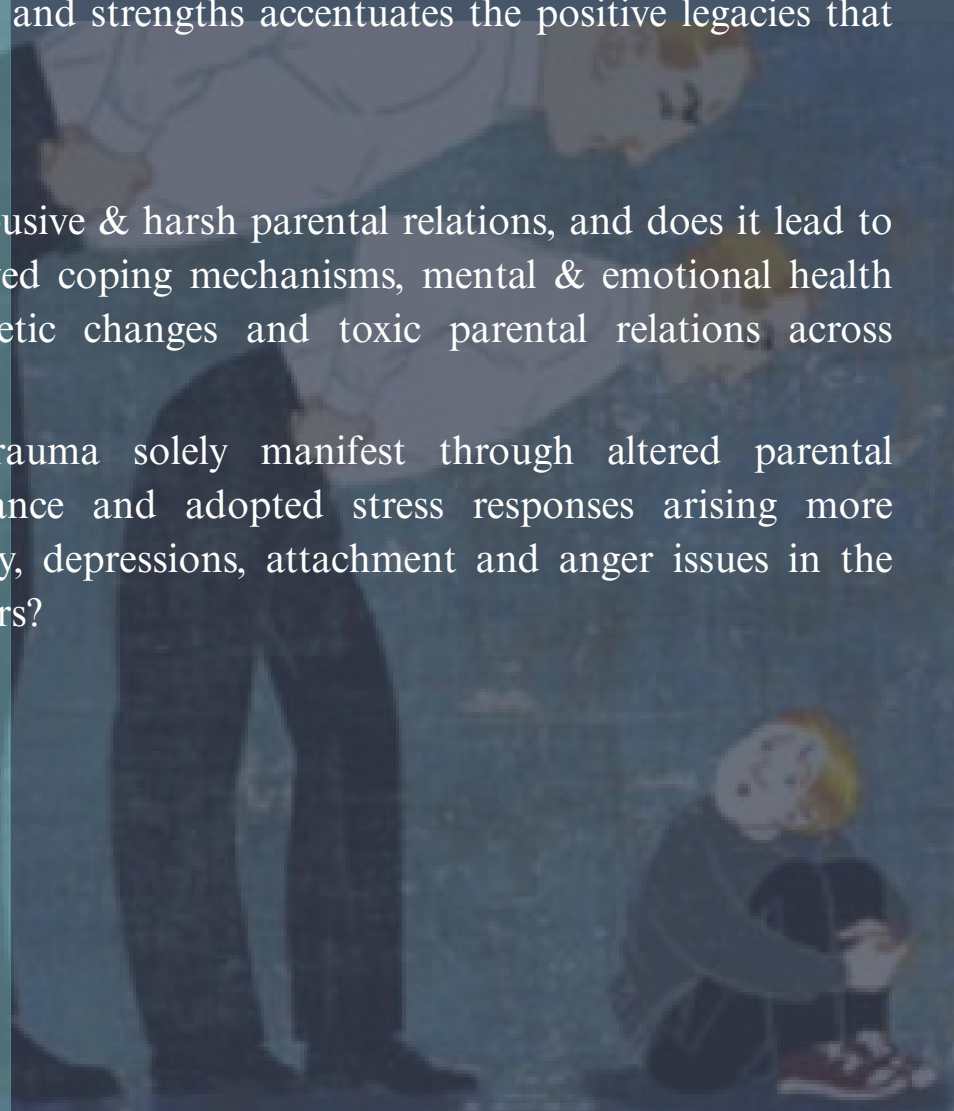
**“It didn’t start with you, but
you can surely end it :)”**

ABSTRACT

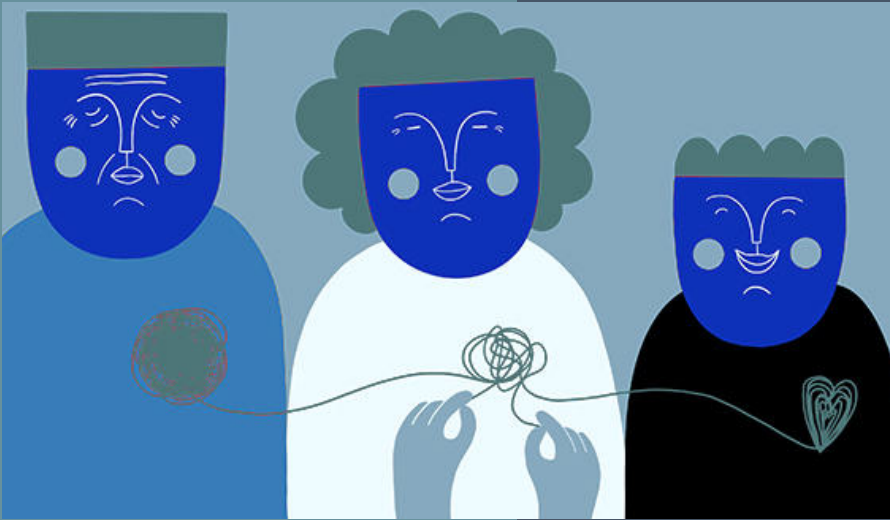
This research intends to create an understanding of intergenerational trauma and its repercussions on emotional, physiological and behavioural patterns of an individual. This research explores the mechanism through which the trauma endured by one generation is passed onto the other, even without having direct exposure to the said traumatic event. The hypothesis is that such trauma of the first generation can impact the mental health, coping mechanisms, emotional and psychological well-being, family bonds etc. of subsequent generations but relatively inspirations, values and strengths accentuates the positive legacies that can be transmitted as well.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Do trauma bonds make abusive & harsh parental relations, and does it lead to vicious continuation of flawed coping mechanisms, mental & emotional health issues and possible epigenetic changes and toxic parental relations across generations?
2. Does intergenerational trauma solely manifest through altered parental behaviours, emotional distance and adopted stress responses arising more vulnerability towards anxiety, depressions, attachment and anger issues in the descendants of trauma bearers?



The primary method used in this research is a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data from both primary sources, namely, survey, personal experience and observation and secondary sources, namely, research published at present, online websites, movies, documentaries, journals and articles. The survey was conducted among 35 young adults (ages 16–18), primarily from Chandigarh and other Indian cities.



Reviewing the intergenerational transmission of trauma is crucial to understanding how historical and personal traumas affect future generations, sustaining across time without proper closure or

healing, and how collective trauma shapes societal evolution.

Global studies across psychology, neuroscience, social sciences, and genetics have explored traumas such as war, genocide, physical and sexual assault, domestic abuse, racism, bullying, and patriarchy. This review focuses on the physiological, biological, and socio-cultural dimensions of current research, highlighting impacts on mental and emotional health across diverse populations. It analyzes mechanisms of trauma transfer, resilience factors, epigenetics, and addresses gaps in representing diverse communities. The concept of intergenerational trauma first appeared in psychiatric literature through studies of Holocaust survivors' offspring. First and foremost, the Bowen's family system theory: scientific theory of human behaviour created by a psychiatrist, Dr. Murray Bowen, views the family as an emotional unit where each member influences the others. This explains how emotional patterns and trauma can be passed through generations via family dynamics, emotional fusion, and lack of differentiation.

Secondly, John Bowlby's attachment theory: Attachment theory focuses on relationships and bonds (particularly long-term) between people, including those between a parent and child and between romantic partners. British psychologist John Bowlby, the first attachment theorist, described attachment as a "lasting psychological connectedness between human beings."

Furthermore, various research by the National Institute of Health (NIH) and other global institutes on intergenerational trauma, including Intergenerational transmission of trauma by Rachel Yehuda and Amy Lehrner which suggests how a family's overall health influences how trauma is passed down. The other is Intergenerational transmission of trauma, this study aimed to understand how family health is important to the well-being of individual family members and the collective family unit, and as such, may serve as a mediator for the intergenerational transmission of trauma parental adverse experiences affect children's emotional well-being, moderated by family environment.

Next is Intergenerational transmission of Physiological trauma: A structural neuroimaging study by Enes Sarigedik, Ibrahim Feyyaz Naldemir, Ahmet Kursat Karaman, Hasan Baki Altinsoy. This study demonstrates that there may be a potential association between intergenerational transmission of trauma and brain structures.

Another is 'The aftermath of atrocities' research on intergenerational transmission of trauma and violence by Lidewyde Berckmores studies the long-term impact of war and violence on later generations. It also shows the growing interdisciplinary focus on understanding trauma beyond the originally affected individuals.





CONCLUSION

While existing research on generational trauma is detailed and insightful, it often centers on Holocaust and war survivors, overlooking other significant sources such as domestic violence, racism, patriarchy, and sexual abuse. There is a growing need to explore these dimensions and their impact on trauma transmission. The concept of generational trauma remains complex and subjective, varying across individuals. Despite scientific and methodological challenges, current research is gradually shifting focus toward the role of epigenetic mechanisms, which suggest that trauma can alter gene expression and influence stress responses and mental health in future generations.

Review and feedback

The opportunity to partake in the “Samshodhana” internship by NSS SRCC was an amazing experience. From webinars with the best speakers to the hassle of selecting the topic, drafting outlines & giving the last few touches; this program truly enhanced my writing skills, broadened my thinking span, and gave an insight into curating an effective research paper. The guidance given by Jashanpreet and the other organizers was very valuable and appreciated. Hands down a fresh and enlightening experience. A big thank you to all the people related to NSS SRCC who gave me this chance.



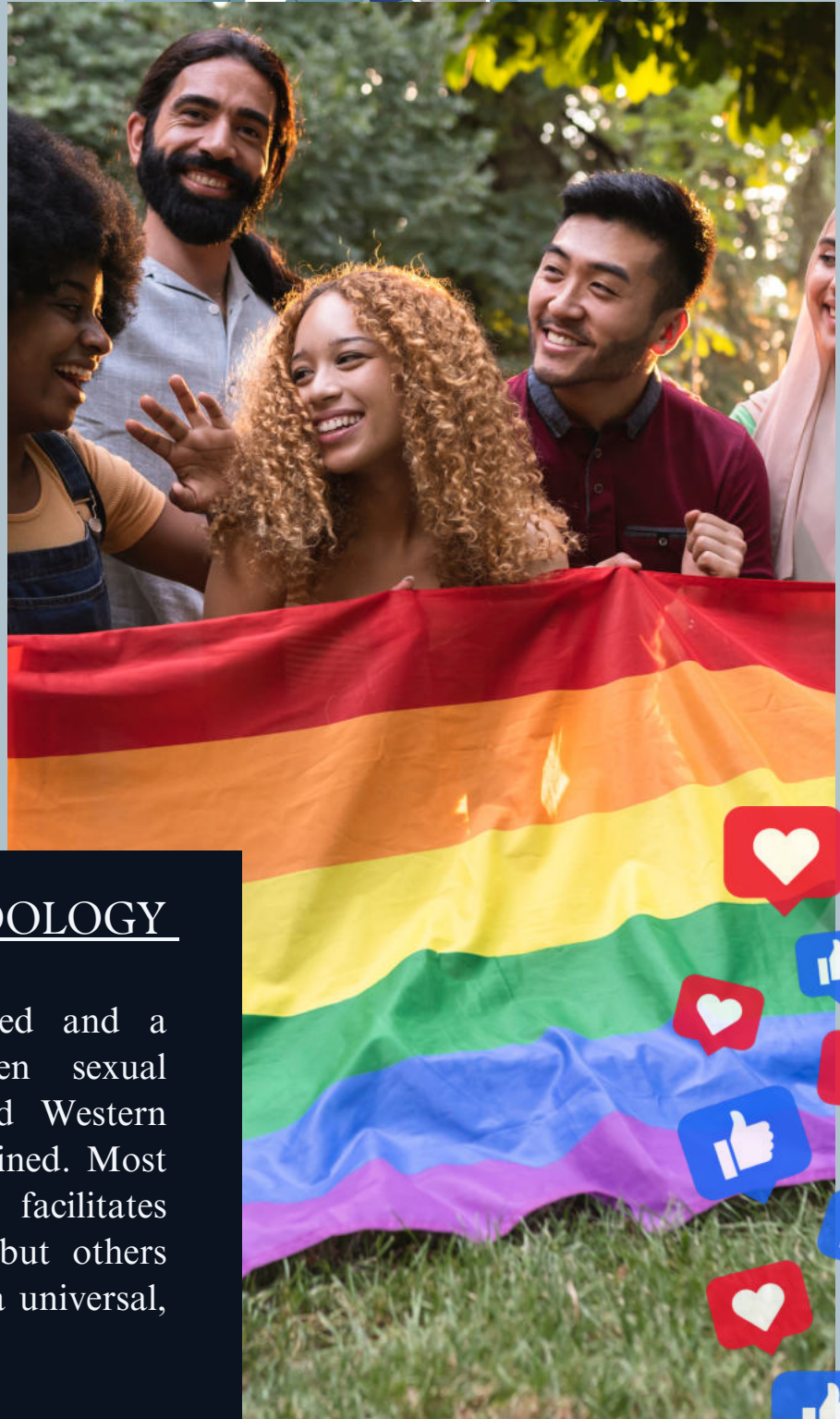
Niharika Goyal
G.M.S.S.S. Sec-16, Chandigarh

Sexual Orientation v. Media

-SANSKRITI SAHU

ABSTRACT

The new technological era has transformed how we connect and access content globally. One notable change is the growing trend among adolescents to explore their sexual identity. This study asks whether such exploration represents a natural stage of personal development or is primarily driven by Western media and cultural narratives. Key questions addressed are: How does Western media shape adolescents' and young adults' exploration of sexual orientation? To what extent is this exploration a natural developmental process? How do exploration levels differ between Western-influenced and less-influenced societies?



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Eight people were surveyed and a strong correlation between sexual orientation exploration and Western media exposure was determined. Most thought that the media facilitates pluralization of identities, but others thought that orientation is a universal, individualized experience.

In today's interconnected world, platforms like TikTok, Netflix, and YouTube transcend borders, exposing teenagers to stories of others like them exploring their sexual identities. Shows like *Sex Education* and *Euphoria* do more than entertain—they reflect the diverse identities often ignored. For those in conservative societies, LGBTQ+ representation sparks them to embark on their own journeys of self-discovery. Yet experts emphasise that exploring sexual orientation is not solely media-driven. It remains a deeply personal journey rooted in self-discovery, while the narratives presented in shows may act as catalysts. This quest may be amplified during adolescence as the growing visibility of LGBTQ+ individuals in media provides them with valuable resources and language to navigate their exploration, equipping them with the tools to articulate their feelings and experiences.

However, the journey is not without its challenges. In conservative environments, where traditional values dominate, many young people feel torn between their desires and societal expectations in the quest for self-understanding. Yet media representation offers solace, reminding them they are not alone and that their feelings are valid. Ultimately, the impact of Western media on exploring sexual orientation cannot be underestimated: it opens doors, challenges norms, and invites young people to embark on self-discovery with courage. In an evolving world, the stories we share and identities we celebrate remind us that exploration is integral to the human experience—shaped by personal introspection and the cultural narratives we consume.

Navigating Identity Amidst Pressures:

Discovering and accepting one's sexual orientation is a deeply personal journey, shaped by societal pressures and media influence. This path often feels like a rollercoaster, oscillating between societal norms and the courage to embrace authenticity.

Picture a young person trapped in a puzzle where they don't fit, forced to contort themselves to match society's narrow definition of "normal." It takes time, confusion, and a lot of soul-searching to realize that they weren't meant to fit that mold. The true struggle begins with acceptance. Fear of rejection and judgment casts a long shadow, yet many find the courage to take a leap of faith and step into their truth. The real struggle begins with acceptance.



Fear of rejection and judgment casts a long shadow, yet many find the courage to take a leap of faith and step into their truth. Reactions vary; some may embrace them with open arms, while others falter, clinging to outdated ideals.

Media emerges as a silent ally in this journey. Platforms like YouTube and TikTok create a digital place where identities are reflected and validated. Personalities like Jenna Embers, a well-known lesbian YouTuber who has been discussing homosexuality since 2011, emphasizes that the media doesn't "push" people to change but helps them untangle their emotions. "Society does have an influence on your orientation, whether by 1%, 50%, or 80%," she explains.

"It influences everything we do." Her words resonate with countless viewers, reinforcing that media shapes not whether we have an identity, but how we perceive it. Allies and the LGBTQ+ community become pillars of support, their solidarity a reminder that self-acceptance is a collective act. The rise of non-heteronormative identities isn't merely a Western import—it's part of a broader, global shift toward inclusivity, challenging antiquated norms and celebrating diversity.

Ultimately, true acceptance starts from within. It is about embracing oneself unconditionally, despite the world's expectations. Each conflict faced can become a stepping stone to self-growth and liberation. In the end, embracing one's identity isn't just about coming out; it's about owning who one is, boldly and proudly. And that is a journey worth taking, no matter the conflicts along the way.



Conclusion

The journey of discovering and embracing one's sexual orientation is a profound testament to human resilience—a dance between societal pressures and the unyielding pursuit of self-truth. While media platforms like YouTube and voices such as Jenna Embers illuminate paths to understanding, they do not create identity; instead, they mirror the complexities of lived experiences, offering language and community to those once isolated.

This journey underscores that self-acceptance is not a surrender to external narratives but a rebellion against conformity. It is a global movement, transcending borders, where courage confronts tradition and vulnerability becomes strength. The rise of non-heteronormative identities reflects not mere “influence” but a universal hunger for inclusivity—a demand to be seen, heard, and valued.

Ultimately, liberation lies in owning one's story. Every act of coming out, every defiant embrace of authenticity, reshapes cultural norms and reaffirms a simple truth: identity is not a puzzle to solve but a mosaic to celebrate. In a world evolving toward empathy, this journey reminds us that the boldest act of self-love is choosing to exist unapologetically, lighting the way for others to follow.



Author: Sanskriti Sahu

Institute: Arwachin International School



Review and feedback

“NSS SRCC was a complete eye-opener for me. from listening to experienced speakers to selecting topics, drafting outlines, and finalizing research, every step shaped my skills. it transformed my journey as a writer and thinker, offering a fresh perspective. the guidance, especially from Jashanpreet, was invaluable. this internship truly helped me grow and deepen my love for writing. a big thanks to NSS SRCC <3!!”



Tech on the Streets:

Digital Inclusion Among Informal Workers

A report by National Service Scheme, Shri Ram College of Commerce

Abstract

This study explores the state of digital literacy and cybersecurity awareness among informal workers in Delhi, focusing on individuals such as auto drivers, rickshaw pullers, and street vendors. As digital platforms become increasingly essential for financial transactions, government services, and daily activities, the ability to navigate these technologies safely and effectively is critical. However, gaps in digital knowledge and accessibility continue to pose challenges for marginalized communities.

Through a structured offline survey, this research examines the extent to which informal workers engage with digital platforms, their perceptions of online safety, and their vulnerability to cyber fraud. The study also investigates barriers to adopting digital services, such as trust issues, lack of awareness, and technological limitations. Based on the findings, the report emphasizes the need for targeted digital literacy programs, cybersecurity awareness initiatives, and simplified digital tools to enhance financial and social inclusion.



In this fast pacing and ever-changing world, India has been able to keep up and stay ahead in this race. The integration of technology into daily life has brought about significant advancements in communication, commerce, and access to information. Digital literacy is the ability to effectively find, evaluate, create, and communicate information using digital technologies, encompassing both technical and cognitive skills. Digital literacy is of outmost importance in every 21st century individual's life as technology has great impact in our lives. As more and more services are accessed and used digitally the need for cybercrime awareness is pivotal, as not everyone knows how to use it with caution. Without proper knowledge people fall prey to frauds and scams. Every issue that has its merits and advancements, always has its demerits and challenges too, in this case its cybersecurity crimes and frauds.

Over 55% of Indians have access to broadband however only about 20% possess the skills to utilize the internet proficiently. As such a substantial portion of the population is exposed to online threats. The need to improve digital skills has become more important than ever because cybercrimes are increasing at an alarming rate. In the year 2024, cyber fraud cases in

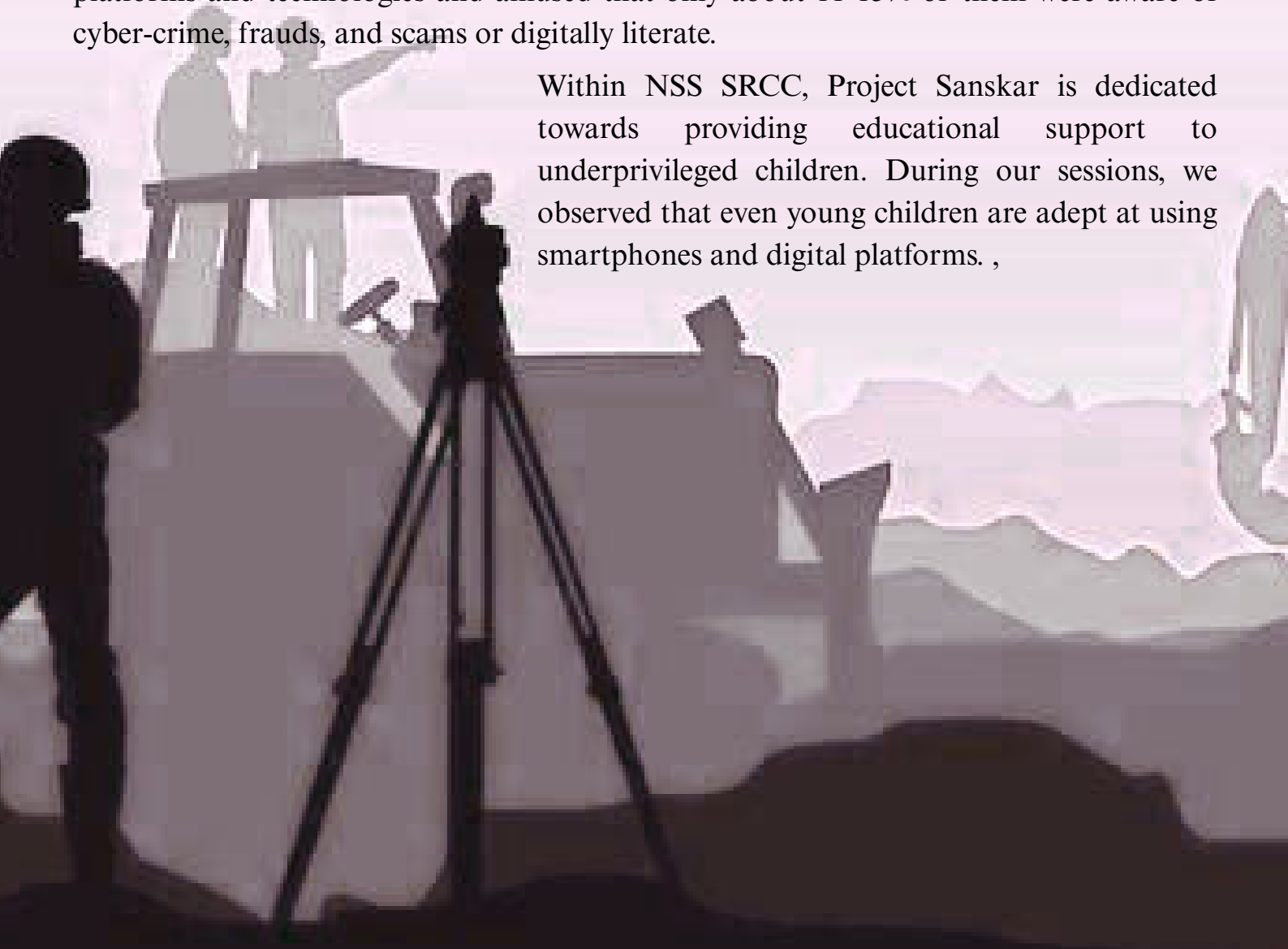
India increased to more than four times, summing up to \$20 million. The number of cases involving amounts over a lakh of rupees escalated from 6,699 in the year 2023 to 29,082 in the year 2024. The reason behind such an increase in cybercrime can be given to surge in digital transactions coupled with inadequate cyber literacy, making individuals susceptible to sophisticated scams.

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With all this the need to discuss and address digital literacy and cybercrime awareness is paramount.

Within NSS SRCC, there are 11 dedicated wings and projects, each working towards social impact. Since 2024, Project Kali has been actively engaged in uplifting slum communities in Dayabasti and Shastri Nagar. Volunteers, along with project heads, frequently visit these areas, organize awareness campaigns, and interact with residents in real-time. Through these initiatives, they have gained valuable insights into the community's digital literacy levels and awareness, highlighting the need for targeted interventions. Unamused to the fact that over 80% of the people were acquainted to digital platforms and technologies and amused that only about 11-13% of them were aware of cyber-crime, frauds, and scams or digitally literate.

Within NSS SRCC, Project Sanskar is dedicated towards providing educational support to underprivileged children. During our sessions, we observed that even young children are adept at using smartphones and digital platforms. ,



This early exposure underscores the urgency of implementing effective digital literacy programs to ensure safe and responsible technology use. Research indicates that only 38% of households in India are digitally literate with rural areas at 25%. Enhancing digital literacy from a young age not only supports educational progress but also increases online safety and fosters responsible digital citizenship. Therefore, integrating digital literacy into our educational initiatives is essential to empower these children to navigate the digital world securely and confidently.

Strong cyber awareness ensures that government initiatives like Digital India and online governance services are trusted and effectively utilized. By improving digital literacy, people, particularly in rural areas, gain better access to job opportunities, e-learning, and online resources, contributing to economic growth. Furthermore, as India faces rising cyber threats from hackers and international cybercriminals, ensuring citizens follow safe online practices strengthens the national security. Overall, widespread awareness about digital literacy and cyber safety will help create a more secure, inclusive, and digitally empowered India.

Taking all these insights into account, NSS SRCC chose digital literacy and cyber awareness as the central theme for SRCC's 100th-year celebrations and our annual festival, Samarpan'25.

This initiative includes nukkad nataks, awareness sessions in schools and colleges, surveys among non-teaching staff, theme-based competitions, and speaker sessions, all aimed at promoting digital inclusion and cybersecurity awareness.

As part of this initiative, we conducted a survey among rickshaw pullers and street vendors, a demographic carefully selected for their role as primary earners and decision makers within their families. The purpose of the researchers was to reach out to as many people as possible, especially the ones who are dealing with digital services, like payments on a regular basis for which vendors and auto rickshaw drivers were chosen as the subjects of the study. Through this survey, the researchers have tried gauging the confidence level, comfort and reliability of the vendors and autorickshaw drivers in UPI and other digital services.

Taking all these insights into account, NSS SRCC chose digital literacy and cyber awareness as the central theme for SRCC's 100th-year celebrations and our annual festival, Samarpan'25. This initiative includes nukkad natak, awareness sessions in schools and colleges, surveys among non-teaching staff, theme-based competitions, and speaker sessions, all aimed at promoting digital inclusion and cybersecurity awareness.



Methodology

This report is based on **offline surveys** conducted by the dedicated volunteers and students of **NSS SRCC** across various locations in **North Delhi**. The objective was to **assess the knowledge, experiences, and perceptions** of individuals from the **lower-middle-class demographic**, specifically **auto drivers, rickshaw pullers, and street vendors**, regarding **digital literacy and cybersecurity awareness**.

A total of **424 responses** were collected over two rounds of surveys conducted on **February 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 26th, 27th, and 28th**. In the **first round**, NSS members from different wings participated in conducting the surveys. The **second round** aimed to expand the sample size and gather deeper insights.

The survey was administered in five distinct groups, with an **average interview duration of 11.5 minutes per respondent**. The respondents primarily belonged to **Kamla Nagar, Vijay Nagar, Burari, Gurmandi, Sangam Vihar, Gopalpur, Malkaganj, and Seemapuri**. While most respondents were **male**, the sample also reflected diversity in **religion, caste, background, ethnicity, and educational levels** to ensure a comprehensive analysis of digital awareness and accessibility.



Who Are Delhi's Informal Workers?

A Demographic Snapshot

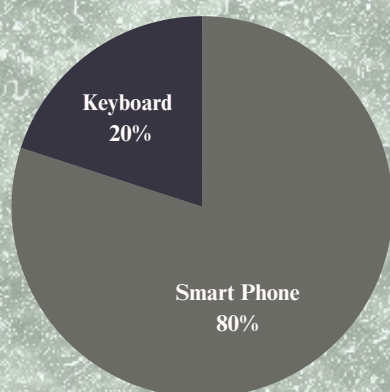
58

This section uncovers the socio-economic profile of **rickshaw pullers, auto drivers, and street vendors** surveyed across North Delhi. The data paints a picture of resilience amidst economic constraints, and a growing, but uneven, digital engagement.

Predominantly Male, Middle-Aged, and Married

The informal workforce is overwhelmingly **male (97%)**, primarily because of the physically demanding nature of these jobs. Most workers fall between **25–40 years**, with a notable peak at 35–40 years. A staggering **84% are married**, typically supporting families of 4–6 members, with 258 families relying on a single income—a sign of high financial vulnerability.

Connected, But Not Equally



Digital access varies—most families have 2 to 4 mobile phones, but 32 families own only one, reflecting digital inequality. Encouragingly, 80% use smartphones, but 20% still rely on basic keypad phones, usually due to cost or familiarity.



Educational Gaps Hindering Digital Literacy

The education level is low:

- 80 respondents never attended school
- 99 only completed primary school
- Only 24 are graduates

This lack of formal education makes navigating digital platforms and understanding online safety practices significantly harder for this group.

Implications: Bridging the Gap

While smartphone access creates opportunities for digital inclusion, low education levels and economic hardship limit deeper digital engagement. Tailored literacy programs—especially in regional languages and through peer-learning models—can empower these individuals to safely adopt and benefit from digital platforms.

The digital divide in India is stark, especially among informal workers who form the backbone of urban economies. Despite the government's push towards digital public infrastructure and online welfare services, lower middle-class informal workers often remain excluded. This analysis presents a focused study on their level of digital access, based on responses from 424 individuals, including auto drivers, rickshaw pullers, and street vendors in North Delhi.

• Access to Government Welfare Schemes:

Out of all the 424 responses collected on the matter of people using online government welfare schemes and subsidies, only 20 individuals (5%) use online platforms to access these services, while 291 individuals (72.75%) do not use them. The remaining 89 individuals (22.25%) either did not respond or may be unaware of such platforms.

Uses online platforms (5%)	Doesn't use (72.75%)	No response/Unaware (22.25%)
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The data indicates an overwhelmingly **low adoption of digital platforms** for government welfare schemes among lower middle-class informal workers. A 5% usage rate suggests significant **digital exclusion** within this demographic. This can be attributed to factors such as lack of digital literacy, **accessibility barriers**, unfamiliarity with online processes, or mistrust in digital transactions.

The findings highlight a critical gap in digital financial literacy and accessibility among informal workers. Despite the **increasing digitalization of government services**, a substantial portion of this population remains disconnected from these benefits. Policymakers and stakeholders should **prioritize awareness campaigns**, skill development programs, and **simplified digital access initiatives** to bridge this gap and ensure wider adoption of online welfare platforms.

• Faced Cyberattack or Cybercrime

To assess their vulnerability to online threats, individuals were asked if they had ever faced cyberattacks or cybercrime. 77 individuals (18.16%) answered yes, whereas 263 (62.03%) responded no. 84 individuals (19.81%) did not answer the question.

Cybercrime Exposure	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Victim of Cybercrime	77	18.16%
Not a Victim	263	62.03%
No Response/Unsure	84	19.81%

The data reveals that nearly **one in five** respondents (18.16%) from the lower middle-class informal workforce, including auto drivers, rickshaw pullers, and small vendors, have fallen victim to cybercrimes. This indicates a significant **vulnerability to digital threats**, possibly due to **low awareness of cybersecurity practices, lack of formal education on digital safety, and exposure to online frauds** through mobile payments and social media.

The findings emphasize the **urgent need for cybersecurity awareness** and protective measures among informal workers. As digital financial transactions increase, targeted education programs, community workshops, and accessible resources on **safe digital practices and fraud prevention** should be implemented to enhance their digital security and resilience.

• Faced Monetary Loss Due to Cyber Fraud

When asked about monetary loss from cyber fraud, **40 individuals (9.43%) responded yes. 324 individuals (76.42%) said no, and 60 (14.15%) did not respond.**

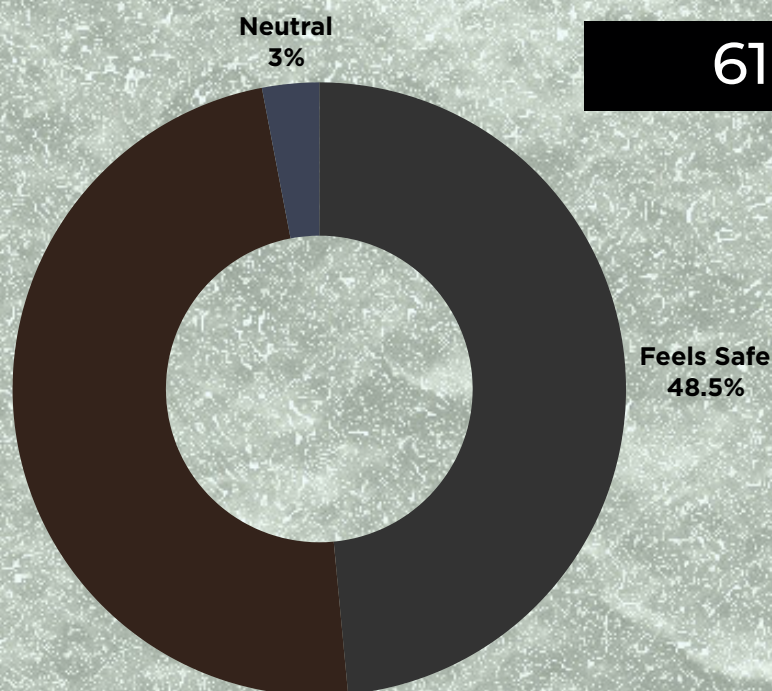
This suggests a **concerning level of vulnerability**, likely due to low digital literacy, limited awareness of cybersecurity measures, and exposure to **online scams** through digital transactions and mobile-based payments. The findings highlight the urgent need for targeted cybersecurity awareness programs for informal workers. As digital payment systems become more common, it is essential to **implement fraud prevention education, easy-to-understand security guidelines, and accessible complaint redressal mechanisms** to safeguard them from financial exploitation in the digital space.



• Perception of Online Safety

The data reveals a **clear divide in perception** regarding the safety of digital platforms among lower middle-class informal workers, including auto drivers, rickshaw pullers, and stall vendors. While nearly half of the respondents' express confidence in online services, an equal proportion remain skeptical, possibly due to concerns about **cyber fraud, lack of digital literacy, and**

Feels Unsafe
48.5%



distrust in online transactions. The **3% neutrality** suggests some individuals are either unaware or indifferent toward digital safety.

The findings highlight the need for targeted digital awareness programs to build trust and **improve confidence** in online services. Addressing cybersecurity concerns, simplifying digital processes, and **promoting safe online practices** will be essential in encouraging wider and more **secure adoption of digital platforms** within this demographic.

• Awareness of How to Report Fraud or Abuse Online

Out of all responses collected, only **19.3% know how to report fraud**, abusive content, or hate speech, while a significant **80.7%** do not have this knowledge.

The data highlights a **major gap in digital awareness** among lower middle-class informal workers, including auto drivers, rickshaw pullers, and stall vendors. With over **80% unaware of reporting mechanisms**, these individuals are highly vulnerable to **online scams, misinformation, and digital harassment**. This lack of awareness may stem from limited digital literacy, inadequate access to information, and the absence of user-friendly reporting systems.

The findings emphasize the urgent need for digital education initiatives focusing on fraud and online safety. **Government agencies, NGOs, and digital service providers** should work towards **simplifying reporting mechanisms**, increasing awareness through community programs, and making digital safety resources more accessible to ensure **better protection** for this vulnerable demographic.

• Willingness to Attend Digital Literacy Sessions

62

Out of all responses collected, 143 individuals (33.73%) expressed interest in attending a free digital literacy session, while 90 individuals (21.23%) were not interested. The remaining 191 individuals (45.04%) either did not respond or were undecided.

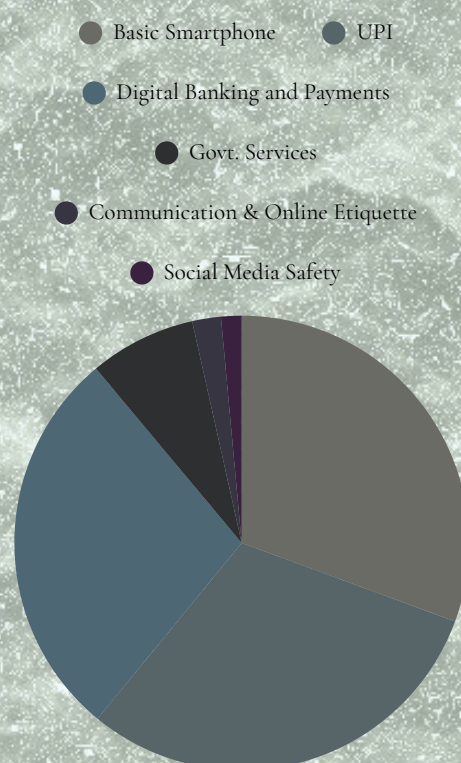
The data suggests that while one-third of the respondents (33.73%) recognize the value of digital literacy and are willing to participate in educational sessions, a notable 21.23% remain uninterested. The high non-response/undecided rate (45.04%) may indicate a lack of awareness about the benefits of digital education or hesitation due to time constraints, accessibility issues, or skepticism about its usefulness.

The findings highlight a **growing demand for digital literacy programs** among informal workers, emphasizing the need for **well-structured, accessible, and practical training sessions**. Efforts should focus on raising awareness about the benefits of **digital skills**, addressing **concerns of the uninterested group**, and designing **flexible learning models** to encourage broader participation.

• Digital Financial Services Usage

When asked about the digital skills they would like to learn, the majority of respondents showed a strong preference for practical, day-to-day digital functions. **Basic smartphone usage emerged as the most in-demand skill**, with 105 individuals (24.76%) identifying it as a priority. Closely following were **UPI transactions**, chosen by 104 respondents (24.52%), and **digital banking and payments**, selected by 96 individuals (22.64%).

Only a small portion of the population showed interest in slightly more advanced or **civic-focused digital capabilities**, such as accessing government services online, which garnered 26 responses (6.13%). Meanwhile, **communication and online etiquette** (7 responses; 1.65%) and **social media safety** (5 responses; 1.18%) were the least prioritized.



This indicates that while there is a **growing openness** to engage with **digital tools**, the focus remains largely on **basic utility-based digital literacy**, with limited awareness or perceived need for **digital citizenship** or safety education.

(COMMENTS- Many respondents were initially skeptical about the survey, questioning our affiliation and the purpose behind our research. They were dismissive and inquired about the organization funding the study. Even after clarifying that we were college students conducting it for academic purposes, some remained doubtful, suspecting potential monetary benefits for us)

Additionally, a few participants revealed that they did not personally engage in digital transactions, instead relying on their spouses, children, or friends to handle payments on their behalf.

The survey revealed that while many respondents used online payments for mobile and TV recharges, they were hesitant to adopt digital platforms for banking services, credit card transactions, or utility bill payments such as water bills. Their engagement with digital financial tools remained limited to basic, familiar transactions.

Furthermore, participants expressed that digital transformation felt more like a necessity imposed upon them rather than a personal choice. As a result, they showed minimal enthusiasm for digital adoption, preferring to learn only what was essential for their immediate needs rather than exploring the full potential of online platforms.)

The survey revealed that 62.3% of vendors and rickshaw drivers in Delhi use UPI, reflecting growing digital adoption. However, 37.7% remain hesitant due to a lack of smartphones, trust issues, and technical difficulties. Cybersecurity awareness is limited, with only 48% recognizing phishing threats and 30% having experienced fraud. Despite rising digital adoption, inadequate cybersecurity awareness poses risks.

The survey on digital literacy and cybersecurity awareness in India reveals critical trends. A significant portion (56.2%) of respondents do not own additional electronic devices, suggesting limited access to digital tools, which may hinder UPI adoption. Confidence in UPI security is mixed, with only 41.9% feeling secure, while 28.6% express doubts and 4.9% feel highly insecure, likely due to fraud concerns and lack of awareness.

While 44.1% find UPI easy, 20.8% face significant difficulties, indicating digital literacy and connectivity issues. DigiLocker adoption remains low (2.1%), with 89.7% never using it due to preference for physical documents and trust concerns. Similarly, only 21.3% have used online government services, highlighting reliance on offline processes.

Online banking adoption is just 20.8%, with 79.2% preferring cash transactions, reflecting trust deficits and digital literacy barriers. Awareness of online bill payment is high (50.3%), yet actual usage is much lower, particularly for credit card payments. The survey highlights a gap between digital awareness and actual adoption, emphasizing the need for targeted training, fraud prevention education, and infrastructure improvements to boost digital participation in financial and government services.

The survey reveals that 44.1% of respondents find UPI easy to use, indicating high adoption and familiarity. However, 33% of respondents face occasional difficulties, while 20.8% find it very difficult, suggesting barriers such as limited digital literacy, network issues, and transaction failures. While the majority are comfortable with UPI, challenges like trust issues and technical difficulties persist, particularly among vendors and auto drivers.

A significant 89.7% of respondents never use DigiLocker, highlighting a strong preference for physical documents. Only 2.1% use it regularly, indicating that digital document storage has not yet become mainstream. The low adoption is primarily due to digital illiteracy, trust concerns, and technical barriers. However, the 7.4% occasional users suggest a potential for growth with proper training and incentives. Given the success of UPI despite initial resistance, a similar push could improve DigiLocker adoption.

Only 21.3% of respondents have used online platforms for applying for essential documents like Aadhaar, PAN, or Voter ID, while 78.7% still depend on offline methods. The minimal 1.2% who sought help from others suggests an overall reluctance toward digital platforms. This low adoption can be attributed to digital illiteracy, lack of awareness, and trust issues. Many prefer manual applications or rely on middlemen for documentation, indicating a need for greater digital inclusion efforts.

Only 20.8% of respondents use online banking, while 79.2% rely on physical transactions, which can lead to time loss and security risks. In contrast, UPI adoption is significantly higher at 62.3%, showing that vendors and auto drivers find mobile payment apps more user friendly than traditional banking apps. The preference for UPI over online banking may be due to the simplicity of UPI transactions, which require only a mobile number and PIN, compared to the complexity of banking apps.

The survey shows an almost equal split, with 50.3% of respondents familiar with online bill payment platforms and 49.7% unaware. However, awareness does not always translate to usage. While 184 respondents are familiar with online platforms, only 89 use them for electricity bills, 59 for mobile recharges, and 57 for gas payments. The reluctance to use online platforms despite awareness is due to concerns about transaction failures, hidden charges, and a preference for cash payments.

Electricity bill payments (89 users) have the highest digital adoption among utility bills, followed by mobile bills (59 users), gas bills (57 users), and water bills (51 users). Credit card bill payments (13 users) have the lowest adoption, suggesting that most vendors and auto drivers operate in a cash-based economy. While essential expenses motivate digital payments, credit-based transactions remain uncommon due to limited financial inclusion.

UPI usage (62.3%) is significantly higher than online banking (20.8%) and online government services (21.3%). Online bill payments vary between 15%-30% depending on the type of bill, showing that while daily transactions are increasingly digital, recurring expenses still rely on offline methods. The gap between UPI adoption and other digital services indicates that while convenience drives digital payments, lack of trust and literacy remain barriers to broader financial digitization.

The survey highlights that while digital payments, particularly UPI, have seen widespread adoption, digital literacy remains a major barrier to expanding online banking, government services, and utility payments. Trust issues, lack of awareness, and preference for offline transactions contribute to low adoption rates. To enhance digital participation, targeted efforts such as training programs, awareness campaigns, and simplified platforms are necessary. Strengthening cybersecurity measures and addressing trust concerns will further encourage digital adoption across all sectors.

Key Suggestions & Recommendations

i.) Digital Literacy Workshops & Training Programs

Half of the respondents expressed interest in learning smartphone usage and UPI payments, highlighting the need for structured training. Free hands-on workshops in local areas can boost confidence, while audio-visual tutorials in regional languages can simplify learning and improve digital adoption.

ii) Fraud Prevention and Cybersecurity Awareness

Many respondents reported scams involving fake UPI payments, leading to distrust in digital transactions. Fear of financial loss discourages adoption. Awareness drives focused on scam detection and safe payment practices can reduce risks and encourage secure digital financial behavior.

iii) Strengthening Complaint Redressal & Encouraging Reporting

Several fraud victims did not report incidents due to past cases being ignored. Lack of trust weakens cybersecurity enforcement. Raising awareness about helplines like 1930 and ensuring fair redressal can encourage reporting and improve fraud prevention mechanisms.

iv) Promotion of Government Schemes & Digital Subsidies

Many respondents were unaware of government schemes supporting digital literacy and financial aid. This knowledge gap limits their participation. Distributing pamphlets in local languages and conducting awareness programs can improve access to government benefits and digital inclusion.

v) Community-Based Support System

Fear of digital errors makes many rely on others for payments. A peer-learning model, where digitally literate individuals train others, can enhance confidence. Establishing local kiosks with volunteers for real-time assistance can further support safe digital transactions.

vi) Financial Inclusion & Accessibility Measures

Complex digital interfaces deter low-literacy users from adopting UPI. Simplified applications, voice-based transactions, and incentives like cashback can improve accessibility. Banks should introduce user-friendly payment methods to encourage digital financial participation.

The survey highlights key challenges in digital adoption, including fraud risks, lack of awareness, and accessibility issues. Targeted efforts such as training, awareness campaigns, and policy interventions can enhance digital security and financial inclusion for vulnerable communities.



The illussion of progress

- Medha Gupta



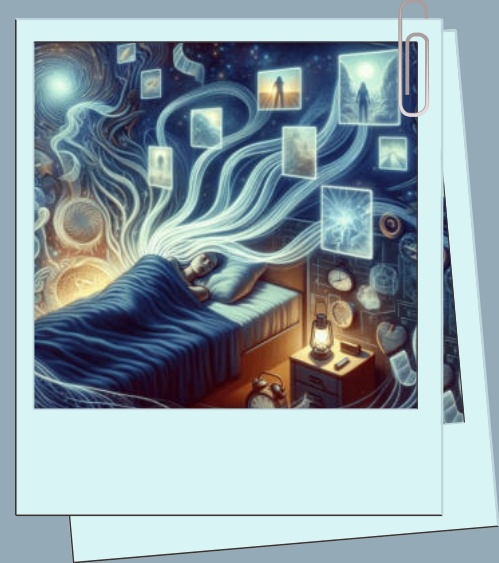
“In a world where everything is faster, smarter, and more convenient—why does peace of mind feel like a luxury?”

This is what we will be talking about in this article. Everyone seems to think that we are progressing and developing every day, yet we are somehow more stressed, unhappy and have more health problems. This is the unfortunate reality of our generation. According to the experts, we are progressing. Progress is often measured in terms of economic growth, urbanisation, technological development, GDP, etc. With this growth, we have achieved “Better living standards”, but this does not always equate to a better quality of life. In the modern world, we have all the possible luxuries, whether it be delivery services or the ease of doing everything from the comfort of our home.

All of these comforts that we enjoy, like having the convenience of cars, mobile phones, and Artificial intelligence (AI), should have decreased our work and burden drastically. It should, in theory, allow us more time to enjoy, to explore our hobby, spend more time with our families and do self-care, however, it seems to be the exact opposite effect. We are now more burdened with work, and because



of this feel more anxious and lack peace of mind. Now, people have more health and mental health problems and are unhappier in general.



We need to realize that the hidden costs of the modern lifestyle, like overworking and burning out, loss of human connection because of urbanization, and loss of nature, have led to generational mental crises. This is a serious problem because, as a society, we have made all of these “toxic” and unsustainable practices the norm, which has led to a very disturbed lifestyle. We are no longer connected to nature or people. It almost feels like a cycle, wherein we first destroy the natural balance and then try to artificially restore it.

For example, earlier people used to work in their agricultural fields, and their work would usually involve some physical labour, which would help them remain fit; however, now most of the jobs do not require any physical labour which has led to a lot of health problems like back ache, to correct which we are now trying to find solutions.

There is a serious need for introspection for this generation as to what it is that we want to achieve, because the idea of “success” that we are sold does not sound too promising. Even though our lives are progressing, we are day by day becoming more anxious.



the Perfection

- Muskan Noor



In this ever-growing, dynamic environment we young adults and teenagers have witnessed it all, growing up from the era of landlines and Shaktiman to the era of wi-fi calling and coco melon. All of us grew up in a jiffy with dreams in our heart and stars in our eyes. We grew up to a world where every achievement is magnified and every flaw is amplified, we young adults are carrying a weight we were never meant to bear—the burden of perfection. It's a silent, invisible load, one that creeps into our dreams, our relationships, and our sense of self. It whispers in our ears, "You're not enough," even though we pour every ounce of ourselves into becoming everything we are expected to be. Expectations. And there went away the little girl in me, who fancied being an astronaut.



"My little angel wings, protect me in the night,
Whispers the young dreamer as her heart takes flight.

Her hopeful wings shine, bright and wide, It dares to fly, where small birds fly.

Up she climbs, through galaxies unknown,
A world of her dreams, where she finally belongs,

A field of her own making, a sky all her own.

But time, moulds the dreamer,
Her soul now anchored, into a woman of law,
with voice displaced.

Perfection's shackles, heavy and grotesque,
multiply upon, turn wings of freedom to brittle bones of gold.

You no longer dance, you never do anymore.
For the weight of the world has clipped her wings.



For perfection is flawless grades, the dream job, a body akin the models of Ralph Lauren, the curated Instagram feed portraying the life that looks like a movie. But surprise! You don't have all of this, no one does but that irksome voice makes us blind. I remember where it all started, from an innocent wish of making my parents proud by topping the class, then becoming a part of the "cool" friend group, to wanting the "perfect" body type because the other girls in comparison fit in the society's beauty standards and I did not. Soon as the years rolled by these thoughts and emotions took form of the haunting images- nightmares. The anxiety kept on crippling my self confidence and happiness, leaving a deep hollow feeling inside. I tried and tried with every fibre of my being to achieve perfection, until I couldn't anymore.

Then came the realisation that perfection is a myth. It's a mirage that shifts and shatters the closer you get to it. With realisation followed acceptance of being different, of being – myself. And my perspective, changed my world. Flaws became friends, distinction became a badge of honour.

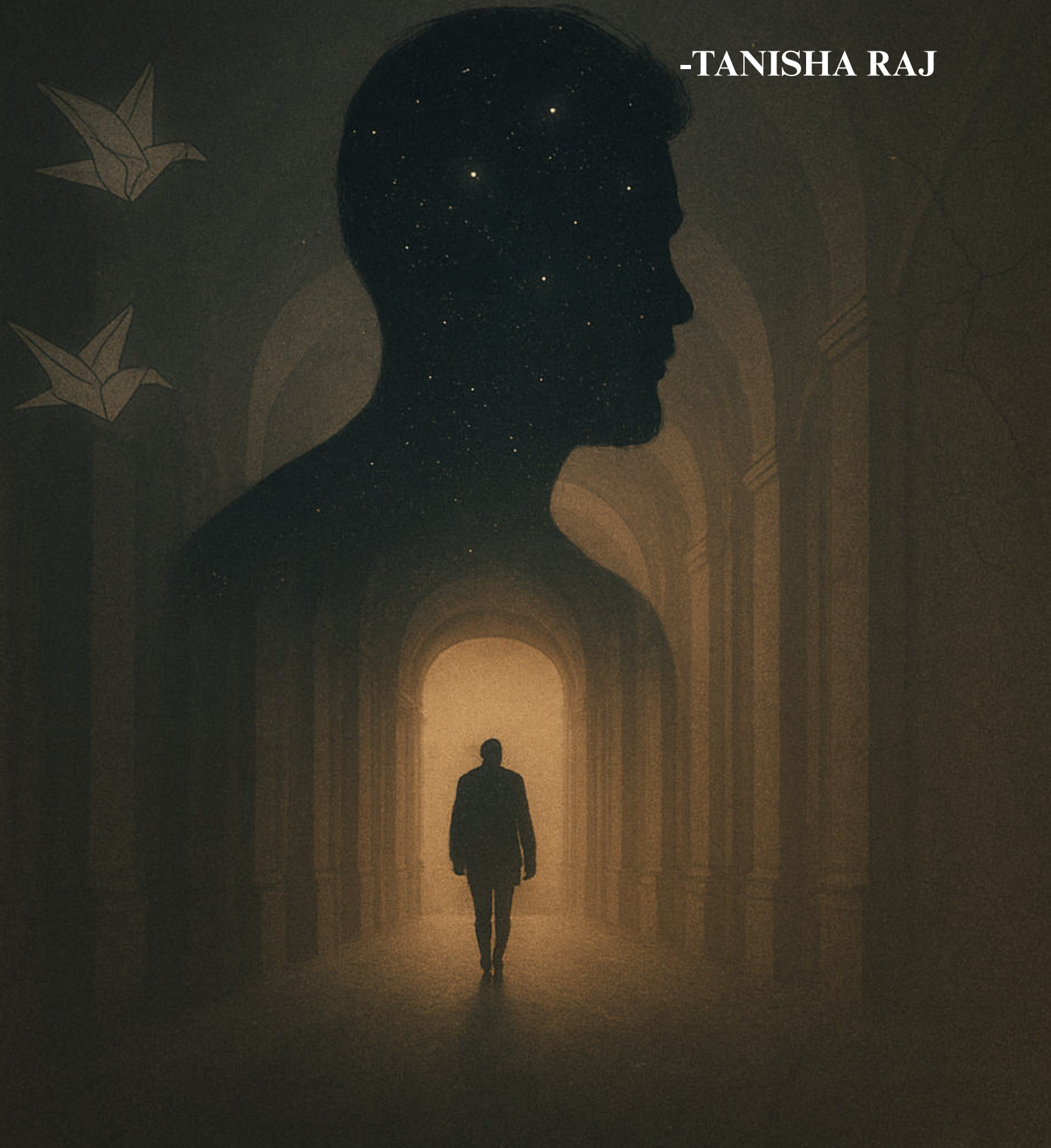
All there was to perfection was being me in the best way possible, loving myself with my flaws and trying to be a better version of myself every other day.

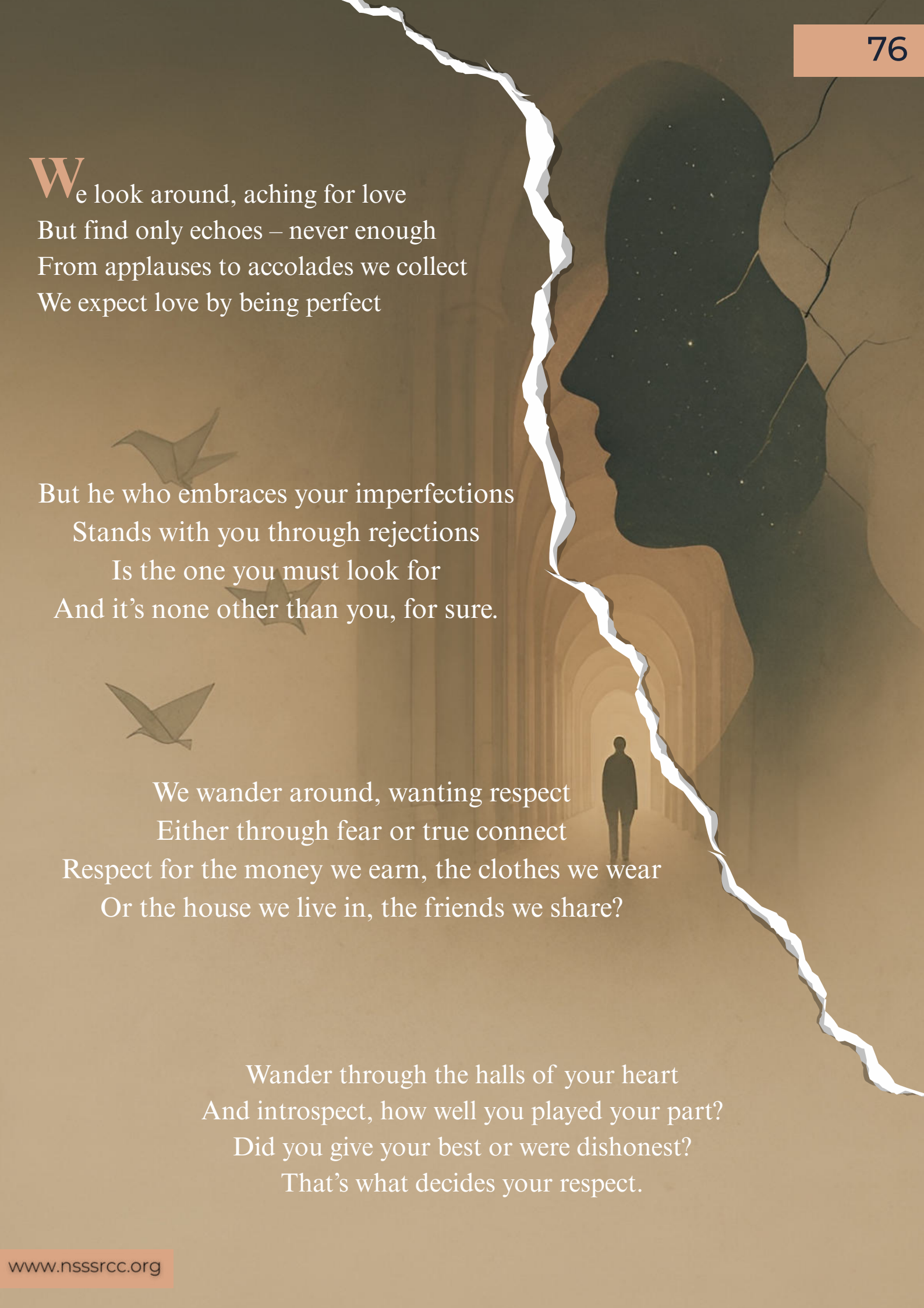
Many of you might know about kintsugi the Japanese technique to fix broken pottery pieces by gluing them with gold. This art not only gives a new life to those shattered items, but also enhances their beauty and makes them even more valuable. Akin to these rejuvenated and imperfect potteries, us humans are not perfect with our flaws, our traumas, and our distinct characteristics; however, with passage of time, great experiences and lessons that act as gold we become refined versions of ourselves, more mature, more imperfect, more human but more of our true self. Remember you are not alone, all your struggles are valid, your feelings are real and your worth is not solely defined by how much you achieve. Just know that sometimes it's okay to rest. It's okay to ask for help. It's okay to be a work in progress.



ECHOES IN EMPTY HALLS

-TANISHA RAJ





We look around, aching for love
But find only echoes – never enough
From applause to accolades we collect
We expect love by being perfect

But he who embraces your imperfections
Stands with you through rejections
Is the one you must look for
And it's none other than you, for sure.

We wander around, wanting respect
Either through fear or true connect
Respect for the money we earn, the clothes we wear
Or the house we live in, the friends we share?

Wander through the halls of your heart
And introspect, how well you played your part?
Did you give your best or were dishonest?
That's what decides your respect.

We stumble through life, seeking trust
Open our heart to others in a rush
learn too late, our mistake
and put our heart on a brake.

Now, close your eyes and
see through the dark
Moments of your life that seemed so harsh
Whom did you trust and why?
If you see yourself, then you're right.

Chasing validation comes at a cost so high
For other's admiration, to ourselves we lie
But the love you seek? It never left.
It's you. It's yours. No need to beg.

Beauty of Imperfection

- Ananya





The cracks, the flaws, the marks of time
a story untold like the face of a mime with
scars so deep, so wounded inside “Perfectly
fine” with conviction she lied.

A heart untamed as free as the breeze She used
to fly, her soul at ease
Her flaws told a tale she tried to conceal
Never knew it was this gruesome a deal

Whispers of life called out to her
But what she used to be was now a mere blur
All she wanted was to be accepted by all
As the world she embraced would accept no fall

Tired she went to her younger self
A beauty so broken but so herself
In imperfection, she found the beauty she had lost
Is perfection really perfect? Is it worth the cost?

ਭੀ ਮੁੜੇ ਭੀਨਾ ਸਿਰਾ ਰਹੀ ਭੀ

- Ananya



दूर खड़ी मुस्का रही थी
 पास मुझे बुला रही थी
 कुछ कहना था शायद उसे, या फिर
 बिन कहे वो कुछ समझा रही थी

"दो पल की कहानी मेरी
 लेकिन उफ! ये भाग-दौड़ तेरी
 क्यों रोकना चाहे तू इसे
 तू वक्त के साथ बहना सीखना ।"

"ऊचाइयाँ छूना हर दिल चाहता है
 मगर क्यों तू ये भूल जाता है
 कि जरा थम कर, इस पल में जीकर
 इस लम्हे को धागे में पिरोना सीखना ।"

"बादल -सा हवा में उड़ना सीखना
 तो कभी तारों-सा टूट के गिरना सीखना
 मेरे हर पहलू को समेट,
 कभी मुझे तू पूरा करना सीखना ।"

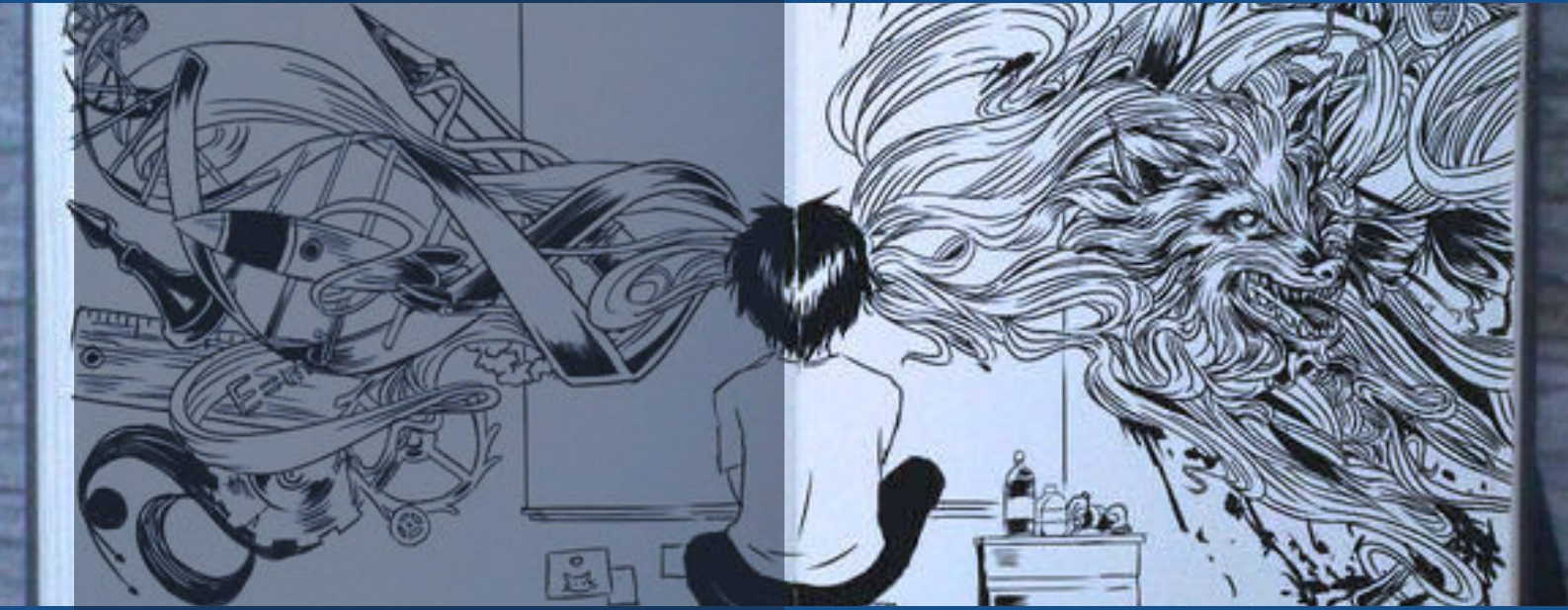
इतना कहा और गुम सी हो गई
 हताश हुआ मन, कही वो खो गई
 समझ ना सका था अब तक मैं लेकिन-

वो दूर खुड़ी मुस्का रही थी
 पास मुझे बुला रही थी
 शायद वो मेरी जिंदगी ही थी जो,
 मुझे जीना सिखा रही थी ।

Theme Interpretation

- Vanshikha and Ananya





They conceal their fears with a grimace of laughter, weave endurance into their struggles, and turn their survival into a beautiful artpiece: this anxious generation. Caught between existence and expectations, burdened between the urge to slow down and the demand to keep up; this generation navigates through life's labyrinth like tightrope walkers.

In balancing dreams and deadlines, validation and vulnerability, and finding calm in the chaos; this life that is less talked about is a kaleidoscope of silent strength.

Yet, in this battlefield unseen, there is an essence of heroism. The pain may not always be visible, but it has been there and evolved over time.

As humans sharing the religion of mankind, we are not just trespassers to this struggle; we are the pearls woven together in the necklace of healing.

By addressing, acknowledging and uplifting - our aim should be to turn this anxious generation into a resilient one.

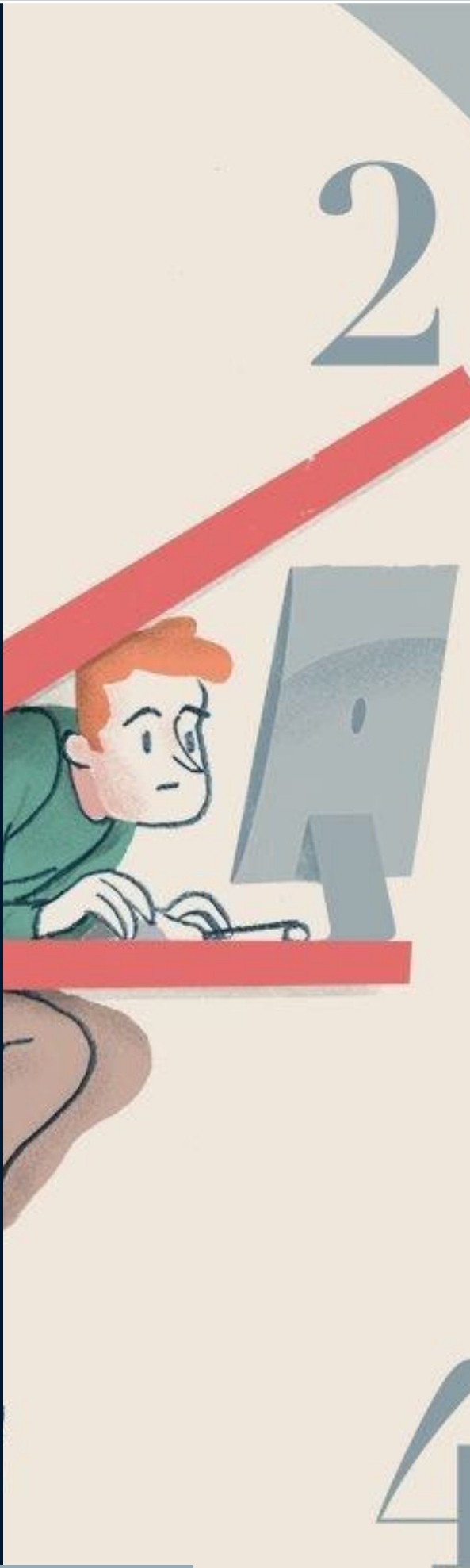
Because life isn't just about the whispers of our hushed struggles. It is about moving forward with a bundle of the good and the bad along with the happy and the sad! Social service, here, becomes not merely an act but a responsibility. For in a world where restlessness and inner turmoil are combated behind shut doors, kindness must roar!

Through a platform like National Service Scheme, the inaudible struggles of every sufferer has been given a voice. With a supportive institution like Shri Ram College of Commerce, NSS SRCC has been successful in addressing ample issues such as education, food waste, community upliftments and spreading awareness; ensuring the promotion of the spirit of care and compassion among all.

Success vs. Health

- Suhana Jena





We often see people involved in a rat race to achieve as much success as possible in today's highly competitive world, especially Gen Z. From running after internships to perfect grades, from decorated CVs to outstanding personality and public speaking skills, they are under constant pressure to achieve it all as fast as possible.

In a 2022 survey of 1055 Gen Z, 1 out of 4 reported having more bad days than good within a 1-month time frame. More than 2 out of 5 (42%) had a diagnosed mental health condition, with more than a quarter of those being diagnosed during the COVID-19 pandemic (March 2020) or later. Anxiety and depression are the 2 largest mental health issues among Gen Z, with 9 out of 10 individuals diagnosed with a mental health condition having anxiety and 8 out of 10 having depression. This data showcases how serious the issue of mental health is among Gen Z.

To top it all is the societal pressure to achieve everything extremely quickly and be perfect caused by social media exposure and a plethora of fake content available online, which forces Gen Z to perform beyond their mind and body support leading to frequent burnouts, messed up the circadian rhythm, break downs, eating disorders and anxiety. Apart from these, they often end up with poor physical health, either due to excessive dieting for the "perfect body" or lack of physical activity due to tight schedules. Not to mention, the lack of time to meditate or introspect, which leads to a lack of self-awareness and spiritual disconnectivity from oneself.

Though Gen Z, is notably more comfortable in discussing mental health issues and is more aware than the other generations because of the advanced technology, they have failed to achieve optimal physical, mental and spiritual health, because of the extreme competition and distractions which has also resulted because of the wider availability of technology and resources compared to before. The late-hour study sessions, hectic schedule, excessive amount of stress and too much caffeine in the system are already burning them out even before they start.



A woman in a white dress is floating horizontally in a dark space filled with stars. A bright, starburst-like effect emanates from her head area. The text 'THE WEIGHT OF' is arched above her, and 'WHAT'S NEXT' is arched below her. The author's name is at the bottom right.

THE WEIGHT OF

WHAT'S NEXT

- RIDDHI YADAV

The rain battered Miya's hotel window, and each drop felt like a drumbeat against her fast-moving thoughts. At eighteen, it was her first month at the engineering college in Bangalore, and it felt like walking a tightrope. The textbooks lay lonely on the desk, pages wide open, mesmerizing equations glaring at her as if to "mock" her. Her phone buzzed; it was Ma "Study hard, beta. You'll make us proud". A knot twisted in her stomach, Proud That seemed to her a weight in itself.

Not yet, she wasn't failing. But her classmates seemed so sure of themselves—chatting about internships, coding clubs, and figured out future. No clear path for Miya, on the other hand. All *she carried was a secret that "she likes words and not the circuits."* Stories blossomed within her mind, but who becomes a writer in a world that values 'stable jobs'? Her parents back in Mysore sacrificed so much, Dad's late nights shift for extra money, Ma's teaching job, so that she could go down a path deemed practical.

The hostel was buzzing with life—some Bollywood playlist, laughter from the corridor—but Miya felt

isolated. Only thought running in her mind was what if she disappoints them? What if she disappoints herself? The sleep couldn't come, so she pulled on a sweatshirt and went up to the terrace. The air was thick and chilled. She wasn't alone, a figure sat cross-legged with a book in hand. His glasses caught the light as he raised his head.



"Couldn't sleep?" he asked with a friendly voice.

She was hesitant then sat few feet away from him "Yeah...a lot"

He closed his book and smiled. "My name is Arjun. third year Lit major. And you're...?"

"Miya. First-year. Engineering." It sounded robotic.

"Rough start?" he asked with no judgement in his eyes.

She nodded, staring towards the rain.

"It's like everybody knows where they're going - except for me."

Arjun pulled out a thermos and poured some chai into two chipped mugs.

"Here. Chai fixes most problems".

"And trust me, nobody has all figured out, not even the ones who say they do."

Miya sipped the tea "my parents want me to be an engineer, big job, big house, stable future. But I kept thinking about writing, stupid right?"

"Not at all". "I wanted to be a poet. My dad thought I was crazy, Poetry won't put food on the table, he told me.

It took two years to shut him up."

"How did you do that?" She asked curiously

Tapping on his book, he said "Words. And stubbornness. I write anyway. Doesn't mean I'm not scared, but it's my fear, not his".

They talked until the rain let up, discussing books, the fast life of Bangalore, Shakespeare...He also read Miya a poem of him which is about a bird finding her wing.

Back to her room, she opened up her suitcase, looking for a

notebook gifted by her grandmother — its pages yellowed yet blank. She had given it to her years ago, saying, "Write your heart, Miya. It'll listen." She hadn't written since school. Now, pen in hand, she began writing what she was thinking, messy but honest. Her shoulders felt lighter. Over the next few weeks, Arjun and Miya would meet at the terrace which had turned into their therapeutic refuge. Arjun brought chai, and Miya brought more questions. He would share poems, and stories of his own twisted path.

"Life is never a straight line," he would remind her. "It's a scribble. So embrace the mess."

Miya's first quiz result was a complete failure. The grade loomed over her like an open wound made of red ink. Her parents called that night. "You must focus," Dad's tone hinting at worry. "This is your life." The pain was not lessened by Ma's softer tone: "We believe in you, beta." Hot tears blurred Miya's eyes as she hung up. She wanted to shout that she didn't believe in the past, but she was unable to do so. She noticed Arjun looking



out at the city from the terrace. "I failed," she admitted, her voice trembling with anxiety. "A test. And... everything. I'm not the perfect which they want me to be".

He didn't interrupt and when she finished he said "Perfect is delusion. You're your best and that's the most. What is it that you want, Miya? Ignore them. What do you want?"

"I want to write. But I don't know if I'm brave enough." she said

"You're here, aren't you?" he said, smiling. "That's brave. Start small. Write one thing. See where it takes you." She wrote again that night, a story about a girl who found her voice while dreaming under a banyan tree. It was hers, even though it wasn't flawless. Next day she noticed a notice for the college literary club. She wrote her name on the sign-up sheet despite her racing heart. Not a leap, but a little step.

She felt lighter because she was finally on her way.

The rain had stopped, and the sun was coloring the entire sky gold. She was on the terrace, notebook in hand, Arjun by her side.

"Still afraid?" he asked her.

"Yeah," she replied, smiling. "But it's alright. I'm working it out."

The pressure of what came next was still there but it was softer, like rain, you could dance in. She opened her notebook, pen in hand, and let the words carry her on.



Miya's story continues... one page, one poem, one choice at a time





Research Article

- Vanshikha

The Skill Gap trap

“

Education is the most powerful tool that you can use to change the world.

- Nelson Mandela



But contrary is the case, when it comes to a developing country like India. The testimony to this fact is the rising rate of unemployment in recent graduates, because even after attending years of school and college, our education system has failed to equip them with necessary skills to land on a fulfilling livelihood. Though change has been initiated, the pace at which its progressing is quite low.

Often, practical skills like those needed especially in the IT, management and analysis industry are lacked in Indian graduates which is one of the core causes of slow progress in the employment rate. With advancement in technology and digital transformation, the Indian job market has seen a spurt in skill gaps during the recent times. A report issued by Aspiring Minds in 2023 revealed that more than 80% of Indian engineering graduates lacked IT skills. This reveals that critical analysis and thinking, problem solving and practical experience has an edge over field-based knowledge only. This lack of experience leads to reduction in productivity of companies and workplaces, and in turn forces them to spend resources on training their employees.

There are numerous causes for the problem of glaring skill gaps. While the Indian education system remains one of the prime reasons, other reasons include the narrow mindset of most Indians about emphasizing strictly on rote learning and studies instead of focusing on all-round development of students. Basic skills like effective communication, public speaking, CV building, the ability to express one's opinions and ideas, etc. are often ignored which creates lack of interpersonal skills, the key element to land a job. Furthermore, there is use of outdated data in the education curriculum of both schools and colleges, instead of replacing them continuously according to the changing dynamics of the subject and its scope, leading to a mismatch with what one knows and what is required of them.

Lastly, there is a major problem about accessibility. India being a 64% rural based country has most of its student population in the less-accessible places. There is lack of opportunities in such areas due to which students are not exposed to the sources available to them and while appearing for jobs and placements, they are not fully equipped with required skills.



To cope with these challenges, several companies have come up with initiatives to help students get acquainted with the demanding skill set. For example : Tata Consultancy Services launched the platform TCS ion to provide virtual internships, projects and courses based on their field of study and interest. Additionally, Infosys launched its program Campus Connect as an initiative to collaborate with universities to provide practical training for students and help them align their knowledge with real-world industry requirements. There are also various platforms like Forage and Edx which customize courses and internships based on a student's interests provided by various companies and universities, assisting them to gain skills in demand like MS Excel, Python, Graphic Designing etc. Such platforms also provide completion certificates and letter of recommendations based on performance which further fuels students to actively become part of such opportunities.

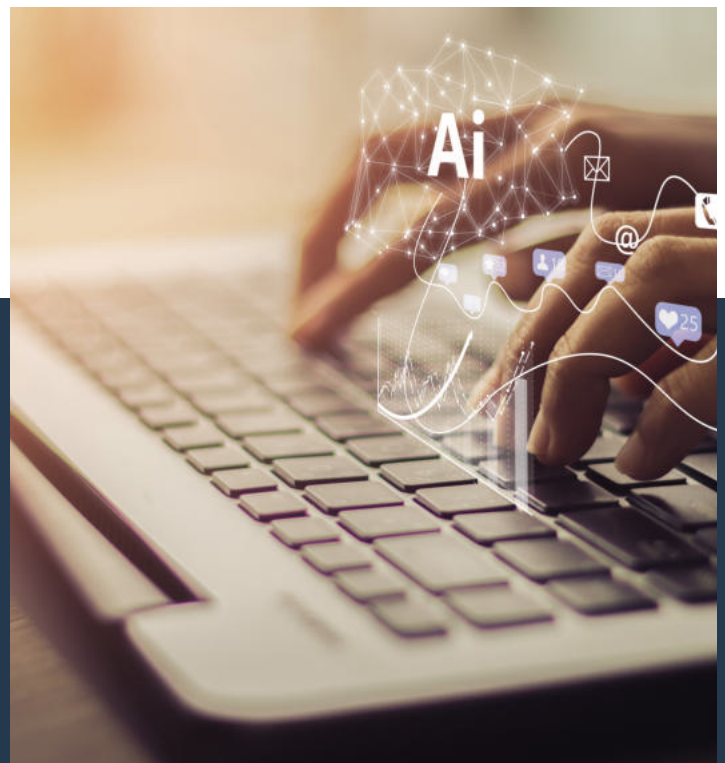
LinkedIn Profile Reports and Harvard Business Reviews have a lot of articles that focus on what talents and skills are actively searched for by employers, and what strategies can be adopted to address such skill gaps. Some innovative recommendations for stakeholders can be regular mentorship programs and workshops as a part of the curriculum for students that would involve industry professionals guide to students for ensuring they remain up-to-date and know what exactly are the requirements for their job preferences. Shifting theory based learning to practical and project based learning is another thing that should be focused on, where students can build pilot projects and present their ideas about particular areas like consulting, business plans, marketing strategy, risk management, etc. Further, initiatives like skill exchange programs through peer to peer skill sharing and constant upskilling and reskilling by companies can be effective in bridging skill gaps. The government can also come up with policies which enforces a necessity on a company to provide learning and training platforms to students as a part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

With rapid growth and advancement in fields of artificial intelligence, technology and digital upgradation, the need for constant learning, adaptability and flexibility is essential for job seekers. Combining technical and theoretical skills with soft skills like creativity, communication and leadership also holds significance in the job market.

Therefore, there is a need to rebuild the education system, create a more collaborative environment between student institutions and industries as well as companies. Through this, the skill gap can be bridged and the future challenges can be tackled. According to World Economic Forum, by 2025, over 85 million jobs globally will be displaced by automation, but 97 million new roles could emerge.

Sources of information :

Aspiring Minds Report 2023
Harvard Business Review Articles
LinkedIn Learning Reports
World Economic Forum Reports



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THE LOST
JEWEL

- ADITI SAINI

I strongly believe that we humans are now living in a superficial world which values nothing but glossy perfection.

We live in a chaotic world where even the minute achievements are overhyped and people tend to stick to them, flexing all around.

This does no good to anyone and fills the world with more and more noise.

Unfortunately, in this world where complexity is often mistaken for progress, we have left our roots behind.

In this long journey, one of the most valuable things that we have lost is the virtue of simplicity.

Simplicity was once regarded as 'Supreme Excellence' but in the present times it has lost its significance because of the worldly race.



Social media pressures and the need for instant connectivity have led to a cluttered mental landscape, leaving little room for simplicity.

Also, our society often equates success and happiness with material possessions and wealth accumulation. This relentless pursuit of more has diverted attention from the beauty of minimalist lifestyle and the contentment found in having just enough.

As is seen in our lives, being busy all the time is often worn as a badge of honour.

The more packed our schedules, the more productive we assume ourselves to be.

However, this constant rush leads us to sacrifice the simplicity of little moments and the joy found in slowing down.



Simplicity does not encourage the Zen lifestyle but it involves re-evaluating our priorities and focusing on things that really matter.

It is finding contentment in spontaneous moments. The beauty of simplicity lies in cutting through the noise and finding peace amid the chaos.

It also involves reconnecting with nature, embracing mindfulness and living in alignment with our deeper values all of which has got lost somewhere in the hustle and bustle of modernism.

It's high time that we switch from this world driven from materialism to a world of simplicity and authenticity.

Adopting simplicity will enable individuals to prioritise essentials and reduce clutter.

It will not only help them to lead a fulfilling life but also a sustainable lifestyle.



LOST AND FOUND



-TANISHA RAJ

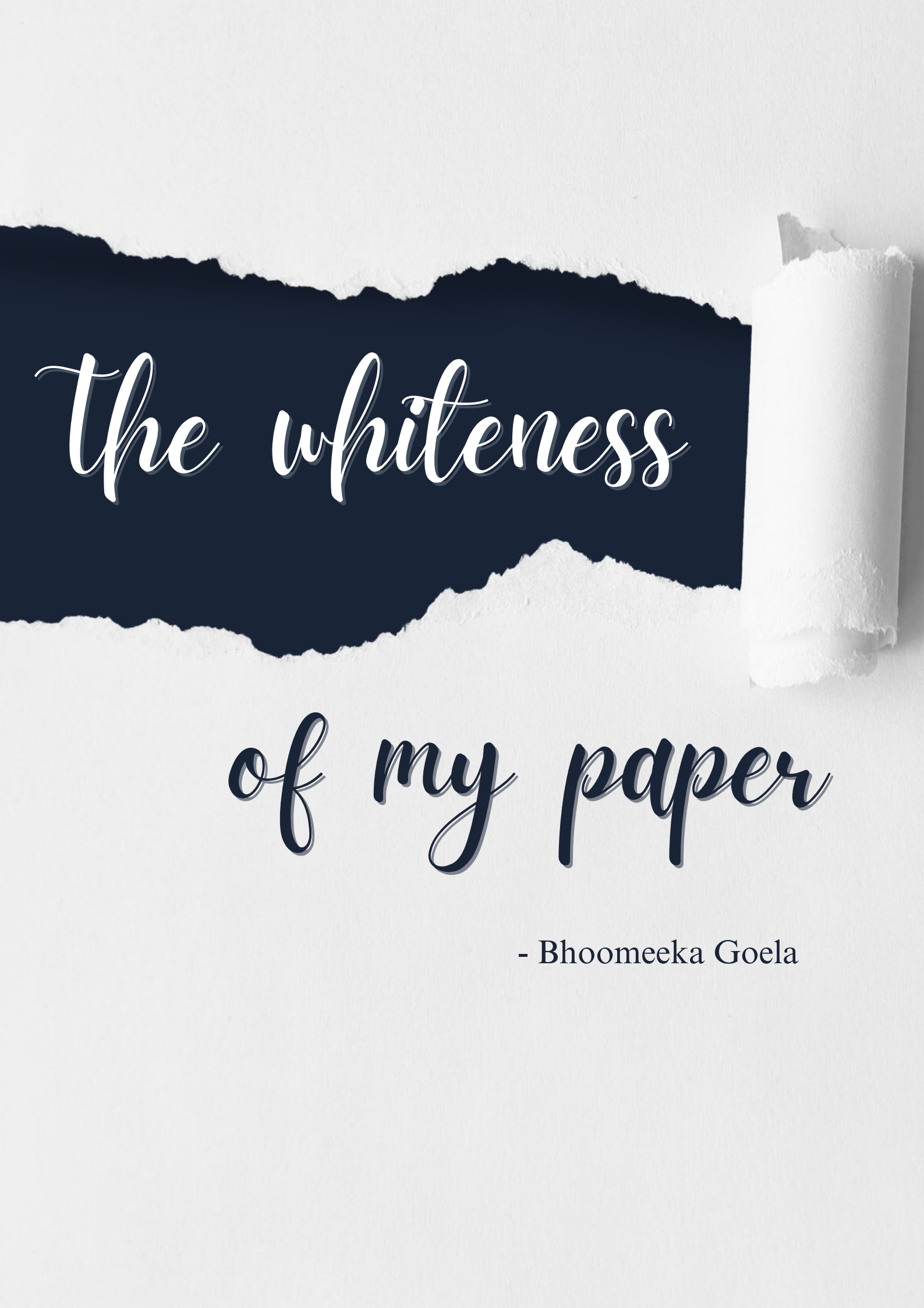


Everyone asked, "Where am I lost?"
in my dreams or in the past
I was stuck in a world between,
what it was like and what it could've been

I wondered, "What had I lost?"
the warmth of friends or a success toast
I feel like I had lost myself
to be in the good books on other's shelves

I feared, I'd be lost and never found
My silent world faded by the world of sound
What I hadn't lost was my pride
My destiny, who's there to decide?

Who'd find me if I was lost?
I'd look at people and was caught in frost
The world fell silent except my heart's sound
I listened to it and was lost and found



The whiteness

of my paper

- Bhoomeeka Goela

A vacant, white paper,
No lines, no colours, no story.
Just an emptiness that engulfs all,
No traces of life,
no traces at all.

Empty and vast
No ink to tell my tale, no joy to
engage.
As I turn my pages,
Still void, still empty,
still devoid of life's class.

White, as far as the eye can see
My paper is waiting for me to set it
free

Looking at other's papers
Colourful, energetic and lovely

Like a canvas yearning to be burnt,
Desiring to vanish, to turn a new burn.
No marks, no colors to leave behind,
Just a wish for a different, a better kind.



ODE

To Sleep



-Peeyush

Oh Sleep, why do you dance away,
A fleeting wisp at the end of day?
You tease, you taunt, you make me yearn,
Then vanish as my thoughts return.

Elusive spirit, unruly and shy,
You drift beyond my weary eye.
You steal my focus, soft as night,
And make me lose my sight.

Yet other times, you're bold and loud,
Breaking through my mind's white shroud,
Unleashing horrors, worries deep,
Past regrets and fears that creep.

Forever evasive, free and wise,
Your spryness an obscure surprise.
When you come, when you go, none can say

—
Yet I feel your absence passing each day.



In silence, caught, I strain to speak—
But words dissolve, a muted shriek.
Like a child denied his fairground prize,
I reach, I plead, yet you rise.

And soon the time slips, sleepy shutters cling to
peak,
And then i remember, your blessing is all I
seek.
Oh, grant me now your gentle grace,
Soothe me in your tender ways.

Carry me softly, safe and light,
Into the heart of velvet night.
For dawn is near, her light will seep—
But for now dear, just let me sleep.





SAM 





 **R P A N**







Aagman

The opening ceremony of Samarpan

The annual fest of the National Service Scheme at Shri Ram College of Commerce, commenced with its magnificent opening ceremony, Aagman. The essence of the day was elevated by renowned personalities such as Dr. Padma Bandopadhyay (India's First Woman Air Marshal and a Padma Shri awardee) and Mr. Kallol Bhattacharjee (Author of Nehru's First Recruits), gracing the occasion as chief guest and guest of honour, adding their wisdom and insight to the event. The day was further resonated with culturally rich performance and soul stirring music.



Udaan- Alumni Panel

At Samarpan'25, the flagship alumni event under UDAAN, NSS SRCC was hosted with an inspiring panel session serving as a dynamic platform where experience met aspiration, leaving students motivated and better informed about the professional world. Gaurav Aggarwal – An entrepreneurial visionary and founder of Naviora Journeys, redefining experiential travel with innovation and passion.

Ankita Sanwaria – A Management Consultant at Accenture, plays a crucial role in driving organizational growth and transformation.

Pramod Meena – An Associate VP at KPMG India, a leader in consulting and advisory services, contributing to high-impact corporate solutions.



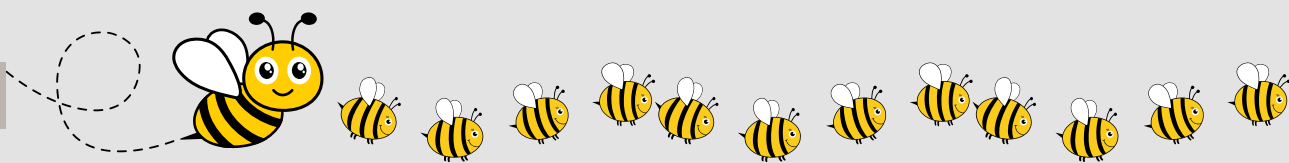
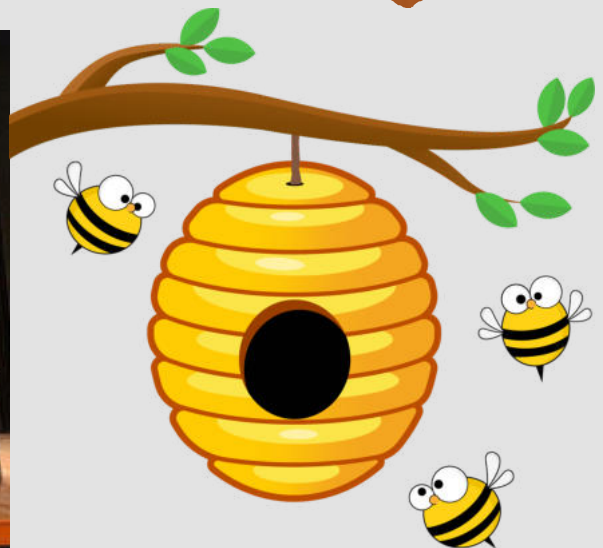


Socio-bee

Buzz for a Cause

Socio Bee'25 witnessed an overwhelming response with 533 registrations, bringing together the brightest social entrepreneurs on one stage, each pitching bold solutions.

Guided by a panel of industry leaders—Hitesh Rathi (Founder, Aadvik Foods), Surbhi Siwach (Associate, MCI, Government of India), and Vibhuti Agarwal (General Partner, Realtime Angel Fund). Four teams emerged victorious: Rivayat and Naqsh from SRCC, Idea Factory from CHRIST, and Project Janmbhoomi from KMC. It once again proved that entrepreneurship and social good can go hand in hand to shape a brighter tomorrow.



Case-o-Cause- 2.0

"Where the infusion of case and cause happens"

Case-o-Cause as part of SAMARPAN'25, where problem solvers, innovators, and changemakers were invited to tackle real-life social issues through case studies. Guided by Dr. Ajay Garg, Ms. Deepika Kapoor and Dr. Suman Khanna Aggarwal. The event aimed to drive meaningful change and develop practical skills among the 1800 participants. .

"They didn't just think about change – they became the change!"



1. Deshbandhu College



2. Shri Ram College of Commerce

3. Lady Shri Ram College for Women



Convergence 9.0

Converging towards an Improved Future

"In the convergence of young minds lies the future of a better world."

Convergence 9.0 showcased NSS volunteers' social work and impactful projects. Over 150 participants of NSS units converged to present their units' works. 8 teams were selected from all over DU, evaluated by Himanshu Mishra, Vikram Kumar and Mahima Bhagat. The event was a successful celebration of NSS efforts. The winners being Delhi Technical University, Hansraj College and SGTB Khalsa college in the same order.



**DELHI TECHNICAL
UNIVERSITY**



HANSRAJ COLLEGE



**SGTB KHALSA
COLLEGE**



Congratulations





Kiddo fest

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Kiddo Fest 2025 was a heartwarming celebration dedicated to the joy and laughter of underprivileged children associated with various NSS projects. Organised by NSS, SRCC, with participation from multiple units showcasing their children-centric initiatives, the fest featured a lively dance competition judged by Anjali Rathore (Voguestar Mrs. India 2024) and Misha Agarwal (popular social media influencer), adding a touch of glamour and excitement to the event. The kids were also treated to a fun-filled magic show, a hilarious mimicry act, and an engaging puppet show. To spark curiosity and learning, a range of science-themed games was organised, striking the perfect balance between education and entertainment. The entire day was filled with smiles, energy, and unforgettable memories.





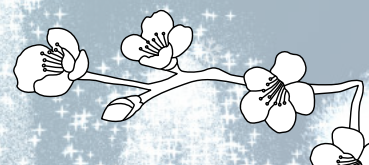
THEME:

DIGITAL LITERACY AND CYBER AWARENESS

For Samarpan 2025, our chosen cause was Digital Literacy and Cyber Awareness, and we carried the theme forward into Prerna as well. To spread awareness, we visited various NGOs where we performed nukkad nataks that highlighted the importance of being digitally aware in today's world. Alongside that, we held interactive sessions and presentations to educate underprivileged communities on the basics of digital tools and how to stay safe online. From protecting personal information to spotting online scams, we aimed to make digital spaces a little safer and more accessible for everyone. Like every year, we picked a cause we believed in—and worked together to make a difference.



-until we meet again!



meet TE 2024





THE Aim -25

MEHAK SHARMA

Head of Project Sanskar

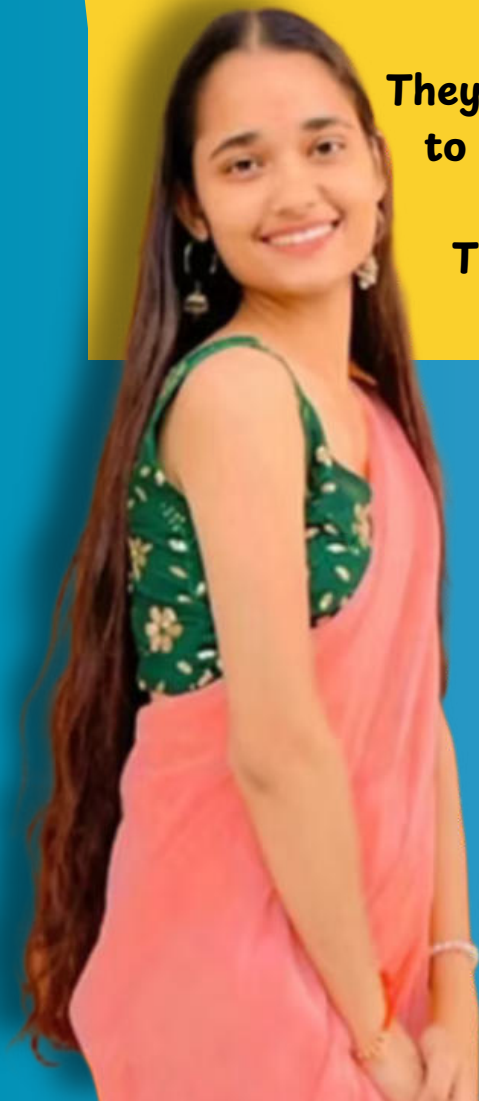
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The best feeling? When children come running and hug me tightly. When they share little moments of their lives. When they tell me that they enjoyed something that was organised for them. These children have taught me lessons that college never could. They have made me realise how much the little things matter.

They have taught me that some things that come to some of us so easily, are far-fetched dreams for many others.

Their smiles? Never failed to make my day!

”



The minute the orientation ended, I had made up my mind — yaha toh jana hi hai! And I have never regretted that decision. It's hard to believe that two years are already coming to an end. Every single moment has been magical and beautiful, beyond words.

The best feeling? When children come running and hug me tightly. When they share little moments of their lives. When they tell me that they enjoyed something that was organised for them. These children have taught me lessons that college never could. They have made me realise how much the little things matter. They have taught me that some things that come to some of us so easily, are far-fetched dreams for many others. Their smiles? Never failed to make my day!

Now, coming to my NSS family — the people who made me feel safe amidst the chaos, embraced my silly side, and stood by me through thick and thin. I am forever grateful for them. My co-head - definitely my forever go-to person! Those last-minute mess-ups, the unfiltered ranting and the 'always ready to help' josh among everyone- have become core memories for me.

NSS has been nothing short of a roller coaster ride — replete with fun, thrill, and the best of people! I am going to cherish every moment spent here. Wherever I go in life, NSS will always stay in my heart, no matter what.

KHUSHI SARAWGI

Head of Project Sanskar

“

Taking on the role of a cabinet member was a turning point, and becoming the Project Sanskar Head was truly something special. It's hard to describe the feeling of seeing those little faces light up with joy and knowing that, somehow, your actions brought that smile. It fills you with a kind of peace and purpose that's rare. That's when you realize—every late night, every ounce of effort, every moment of doubt—it was all worth it.

”



Being a part of NSS has been one of the most wholesome and heartfelt experiences of my life. When we call it a family, it's not just a phrase—it's a feeling lived and shared by every single member. I joined NSS out of a simple love for teaching and a heart that always wanted to serve. But looking back at the past two years, I see so much more than just lessons taught. I see laughter, challenges, growth, pure joy—and above all, the friendships and bonds that became my second family.

Taking on the role of a cabinet member was a turning point, and becoming the Project Sanskar Head was truly something special. It's hard to describe the feeling of seeing those little faces light up with joy and knowing that, somehow, your actions brought that smile. It fills you with a kind of peace and purpose that's rare. That's when you realize—every late night, every ounce of effort, every moment of doubt—it was all worth it.

Project Sanskar didn't just give me a platform to serve—it changed the way I see the world. It taught me to view life through the eyes of a child—innocent, hopeful, and full of wonder. And with every small initiative, I felt not just that I was giving something to them, but that they were giving something to me—a deeper understanding of what it means to truly care.

No matter where life takes me, the memories, the bonds, the purpose I found here will stay with me forever. Because once you're in NSS, a part of your heart always will be.

LAVANYA HARISHENAM

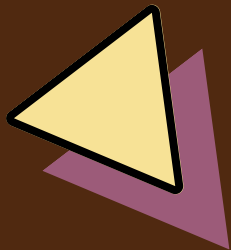
Head of
Project
Ankush

123



From distributing meals as a timid yet active volunteer to leading the very cause that tugged at my heartstrings; mitigating hunger needs—it's been a humbling journey. Even when challenges came, especially being a solo head, I never stood alone.

"No matter how life turns out naa romba happy dhaan cuz NSS fam hai mere saath. Nandri, Vanakkam"



As I pen this farewell, I'm flooded with memories that feel too precious to put into words. When I first stepped into NSS, I was just looking for a place to belong—and what I found was a family.

Being a South Indian, Hindi wasn't my strongest suit. But never once did I ever feel judged. Instead, I got adorable tuitions from my fam that often ended in laughter. Those moments will always stay close to my heart.

Our close-knit vibe was something rare—no rigid hierarchies, just open hearts. I found my fambruhs and friends here. From late evening staybacks to countless outings, we built lasting bonds of friendship & cherished camaraderie.

One of the most defining parts of this journey was Project Ankush. From distributing meals as a timid yet active volunteer to leading the very cause that tugged at my heartstrings; mitigating hunger needs—it's been a humbling journey. Even when challenges came, especially being a solo head, I never stood alone. My volunteers and NSS fam had my back in every step of the way.

Then came Samarpan—not just an annual fest, but an emotion. From chaotic date bookings to magical event day moments, it was a true rollercoaster. Despite the pressure, we poured our hearts into it. It became a milestone I proudly carry—proof that through trust, unity, and resilience, we rose above every challenge and created something truly unforgettable.

I walked into college joining only one society. But little did I know, it would become the best choice I made. I leave with a heart full of gratitude, memories, and a family for life.

“No matter how life turns out naa romba happy dhaan cuz NSS fam hai mere saath. Nandri, Vanakkam”

ARYAN NATH

Head of Project Vishwas

Talking about my journey in NSS, it all started with an interview, one that I still remember vividly. I can confidently say that who I am today is largely because of NSS. From starting off as a volunteer to eventually becoming a head, I've been fortunate to create impact and collect memories that I'll cherish forever. Serving as the Project Vishwas Head has been an incredible journey, and it's the people who made it so special.



Talking about my journey in NSS, it all started with an interview, one that I still remember vividly.

:) Honestly, at first, NSS was just another society I wanted to be a part of. But that interview changed everything. It reshaped how I saw SRCC, how I saw its people, and most importantly, how I saw NSS. I can confidently say that who I am today is largely because of NSS. From starting off as a volunteer to eventually becoming a head, I've been fortunate to create impact and collect memories that I'll cherish forever. It constantly pushed me out of my comfort zone and helped me grow into a better version of myself.

"Ye ek safe space hai", a line I heard many times during my volunteering days, but only truly understood it's true meaning during Samarpan. It was a complete roller coaster ride for me. Being able to interact with other people of NSS and working with them till night made every moment feel worth it.

In conclusion, serving as the Project Vishwas Head has been an incredible journey and It's the people who made it so special. I've met some of the best folks here and received so much love and respect, more than I could have ever imagined.

UNNATI FIRKE

Head of Project Kali

“

"Most of the people I know right now are either from NSS or the people I've met through NSS."

I did not realise the depth of this line until now. In the end, things that mattered weren't just the projects, but the relationships we built, the memories of the people we assisted, and our own personal development were what gave the experience its true value.

”



Ufff!! That was my reaction to write about my 2yrs' NSS Journey in just 1 page. My journey of NSS was nothing short of a wild adventure, from being a nervous interviewee to being a strict interviewer, from being an introverted person to a social butterfly. As a volunteer, I was too emotional that my tenure has to end. But god had other plans for me. Being chosen as the head of Project Kali was one of the best things that has ever happened to me. My journey as a cabinet member was a bittersweet one, it surprised me, scared the shit out of me, challenged me but gave me a lot of memories that I would cherish forever. I would always remember staying till 9pm in the college, everyday rant sessions and the unforgettable gossip spot. My senior once said a very beautiful line, "Most of the people I know right now are either from NSS or the people I've met through NSS." I did not realise the depth of this line until now. In the end, things that mattered weren't just the projects, but the relationships we built, the memories of the people we assisted, and our own personal development were what gave the experience its true value. I just want to thank SC and my fellow cabinet members for being there, the ones I run to every time there's a minor issue, the ones that have seen me cry and made me laugh. I don't know what life holds for me after NSS, but I sure that I am going to miss NSS wholeheartedly.

GUNJAN SAGAR

Head of Project Kali

“

I still remember the words I heard often as a child: **When we care about others' problems more than our own, we cleanse our minds of false ego and uproot sufferings.** As the Project Kali team we always tried our best to bring change into the lives we touched. Were we successful? Yes—and no. No, because we couldn't change everything or heal every wound. But a big yes, because someone smiled because of us. Someone dared to dream—because we existed.

”



My journey in NSS began in my first year of college, when everything felt surreal and, at the same time, intimidating. The fear of losing myself amidst the loud noise of this bustling city, filled my mind with a longing—a longing to find a place that resonated with me. Something beyond the mask. And that place was NSS.

Working in the first year was all about exploring the larger world that NSS belongs to. The real journey started in the second year after I became a JC heading Project Kali. I still remember the day I met my JC group for the first time—everyone was new, people I had never spoken to before. It felt like the start of a new storybook meant to be written by us. And guess what? We ended up creating one of the most beautiful stories ever told. From being strangers to being called an NSS family didn't happen overnight. It took days and months of being each other's biggest supporters—whether it was someone's birthday or an NSS camp, Samarpan events or Kali visits, everyone showed up for each other. And believe me, it never felt boring.

Was NSS just about friendship? No. It was about a zillion other things. But it was more about rediscovering ourselves. I still remember the words I heard often as a child: When we care about others' problems more than our own, we cleanse our minds of false ego and uproot sufferings. As the Project Kali team we always tried our best to bring change into the lives we touched. Were we successful? Yes—and no. No, because we couldn't change everything or heal every wound. But a big yes, because someone smiled because of us. Someone dared to dream—because we existed.

Looking back on my NSS journey, all I can say is—thank you. Thank you, NSS, for everything you gave me. The good times and the tough ones—they all helped me grow, not as a corporate machine, but as a human being—free to discover her own destiny someday. We've just got one life, give it to something worth remembering!



SNIGDHA JAIN

Head of Social Support Wing



“

Looking back at my journey, I truly couldn't have asked for a better way to spend the past two years. The opportunity to head the Social Support Wing taught me more than I ever imagined—whether it was organising events, navigating chaos, or learning the true meaning of teamwork and empathy. I can proudly say that as a part of NSS, I've done it all.

”



Dear NSS,

If someone had told me at the start of my first year that NSS would become such a huge part of my life, I probably would've laughed it off... but I couldn't have been more wrong.

Looking back at my journey, I truly couldn't have asked for a better way to spend the past two years. The opportunity to head the Social Support Wing taught me more than I ever imagined—whether it was organising events, navigating chaos, or learning the true meaning of teamwork and empathy. I can proudly say that as a part of NSS, I've done it all.

But what makes NSS truly special is its people. I've made some of the best friends I could've ever asked for. From bonding over late-night Google Meets to cheering each other on every step of the way—we laughed, we stumbled, we learned, and most importantly, we grew, together.

Thank you for making my second year one of the most meaningful, heartwarming chapters of my college life.

Because let's be honest: once you've danced in an NSS flashmob, chased permissions, or convinced ten people to sign up for a blood donation camp—you're never really out.



Once in NSS, always in NSS.





AMISHA TETE

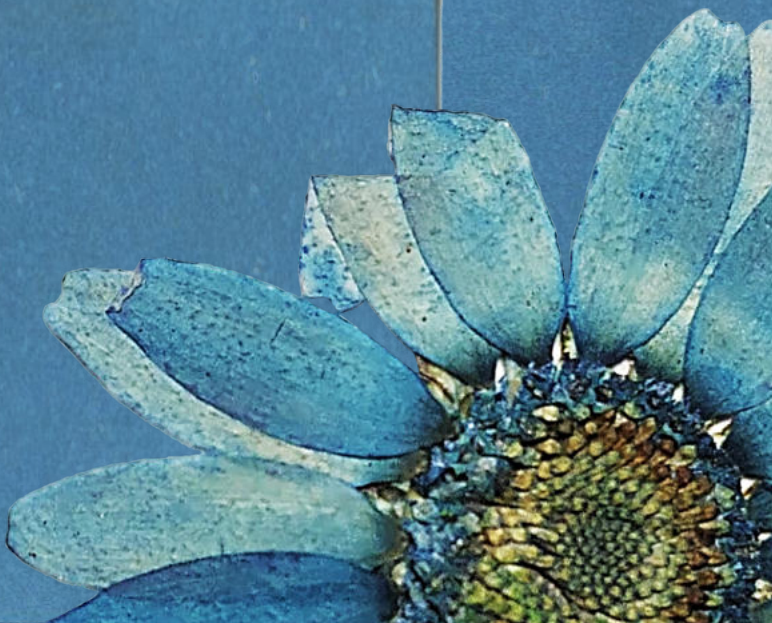


Head of Social Empowerment

“

But somewhere between the sleepless nights and the endless calls to volunteers, I kept returning to the girl who once sat for that first interview scared, soft-spoken, unsure. And I thought of the rain that day...

”



I still remember the first time I sat for the PI as a volunteer. Everything felt so new, so overwhelming... and I cried that day not because something bad happened, but because for the first time in a long time, I felt something shift in me. That PI changed everything. It made me realise that maybe just maybe not everything around me is toxic. That there are spaces where I can grow, be myself, and actually matter.

Back then, I was just someone looking to belong. And today after holding this post, after facing setbacks and showing up anyway I'm filled with pride and gratitude. Pride in how far I've come. And gratitude for every moment, every person, and every experience that shaped me here.

Being part of the Social Empowerment wing wasn't just a title it was a responsibility. A chance to turn compassion into action. And together, we did that again and again.

From our vibrant pre-Diwali celebration at Karuna Compassion, where women and children lit up the room with their laughter and colours, to our Self-Defense Workshop in collaboration with the Special Police Unit for students, we've focused not just on impact, but also on intent. We collaborated with NGOs to spread joy, and launched campaigns that aimed not just to inform, but to transform.

Our LOL Story campaign brought stories that made people think and feel. And while it may seem simple, it helped foster the kind of soft change we often overlook the kind that shifts perspectives.

Planning these events wasn't always easy. I made mistakes the Socio Bee hiccup being the biggest one. It broke me for a while, but it also rebuilt me with stronger nerves, better foresight, and way more empathy. I learnt how to handle pressure without losing kindness. How to lead from the front even when things got tough.

So yes I've grown. And I've grown with this wing. Every event, every meeting, every challenge it has taught me how to not just do the work, but be there for it. Fully. Authentically.

And now, I want to pass on what I felt in my very first PI that sense of belonging, that quiet courage, that hope to the next set of volunteers. I want them to feel what I did... not just once, but again and again.

No, I may not be the "best" in the conventional sense. But I am someone who's shown up. Who's grown from failures. Who's led with heart and handled the hard stuff with grace. And that, I believe, counts for something.

To everyone reading this whether you're stepping in as a new volunteer or simply flipping through these pages: thank you. For being part of this journey. For believing. And most importantly, for caring enough to make a difference.

This was never just about events. It was about people. It was about empowerment in the truest sense.

Here's to the wing that taught me how to lead. And to the people who made it all worth it.

THE RAIN THAT DAY

- Amisha Tete

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It was raining that day
not just outside,
but somewhere within me too.

A quiet storm,
gathered over months
of feeling out of place
in rooms too loud,
in crowds too cool,
in a city too fast for someone still learning
to breathe.

I sat across from two kind faces,
voices soft,
questions gentle.

And then
one question that pierced through the noise:
"Have you seen our social media page?"

I had.

And I remembered a reel
a fleeting line,
a lasting feeling:
"NSS is like a family a safe space."

And just like that,
something cracked open.

Not from sadness,
but from hope.

From the aching, almost childlike belief
that maybe, just maybe,
this was it
the place I'd been searching for.

I cried.

Not because I was weak,
but because, for once,

I felt seen.

Two years later,

I know I was right.

The rain that once mirrored my loneliness
now feels like a quiet blessing
as if the universe, in its own poetic way,
was washing away the doubt,
the fear,
the feeling of not belonging.

What bloomed in its place
was something softer,
something stronger

A home.

A family.

A version of me I had almost forgotten
could exist.

And every time it rains now,
I smile.

Because I remember
how it all began
with a question,
a reel,

and the quiet courage to believe
that I, too, belonged.

RIDHIMA BHARDWAJ

Head of Environement Wing

“

For someone who doesn't know, serving others isn't just work, it is a fun experience. The memories you create while teaching the kids or while cleaning the beautiful river-side of Yamuna, it's all worth it.

”



Dear Readers!!!

Welcome to this mini blog of mine in Prerna. I entered NSS as a volunteer because of my love for gardening, but little did I know it had the world saved up for me. It's needless to say the love I have or either of us have for NSS. But, I want to let all of you know the reason behind. Well, while satisfaction of helping or serving someone is one aspect of social service, but there is one other aspect too. The simple comfort of happiness around you after helping someone, the vibrance and positivity of the atmosphere I felt when the first time I went for a plantation drive. For someone who doesn't know, serving others isn't just work, it is a fun experience. The memories you create while teaching the kids or while cleaning the beautiful riverside of Yamuna are all worth it.

I must have been in my most right senses when I applied for the Junior Cabinet because I built a family here, or Familia as we call it. Bonding while the late evening stays in college turned into a daily ritual as each other's company gave us a safe and happy space. Be it any drive or last-minute duties as the Coordinator, with these people, I had it done every time. We couldn't even bother to think about how, from discussing initiatives for NSS, we went to discuss our life stories with each other. And the stories of Samarpan our once in a lifetime. From instructing the volunteers to sitting next to them with fun chit-chats, we evolved into a team that knew and supported each other no matter what.

From guiding us for NSS work to scolding us for our silly life decisions, the senior cabinet really came a long way to become our bhaiya and didi.

I still wonder how we worked out to make something this beautiful, without even thinking, but all I can call it is magic.

Entering into NSS, I did not have any expectations but while leaving NSS, it hurts physically as I carry a bundle of memories to cherish for a lifetime. As much as it hurts to leave but I'll always know I have a home away from home.

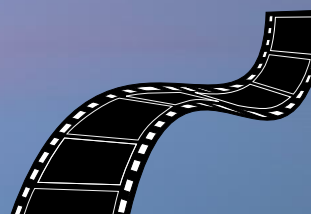
ARYAN MARSKOLE

Head of Technical & Marketing

NSS gave me people — and in them, I found myself. From quietly blending into the crowd... to becoming Aryan Bhaiya who laughs loudest, vibes hardest, and leads with heart — this journey was never about positions, it was about people.



Here, I learnt that the best source of happiness... is to make others happy. And that's how NSS didn't just change my story — it changed me.



From 'just Aryan' to 'Aryan Bhaiya' — A Journey I'll Never Forget

I still remember my first day in NSS. I was nervous, uncertain, and a little overwhelmed. I quietly told myself,

"Shayad ho jayega sub kuch manage..."

But deep down, I was scared. Scared of not fitting in. Scared of not being enough.

And then, slowly, magic started to happen.

I watched the very first reel I made play on the NSS page. I saw how something I created became a heartbeat in the digital identity of this beautiful family. And I realized — I'm not just growing skills here. I'm growing as a person.

From being someone who used to struggle to even start conversations...

to becoming the social bird of NSS who could **vibe with anyone**, who led an entire team of 50 beautiful people — I think... I made it.

But it wasn't just about the work. It was about the **people.**

I made memories that can't be stored in a gallery, but only in the heart.

Late-night shoots, chai breaks, jamming sessions, random dance-offs, gossip, laughter, and even the quiet breakdowns — every moment mattered. Every person mattered.

And to my beautiful cabinet family,

Thank you for always standing by me — whether it was dancing in corridors, making random reels, planning chaos, or calming me down before events. You never questioned my madness. You just joined in. I couldn't have asked for better partners in crime.

And to my volunteers, my loveliest people,

Thank you for loving me so much that it often left me wondering, "Why me?"

Why do I get such pure, unconditional love? But then again, maybe that's what NSS is — not just a society, but a family.

You guys made me feel seen, heard, and safe.

From sending me the sweetest messages, feeding me homemade food, and cheering me on at every step — you became my happy place.

Some people say boarding school days are the best. And trust me, I get it.

I did my schooling in a boarding school called Navodaya.

And for every Navodayan, those 7 years are the most cherished, irreplaceable years of life.

But this is hard to say — and even harder to believe —

Yet I say it with full pride: **My one year as the Technical & Marketing Head in NSS is more memorable than all those 7 years at Navodaya.**

This is what NSS is. This is what NSS gave me.

My dad once said:

"Beta, paisa kamaane mein woh khushi nahi hoti, jo log kamaane mein hoti hai."

And today, I get it. I didn't just earn work experience here — I earned people. Love. Memories.

And a version of myself that I never thought I'd reach.

From a confused, underconfident, and guarded Aryan...

to a grounded, grateful, and glowing Aryan Bhaiya —

this transformation is because of **NSS**.

NSS taught me that the best source of happiness... is to make others happy.

And above all, it taught me that the most precious thing in life... is people.

So yes, I might be leaving the post of Technical & Marketing Head...

but the truth is — NSS never leaves you.

Once in NSS, always in NSS.

Thank you for giving me more than I ever thought I deserved.

Forever grateful,
Aryan Marskole

(Joined as Tech & Marketing Head Aryan, leaving as your Aryan Bhaiya.) ❤️👥✨

NAINIKA

Head of Finance & Outreach

“

Over time, from a volunteer to the Finance and Outreach Head, There was a chance to be part of almost every wing and project— planning, outreach, fundraising, or just showing up when needed.

And as this chapter comes to an end, a part of me will always belong here...

—with this team,
with this journey,
with NSS.

”



If someone had told me two years ago that social service would become such a big part of who I am, I probably wouldn't have believed them. Back then, NSS was just another society to explore and something to add to the college experience. But today, looking back, it feels like one of the best decisions ever made.

It started off slow. The idea of service didn't immediately click. But then came those little moments—the smiles during various drives, the energy of the kids taught on campus, the unspoken thank yous that warmed the heart. That's when everything began to change. Social service wasn't just an activity anymore—it started to feel personal. Over time, from a volunteer to the Finance and Outreach Head, every step taught something new. There was a chance to be part of almost every wing and project—planning, outreach, fundraising, or just showing up when needed. Every small role made me feel more connected, more responsible, more involved.

What made this journey even more special were the people. From strangers to becoming a team that felt like home—this bond was unexpected, but so precious. Every event, every challenge, every late-night discussion turned into memories that now feel unforgettable. These two years flew by. And now, as this chapter slowly comes to an end, it honestly breaks my heart a little. The idea of stepping down, of not being in the thick of things anymore, feels surreal. But that's how life works, right? Chalti ka naam hai zindagi.

Still, there's this one thing we all hold on to—"Once in NSS, always in NSS." And that will always stay true. No matter where life goes next, a part of me will always belong here—with this team, with this journey, with NSS.

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Aditi Saini



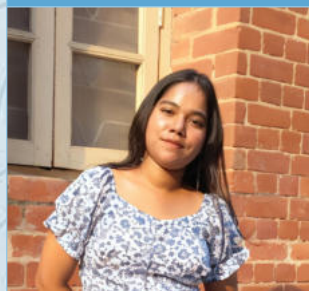
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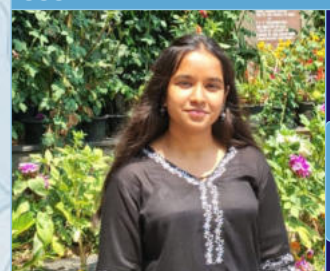
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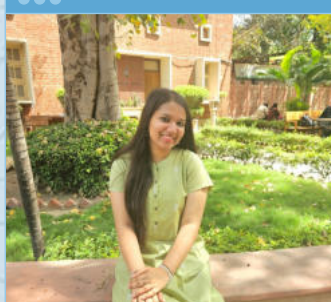
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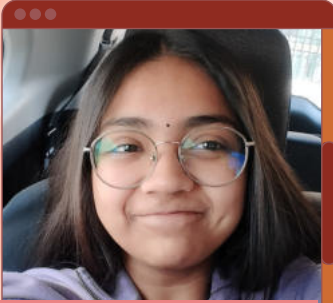


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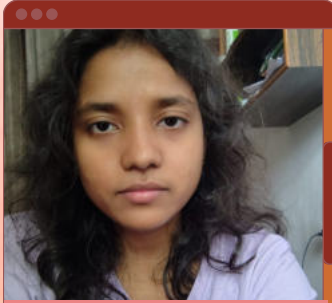


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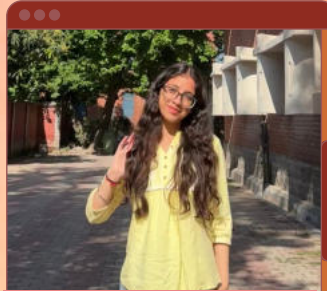
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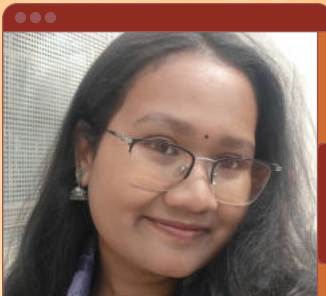
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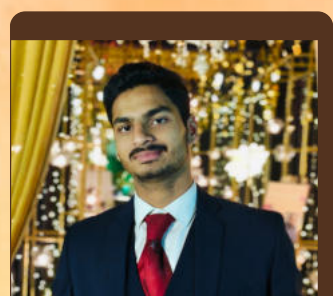
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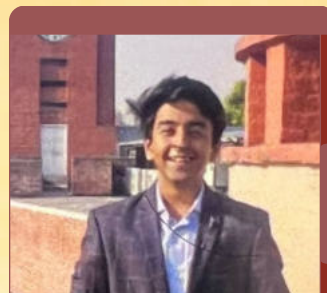
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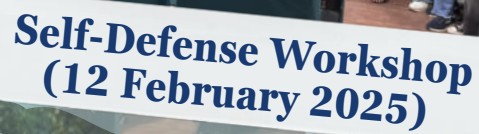
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Pranjal



Swejeet





**Inter NSS PPT Competition
(11 April, 2025)**



**Pre-Diwali Celebration at
Karuna Compassion NGO**



**Donation Drive
(25 November 2024)**



**Orators Conclave
(7 December 2024)**



**Collaboration with WICCI, DEAC
(9,16,30 November 2024)**



**Elimination of Violence
Against Women**



**Humanity Hour Podcast
(7 February 2025)**



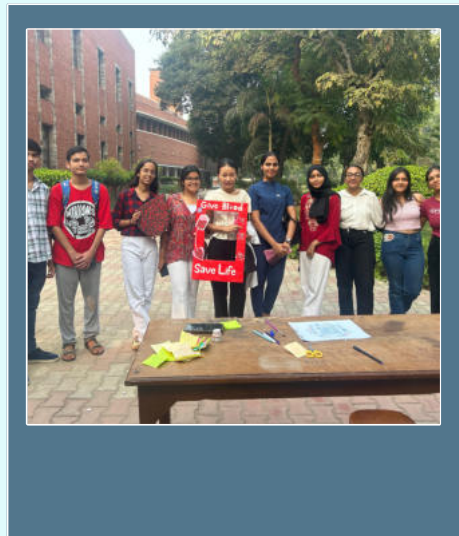
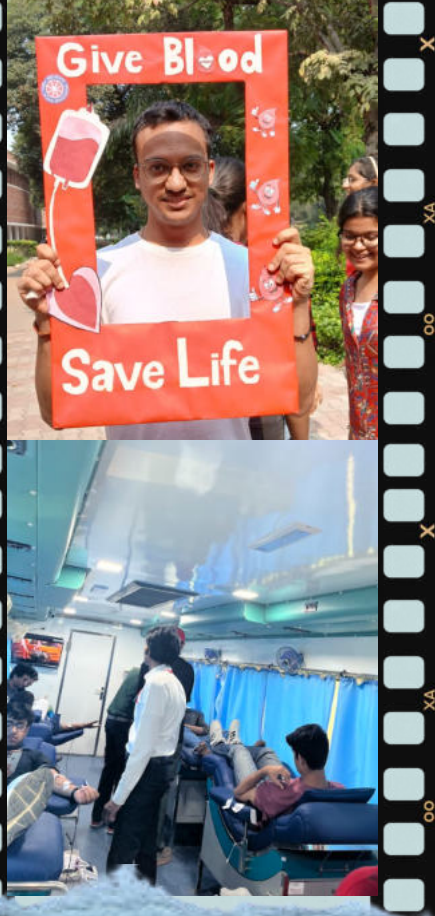
**Yamuna Cleanliness drive
(30 March 2025)**



**Plantation Drive at MCD
Primary School**



**Bottle and Container Collection Drive
(28 and 29 April 2025)**



BLOOD DONATION CAMPS

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NOT ME BUT YOU

FOOD DRIVE





NATIONAL SERVICE SCHEME

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