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## Digitisation of Higher Education and Global Gross Enrolment Ratio: The Present Scenario

**Bhuban C Mahapatra\***

*Bharat* is a developing country with the densest population compared to de developed countries in the globe as the United States of America (USA). The population and workforce of the country play a crucial role in its development. The economy of any country depends on its natural resources and its demand, how it has to be managed, utilised and fulfil the other countries' requirements. For its management, workforces are required in terms of the smart and hard work capacity of the countries. It is a global issue that the capitalist countries hire smart workers, whereas the hard workers are left behind in their countries without migration. The poorer workforces are within their territories/ countries, migrating for their survival. The disequilibrium of the economy democratically falls into the hands of poor to poorer people of the country.

If we want to see the developed countries like the USA, more than 6000 Universities are working and promoting global higher education. Whereas, as per UGC, 1215 Universities are working in *Bharat*, but *Bharat's* population is five times more than the USA population. With this respect, *Bharat* needs more than thirty thousand Universities/Higher Education Institutions to fulfil the social demand to a hundred present higher education. The longitudinal effect of sustainable development depends on all twenty areas by UNESCO integrated with the educational goals of any Nation. Education is the nuclear part of Global development, whereas quality education among the people focusing on it is interred and intra-competition among Countries without common interests of the people, the brotherhood of integration without discrimination is possible through education.

From the primitive age to the modern age, the flow of knowledge from individual to group is possible with the help of media and the medium. In the present digital age, information is knocking at your doorsteps through different means. Acquisition of knowledge, understanding, belief, etc., requires the experiences of the people, longitudinal effect and practices. The International Council for Educational Development not only focuses on increasing the increase of gross enrolment ratio of the country but also on how to spread it with quality education is the core area of their work. Digitisation of education with its effect as reach to the unreached without discrimination as a product of Open Distance Education (ODL) through Open Programming (OP). In our country, the Ministry of Education, through the ODL and OP programmes, wanted to provide quality higher education without barriers. Therefore, some selected Category Central Universities have got opportunity to provide and enrich the ODL programme.

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The Central University of Rajasthan, Category I by UGC and accredited by NAAC as A++ ranked Central University situated in Rajasthan. Recently, for the year 2024-25, the UGC has given permission to run the ODL and OP programme with six departments of the University. It is a privilege that the university has started seven programmes in association with six departments.

### **The Global Scenario of ODL**

The manifestation of ODL is cross-border education, sometimes also known as transnational education. UNESCO, in its Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education, states,

*“Cross-border higher education includes higher education that takes place when students follow a course or programme of study that has been produced, and is continuing to be maintained, in a country different from the one in which they are residing. Cross-border higher education may include higher education by private and/or for-profit providers.”*

UNESCO proposed an international agenda for development that stressed the core missions and values of higher education; notably, equitable access, the advancement of knowledge through research, and the need to better define long-term options for higher education in promoting relevance and quality. For the developing world, the challenge begins, as it usually does, with demography. Forecasts indicate a population of 7–8 billion people in the developing countries in 2025, more than half of them young people.

The field of ODL deals with the interaction of performance and design. Thus, the focus with Open and Distance Learning (ODL) environments is on how the design of ODL interfaces, environments, and technologies can be improved to benefit student learning and educational system performance. The advent of ODL communities; virtual or remote classrooms that support teaching at a distance with no direct contact between teacher and student has introduced a new domain of system and interface design features, problems, and issues whose influence on student learning and educational system performance is largely not understood from a practical perspective, and largely unexplored from a research perspective. There may be several different perspectives related to :

i. Characterisation of the field of educational ergonomics, concerned with how educational design influences learning performance;

ii. Application of educational ergonomic findings and principles for designing online and distance educational interfaces, environments, technologies, and systems; and

iii. The degree to which ODL systems may benefit educational performance, the learning process remains controversial and poorly defined.

In particular, the advent of distance learning communities has introduced a new domain of system and interface design features, problems and issues whose influence on student learning and educational system performance is largely not understood from a practical perspective, and largely unexplored from a research perspective. The pivotal question concerns the effectiveness of the remote classroom in supporting human learning, in which telecommunication and electronic media technology support teaching and learning at a distance without any direct contact between teacher and student. Supporters of ODL, based on a variety of empirical evidence, argue that the ODL approach can benefit learning and that investment in ODL technology is advisable if not essential for the future of education.

### **The Global Issues**

#### **Worldwide Issues in Education and the Learning Process**

The development of educational technology and the use of a wide range of media in Open and Distance Education (ODE) may add to the ‘complexity’ of becoming a distance learner. In the present generation of ODE, DLs are required to engage in ‘new’ ways of learning. In this information age, the storage and retrieval of information in a convenient manner have gained importance. Because of the near-universal adoption of the World Wide Web (*www*) as a repository of information for unconstrained and wide dissemination, information is now broadly available on the Internet and is accessible from remote sites. In the current Indian context, this restricts the usage to a minuscule fraction of the population, who are both computer-literate and conversant with written English. In order to enable a wider proportion of the population to benefit from Information technology, there is a dire need for an interface other than keyboard and screen interface that is widely in use at present. Speech, being a natural means of communication among human beings, can also provide a consummate platform for man-machine interaction. For cross-border provision to help the developing world, it needs a new approach that addresses the three ‘A’s’ of accessibility, affordability and availability.

### ***Accessibility***

Access to quality higher education continues to be a major challenge in the developing world. Decreasing public spending and increasing demand have set the stage for a diverse range of providers, including rogue providers. Countries like India, with large and well-developed distance education systems, will not provide easy and sustainable pickings for overseas providers. That is because access to higher education also requires access to the technology and allied infrastructure through which education is delivered.

The leading open universities in India working with open distance learning as the Central University, i.e. IGNOU, which has more than 25 lacs of students across the world and has become the largest open university in the world, and M.P. Bhoj Open University (MPBOU) has more than 6 lacs of students enrolled with it (2022) as a state open university. The trends show the importance of the ODL system in higher education. The gross enrolment global education system, irrespective of elementary to higher education, nowadays is based on education with Learning Technology (LT) and Instructional Technology (IT). The approaches towards learners are influenced by both the technological assimilation, i.e. LT & IT, but teachers nowadays, with the influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) based on Teaching Technology (TT) able to understand learners within their individual differences. Learning Environment is also created by the teachers with the interventions of TT, AI, LT and IT, etc. The technology can reshape our education system according to our needs. Technology from the *Gurukul* System of Education in India to the digitisation of education, with the concept of maximum learning output in the part of learners in this era possible through technology intervention.

### ***Affordability***

Costs are a major deterrent. It has been shown that conventional distance education is well developed in Asia and costs much less than traditional education. Foreign providers with higher costs cannot compete with local education provision. To succeed, ODL providers must devise a business model that can take them beyond the elite to reach out to the masses.

India has transformed higher education from an elite system to a mass system aimed at the needs of a vibrant democracy. Instead of bucking this trend,

overseas providers should follow the mainstream of national developments.

### ***Availability***

The subjects offered by ODL providers are limited and liberal. Education is often a casualty of the demand for more market-driven courses. Programmes are mostly in the areas of Business and Information Technology. Students from different cultures and linguistic backgrounds study the identical courses as in their country of origin, with no recognition of social, cultural and ethnic diversity. ODL education provision will become relevant only when it endeavours to respond to such country priorities.

### ***Change in Organisational Structure***

Higher education is entering a global economy with intense competition and commercialism (Bates, 1997 and Rumble, 2000). The power distribution of higher education will be realigned, with the individuals and organisations who are controlling higher education today not being the ones who will develop and control it in the future. It will depend more on partnerships and outside vendors. Since we are in the era of shifting our traditional educational system towards the ODL system (Sharma, 2006). However, we are not mentally preparing ourselves to adopt the system. From admissions to examinations, a clear-cut traditional face-to-face education system has been reflected. These may be of :

- Limitations of student enrolment in a centre,
- Limitation of instructional hours,
- Limited accessibility to Self-learning material,
- Limitations for completing the assignments as per the SIMs,
- Examination schedule as to the ease for the university,
- There is no weightage for the student's ease when deciding the examination schedule, and
- Evaluation is done by the evaluators with traditional education backgrounds, etc.

Curriculum and instruction face changes, as well and the role of the instructor will be unbundled in the online environment. Since the instructor will not be spending time writing lectures and creating course materials, more time will be spent interacting with online students to challenge them individually (Farrington and Yoshida, 2000).

In special education programmes, there are sufficient contact programmes with a minimum of 380 hours of teaching, i.e. counselling programme. It has 460 hrs. of practical transaction programme

to provide necessary input to the students when they contact the study centres.

## Conclusion

It is a great opportunity that the ODL system in the world venture captures more than twenty per cent of higher education learners, whereas only six per cent of universities are working to facilitate the system of learning. There is a need to re-engineer the system with Information Communication System (ICS) innovation interference requirement of the learners can be fulfilled (Sharma, 2006). Keeping to the Indian Higher Education System, the Distance Education Council (DEC), with the understanding between the UGC, AICTE, RCI, NCTE, NCERT and NIEPA, came to the platform for facilitating educational barriers at any cost for achieving the national goal. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and all other state Open Universities are leading the ODLs for promoting higher education. Keeping the requirement, challenges, and opportunities of the ODL system Government should think of promoting the ODL system more and more. The NEP-2020 vision with guidelines, Central University of Rajasthan (CURAJ) is on the way towards the fulfilment of Digitisation of Higher Education and Global Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) with The Present Scenario of Higher Education social demand. Digitisation of education will help quality education enrichment with transparent administration and low cost, and wide coverage globally.

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# Global Competencies: The Integrated Learning Model of the Dayalbagh Educational Institute

Rupali Satsangi\*, J K Verma\*\*, and Prem Kumar Kalra\*\*\*

Today's competitive world offers new opportunities every day, and a holistic education is the most effective way of preparing individuals to utilise the emerging opportunities. The Dayalbagh Educational Institute (Deemed-to-be University) has pioneered a holistic startup model for excellence, value-based education and skill development. The study examines Dayalbagh Educational Institute's (Deemed-to-be University) creative approach, its impact on student growth, and key programs that foster global competencies, enabling the development of socially conscious individuals who can address today's global issues inclusively and sustainably.

In today's world of globalisation and rapid technological advancements, the importance of holistic education is vital in developing global capabilities. Dayalbagh Educational Institute (Deemed-to-be University) has emerged as a leader in creating an integrated educational model that effectively combines academic rigor with value-based learning, skill development and active community participation. Ingrained in the principles of integral education, the DEI approach uses interdisciplinary methods, sustainability, and practical learning experiences to nurture socially responsible and globally aware individuals.

This educational framework emphasises ethical leadership, environmental consciousness, and collaborative problem-solving, aligning its goals with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By connecting theoretical knowledge with practical applications through vocational training, community service, and partnerships with industry, DEI prepares its students to address contemporary global challenges with insight, creativity, and a

commitment to inclusivity. This study discusses the overall educational framework of DEI, its impact on student development, and its importance in promoting a sustainable and equitable global future.

## Objectives of the Study

- To study the significance of global competencies of Dayalbagh Educational Institute at large.
- To identify the most important activity of Dayalbagh Educational Institute and natured attributes for each eleven global competencies.

## Global Competencies at DEI

In the contemporary start-up scenario of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, global scholarships are emerging as a component of the curriculum. These sciences include a range of professions that are linked solely by knowledge and skills, preparing learners for effective integration and assistance in both professional and personal instances. Various organisations and research institutions have outlined competencies that share important similarities, collectively known as global competencies.

The institute appointed Professor A. to adopt a comprehensive framework of 11 competencies proposed by P. Padhi (Member of the Executive Committee of NAAC 2019). This framework includes traditional skills such as time management and prioritisation, as well as socially relevant competencies that enable individuals to collaborate with diverse groups, foster and maintain networks, and mentor others, which will contribute to an inclusive educational and business environment. In response to the increasing prominence of big data, the ability to analyse such data has also been recognised as a critical global competency.

In addition, stackable and inclusive learning pathways focus on the learner's skill to adapt, create, and change as a person, which correlates with problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity – which are all important competencies. With the growth of new platforms came new competencies like using social media for business purposes, comprehending the impact of a business's operations in the digital space,

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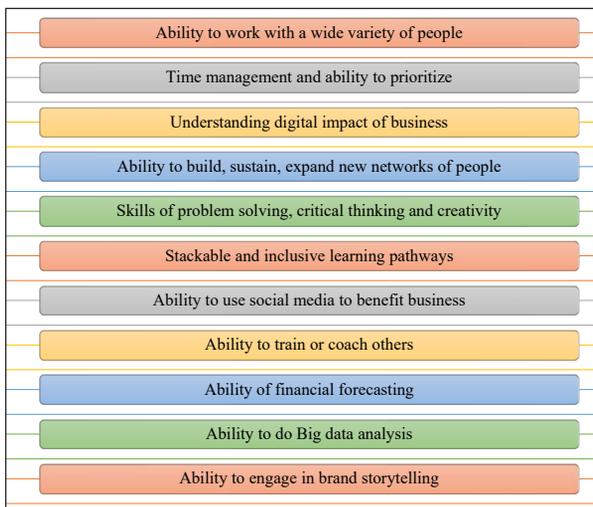
brand storytelling, and other economically relevant skills, such as predicting finances.

These modern global competencies are included in the comprehensive list. The activities designed at the institute, which are intricately woven into the curriculum, play a vital role in fostering these attributes among the students, which are essential for the cultivation of competencies. As a result, compiling a comprehensive list of activities and their associated characteristics in DEI across different competencies was a necessary step to begin studies on global competencies.

This paper employed a pilot survey methodology, which proved essential in pinpointing the key characteristics and competencies developed within the institution that have the potential to effect change on a global scale. The survey results indicated a significant consensus among various stakeholders regarding the impact of activities conducted in DEI.

A comprehensive framework consisting of 11 global competencies has been identified as essential for an educational system to develop, educate, equip, engage and motivate learners. As determined by a panel of experts, this framework was initially aligned with 200 activities in DEI. Subsequently, these activities were divided into a more focused set of 69, with each activity associated with three specific characteristics that corresponded to a particular competency. To gather insight on the effectiveness of these activities and features in promoting competency development, a survey was administered to students (Fig 1).

**Figure 1: 11 Global Competence Developed by DEI**



Source: Authors' Compilation

The study was based on primary data, and for this purpose, the identification of global competencies, activities, features, and related attributes was grouped and presented to students and alumni through an online survey on a five-point scale, allowing them to choose the most important activities, features, and attributes for each competency. The stakeholder was asked to rate the attribute on a point Likert scale for each activity of DEI to verify and identify attributes for each competency independently. A study with more than 4375 respondents was conducted.

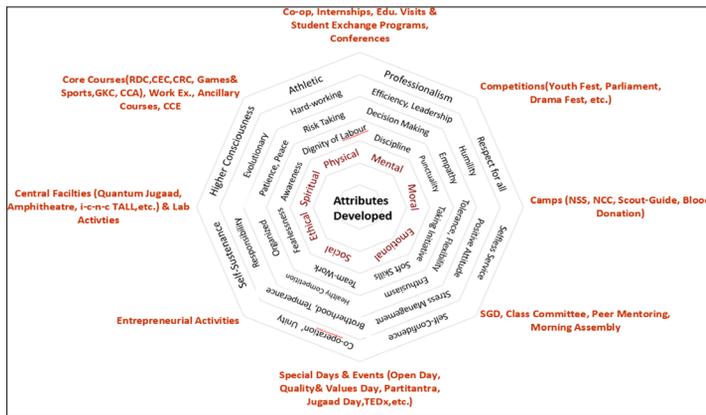
DEI promotes the core values of humanism, secularism, and democracy by exposing students to important global religions and their cultural contexts, thereby fostering individuals with a well-rounded character. In a time of rapid change, where educational frameworks require adaptation, the model of DEI remains exceptionally relevant. It successfully develops global competence – a blend of values, skills, and behaviors required for success in today's interconnected world.

***Ability to Work with a Wide Variety of People***

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives foster the enhancement of communication skills, empathy, collaboration, teamwork, and conflict management among students. These initiatives create numerous opportunities for students to engage with diverse individuals. Consequently, students are equipped to work effectively with people from various professional, cultural, geographical, national, linguistic, and age-related backgrounds. The cultivation of these competencies is achieved through thoughtfully integrated activities within the course framework.

DEI advocates for a Sigma Six Q-V philosophy aimed at fostering a sustainable community, focusing on six key quality parameters: air and water quality, education and healthcare, agriculture and dairy, women's empowerment, innovation, and values. These parameters are complemented by Smart Solutions, Mobility, and Resilience attributes. This philosophy is reflected in DEI's commitment to self-regulation and a proactive stance on sustainable living, which encourages students to become responsible community members. By adopting a community-based approach, students are empowered to collaborate effectively towards common objectives (Fig 2).

**Figure 2: Global Competence 1- Ability to Work with a Wide Variety of People**



Source: <https://www.dei.ac.in>

**Time Management and Ability to Prioritise**

The efficacy of DEI is rooted in its holistic approach to value-based education and its pioneering methodologies that foster a robust value system, resourcefulness, efficient use of time and resources, community engagement, strategic planning, adherence to schedules, and adaptability in scheduling. Achieving this necessitates a meticulously structured educational framework that incorporates a systematic approach to implementation. At DEI, students engage in a straightforward and disciplined way of life that encompasses several key elements. To maximise both time and financial resources, students receive training in prioritising activities and strictly following a thoughtfully organised Academic Calendar.

Within DEI, students engage in a large variety of scholastic and co-scholastic components and academic courses, Institutional Core Courses, Work-based Training, Departmental Core Courses and Non-faculty courses, Cultural Education, Scientific Methodology, General Knowledge and Current Affairs, Rural Development, Agricultural Operations, Social Service, Comparative Study of Religion, Co-curricular Activities that include Cultural, Literary, Games and Sports and Discipline, Environmental Studies and Disaster Management encourages and trains the students to enhance their life skills and knowledge of generic issues helping them in making better decisions (Fig 3).

**Understanding the Digital Impact of Business**

DEI implements a variety of initiatives

aimed at equipping students with the competencies necessary to connect, share, manage, and actively engage with knowledge and skills in the digital landscape (Fig. 4). This preparation enables students to synthesise knowledge, skills, technology, values, and quality, fostering a proactive approach to addressing the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The underlying philosophy of DEI emphasises the importance of in-house design, development, and maintenance, eschewing the practice of outsourcing turnkey projects to external vendors. Additionally, system integration projects are executed internally, which facilitates substantial student involvement in all facets of project development, thereby enhancing their comprehension of the digital impact.

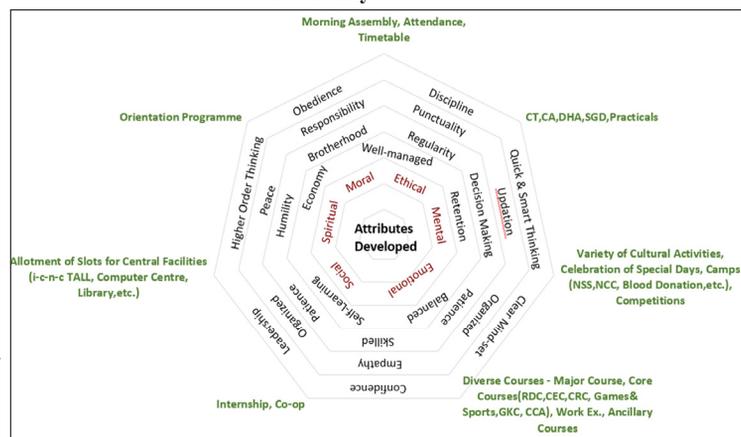
This requires, besides curriculum knowledge:

- Provisioning opportunities for students to actively participate in real-world projects that cover all aspects of applications of digital technologies
- Building the ability in students to deal with vast amounts of data to extract information, and develop knowledge in generating wisdom, i.e., dealing with big data.

**Ability to Build, Sustain, and Expand New Networks of People**

DEI prepares students to build, sustain, and expand new networks of people through a multi-dimensional approach (Fig 5). The benefits of international collaborations at DEI are not limited merely to university students on the main campus but also extend to school students in the DEI system

**Figure 3: Global Competence 2-Time Management and Ability to Prioritise**



Source: <https://www.dei.ac.in>



and creativity, which are vital for overcoming obstacles through innovative solutions (Fig 6). The foundation of all innovation in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) lies in the principle of achieving more with fewer resources for the greatest benefit to the largest number of people. Guided by this philosophy and the Shavian ethos of “Why not?”, students are encouraged to elevate their creativity and problem-solving abilities to new levels.

The basic mantra is ‘Excellence but not at the cost of relevance’ which ensures that students develop problem-solving skills and critical thinking to address real-world challenges. The institution fosters active learning beyond conventional lectures through seminars, group discussions, self-study, and hands-on projects. Its outcome-based education model emphasises higher-order thinking Skills (HOTS) assessment and promotes entrepreneurship as a core competency for innovation.

Additionally, ethical decision-making, social sensibilities, and mental wellness are integrated into academics to cultivate holistic development. Experiential learning is encouraged through Labs on Land projects, tinkering labs, and real-world assignments like solar power system maintenance, giving students firsthand exposure to practical applications.

To enhance creativity and leadership, students organise major events like the Open Day, gaining project management skills. DEI’s twenty-three B. Voc. programs are indifferent emphasis skill development with 60% practical training, supported by the Quantum Jugaad Centre for entrepreneurship incubation. Co-curricular activities, NSS volunteering, and rural

internships allow students to engage with societal issues and devise practical solutions.

The Centre for Knowledge Acquisition, Retention, and Transformation under the Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission for Teachers and Teaching employs innovative learning techniques like brain-based learning, meditation, and fine arts. Through these initiatives, DEI nurtures a culture of problem-solving, creativity, and real-world impact among students.

### Stackable and Inclusive Learning Pathways

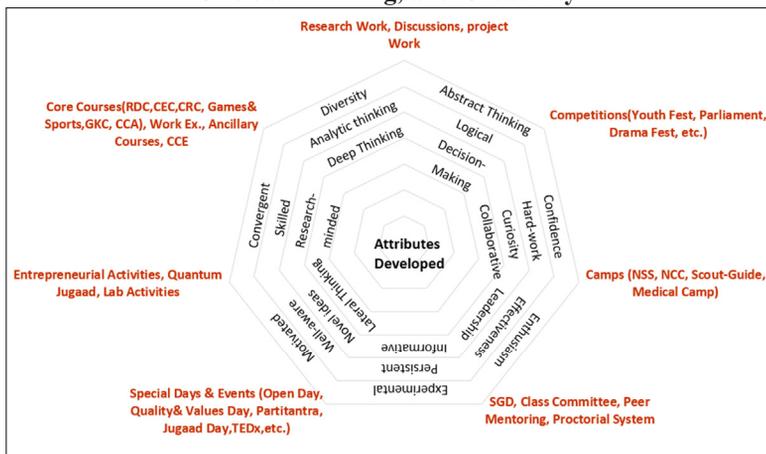
Education in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) promotes an integrated approach to learning that encompasses both vertical and horizontal pathways, beginning from the pre-nursery stage. Vertical learning allows students in the nursery to accumulate knowledge through measurable credentials and grades, thereby establishing a structured educational framework. In parallel, horizontal learning within DEI is characterised by its qualitative and varied nature, commencing as early as three weeks of age. During this formative period, children engage in observational learning within environments that closely resemble untouched nature, fostering teamwork, resource sharing, and a connection to the natural world.

As they progress to the nursery stage at three years old, students participate in activities at Children’s recreation centres, which are specifically designed to nurture creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and curiosity. By the age of five, learners are introduced to tailored activities across various domains, including drawing, drama, music, and

languages. These sequential horizontal learning experiences are illustrated in Figure 7a. The interplay of vertical and horizontal learning pathways serves as the foundational elements of a value-added inclusive educational framework.

The educational framework of DEI follows a bottom-up pyramid approach, where up to high school students are exposed to and trained on different skills and learning avenues and later converge to a few based on individual interests. This learning approach allows students to see and appreciate the underlying connection between different disciplines. This unique integrated systems approach

**Figure 6: Global Competence 5- Skills of Problem-Solving, Critical Thinking, and Creativity**



Source: <https://www.dei.ac.in>

to learning is summarised in Figures 7a & 7b.

### Ability to Use Social Media to Benefit Business

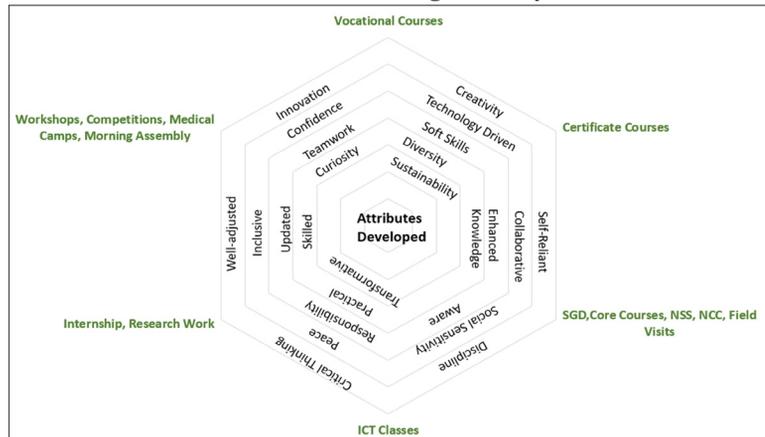
Social media has emerged as a pervasive element in contemporary communication, utilised by individuals across various contexts to establish networks. The Digital Equity Initiative (DEI) advocates for the inclusion of all types of media in the public sphere that facilitate social interaction, thereby fostering significant exchanges of thoughts, ideas, information, knowledge, and wisdom. Participants in the DEI program are equipped with a foundational level of digital literacy through courses focused on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and practical experience with computers and tablets. This initiative enhances each student's capacity to navigate diverse digital platforms, enabling them to comprehend, evaluate, and engage in communication effectively (Fig 8).

The Institute promotes and enables the use of social media through the following avenues:

#### Video Conferencing

The utilisation of video conferencing by students and faculty is prevalent for engaging with experts, conducting meetings, and facilitating discussions across various geographical locations. The technology employed ranges from sophisticated hardware-based systems such as Enterprise

Figure 7: Global Competence 6-Stackable and Inclusive Learning Pathways



Source: <https://www.dei.ac.in>

Polycom to widely accessible platforms like Google Meet.

#### YouTube & Online Learning

Platforms such as YouTube serve as valuable resources for lectures, events, and the dissemination of knowledge. DEI has independently organised a TED Talk and conducted sessions focused on Textiles and Printing. Motivated students have initiated their channels by addressing academic, cultural, and social topics.

#### Blogs for Knowledge Sharing

DEI encourages the practice of blogging to engage in discussions surrounding education policy, quality, and values. The blog titled Sigma Six Q-V Sustainability Model (<http://sigmasixq.blogspot.com/>) highlights DEI's commitment to sustainable practices. Students enhance their

Figure 7a: Vertical and Horizontal Stackable Learning Pathways

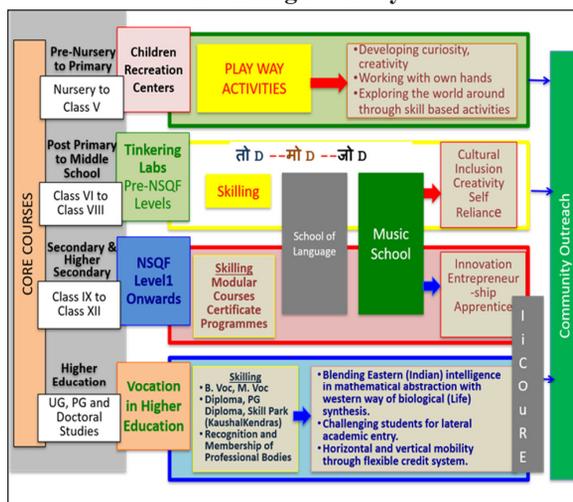
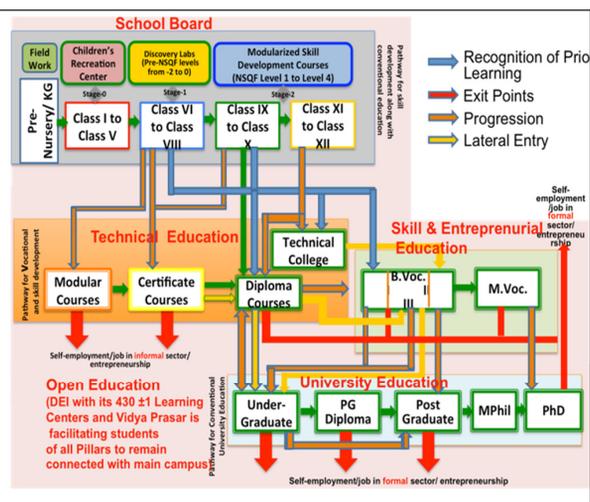


Figure 7b: 360 Degree Transition Pathways



writing abilities through participation in literary events and guidance from faculty.

### Digital Learning

Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Moodle and Sakai, in addition to DEI's proprietary platform (<http://vp.dei.ac.in/>), create a comprehensive digital learning environment. Features like instant messaging, video content, and discussion forums facilitate effective knowledge sharing. (<http://deilms.dei.ac.in/deilms/>).

### Collaborative Platforms

Microsoft Kaizala: DEI collaborates with Microsoft to implement Kaizala, enhancing the organisation of events and communication.

### Adobe Digital Disha

DEI partners with Adobe to provide educators with digital resources such as Adobe Spark, fostering innovative teaching methodologies.

### Ability to Train or Coach Others

Coaching and training individuals represent a significant strategy for reinforcing knowledge acquisition, skill enhancement, and the attainment of specific objectives. This practice is a fundamental leadership quality that DEI actively promotes among its students as part of their social responsibility. Through organised programs, students acquire practical teaching experience, mentorship roles, and exposure to a variety of educational settings. For example, students pursuing PG, Ph.D., and B.Ed. degrees function as Teaching Assistants, receiving stipends while aiding faculty in interdisciplinary courses. Moreover, more than 300 students each year participate in 16-week teaching internships at local institutions or through online platforms, where they instruct learners in remote regions, utilising tablets and DEI's Learning Management System. These experiences provide students with essential classroom teaching skills and proficiency in technology-enhanced education (Fig 9).

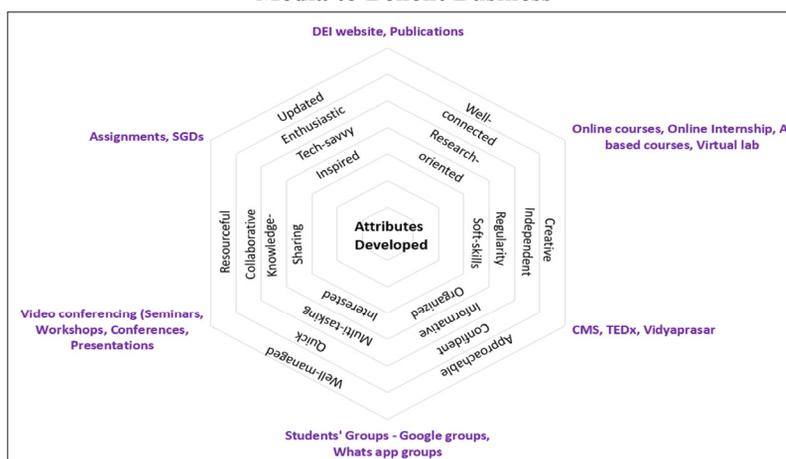
In addition to formal educational roles, DEI offers training opportunities across diverse social contexts. Students participate in rural and tribal internship programs,

providing instruction to underprivileged learners under the guidance of experienced mentors. The UGC Remedial Coaching Scheme further promotes peer coaching, enabling senior students to assist juniors in difficult subjects. Vocational training also plays a vital role, with students engaging in skill development workshops aimed at rural women and unemployed youth in areas such as soft toy and apparel production (ATMA), dairy and agricultural product processing (ADyNaM), and automobile repair (AAM). Furthermore, students contribute significantly to the upkeep of campus infrastructure, including solar energy systems and surveillance networks, while mentoring new recruits in these areas. Through these initiatives, DEI fosters a culture of peer mentoring and leadership, reinforcing the belief that teaching others is one of the most effective methods of learning.

### Ability for Financial Forecasting

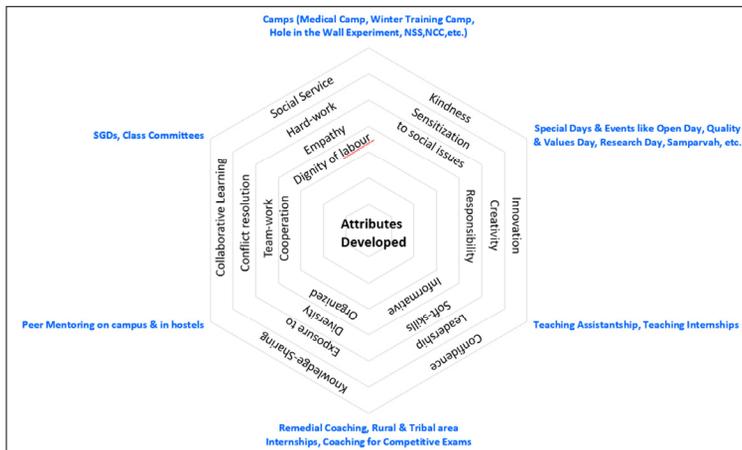
DEI underscores the importance of financial forecasting as an essential competency, promoting financial stability and resilience among its students (Fig 10). The institute exemplifies this commitment through its zero-inflation-based model and the incorporation of financial planning into a variety of programs. Students participate in the 'Earn While You Learn' (EWYL) initiative and receive subsidised meals and uniforms, which fosters the development of budgeting skills. Programs such as 'Wealth from Waste' encourage sustainability and financial autonomy by facilitating the sale of environmentally friendly products. Diploma and vocational students acquire practical experience in

**Figure 8: Global Competence 7-Ability to Use Social Media to Benefit Business**



Source: <https://www.dei.ac.in>

**Figure 9: Global Competence 8 -Ability to Train or Coach Others**



Source: <https://www.dei.ac.in>

budgeting, accounting, and cash flow management by supporting the administrative and accounting departments.

Entrepreneurial initiatives, including student-operated Micro and Nano Enterprises (ATMA & ADYNAM), provide insights into business management and financial planning. Engagement with industries such as dairy, textiles, and food processing enhances students' abilities in value addition and financial risk assessment. Hands-on training in costing, inventory management, and cooperative banking equips students to tackle real-world financial challenges. DEI's interdisciplinary curriculum integrates financial forecasting across various fields, enabling non-companied students to enroll in finance courses. Furthermore, the inclusion of behavioural finance principles aids students in managing uncertainties and applying their financial acumen to broader societal and economic contexts.

**Ability to do Big Data Analysis**

Big data analytics tries to examine large amounts of data to uncover hidden patterns and make informed decisions. All the real-world projects taken up by DEI generate a large amount of data. Like in the case of installing and monitoring projects done by students, here also Institute provides students with an experiential learning opportunity in data analysis (Fig 11).

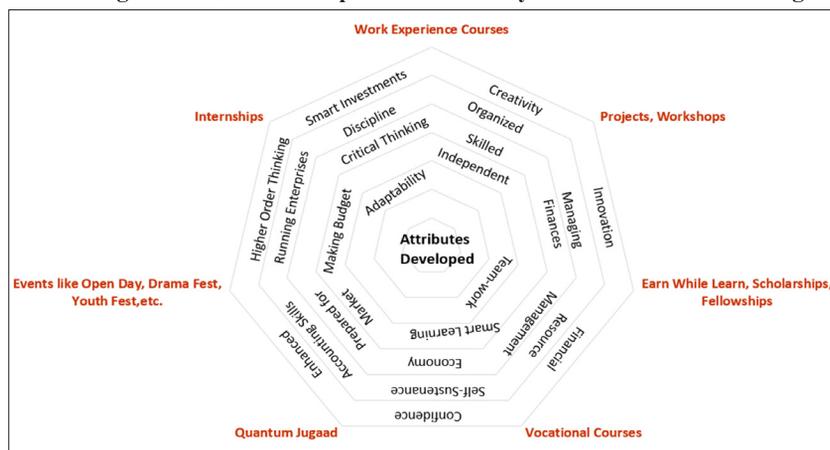
Each project has a set of students who are dedicated

to gathering, cleaning and extracting information from this data. As such, in most cases, since the amount of data generated is sizable, programs are developed for suitable analytics of this data.

Some of the aspects of analytics in projects with extensive data analytics are detailed below:

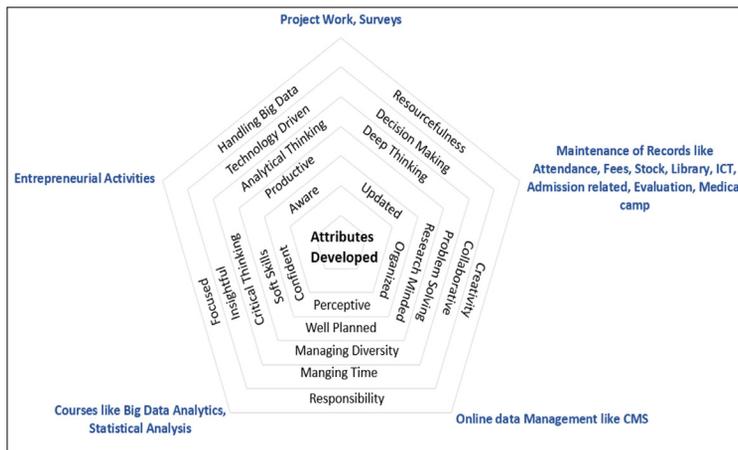
- Deployment, Operation and Maintenance of ICT Infrastructure. Maintenance data for tracking breakdown frequencies and reliability.
- E-Content Generation. Tracking of generation schedules, students, and performance.
- Virtual Laboratories. Tracking of students, their progress, and performance.
- DEI has established ICT Centers and information Centers & used different Modes of Content Delivery at almost 435 locations across the globe. Connection status, bandwidth monitoring, and student tracking.
- Connectivity to Remote Areas; Engaging ISPs. Utilization patterns.
- Dayalbagh School Education using ICT Interventions. Analytics through Learning Management Systems.
- Multimedia Laboratory. Analysis of success of deployments.
- MOOSKENE. Analytics through Learning Management Systems.
- Dayalbagh Educational Institute has established

**Figure 10: Global Competence 9 - Ability for Financial Forecasting**



Source: <https://www.dei.ac.in>

**Figure 11: Global Competence 10- Ability to do Big Data Analysis**



Source: <https://www.dei.ac.in>

iNFORMATION-cOMMUNICATION-nEURO-cOGNITIVE (i-c-n-c-) TALL. Student learning and performance profiles.

- 2G to 5G Technologies Laboratory. Technology tracking.
- DEI Surveillance System. Extensive analysis using video analytics, face recognition, and archiving strategies.
- Community projects such as RFIDs for tagging cows and buffalos, Pilgrim registration, and vehicle tracking. Tracking data analytics.
- Library Automation & e-journal Services. Usage patterns and student usage profiles.
- Smart Connected Vehicles. Navigation data for control and analytics.
- Smart Agriculture. Monitoring of the health of plants and soil with smart IOT devices.
- Smart Grid. Remote monitoring and control.
- Hole in the Wall Experiment. Learner and Learning tracking.
- Telemedicine. Maintaining and analysing case histories

**Ability to Engage in Brand Storytelling**

Narratives have the power to captivate individuals and resonate emotionally with audiences. The effectiveness of brand storytelling is rooted in the capacity to align concepts with values, to balance quantity with quality, and to link actions with significance (Fig 12). At DEI, the cultivation and implementation of brand storytelling commence with a profound

engagement of students, complemented by both in-situ and ex-situ experiences. This process ultimately fosters the emergence of brand ambassadors, which can be outlined as follows:

**Brand Familiarization**

From the beginning, students are immersed in DEI’s extensive heritage, core values, and guiding principles, which are woven into their academic pursuits, extracurricular activities, and entrepreneurial endeavours. This approach cultivates a profound sense of community and a dedication to socially impactful initiatives.

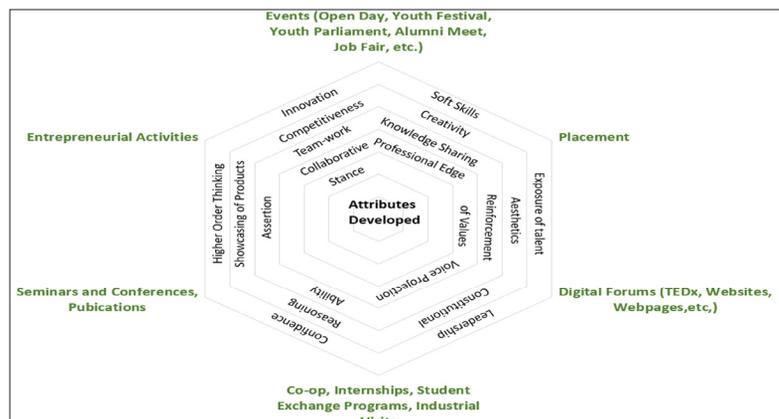
**Brand Incubation**

Through engagement in seminars, collaborative discussions, literary contests, and partnerships with industry, students enhance their communication and leadership capabilities. Participation in events such as Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, Swachh Pakhwada, National Integration Day, and international student exchange programs further equips them to embody and advocate for DEI’s values. Connections with alumni offer essential perspectives and career pathways.

**Brand Ambassadors**

Alumni serve as enduring advocates for DEI, championing its distinctive educational framework through networks, corporate interactions, and community projects. Their efforts play a crucial role in attracting prospective students, fostering industry collaborations, and amplifying DEI’s influence both nationally and internationally.

**Figure 12: Global Competence 11- Ability to Engage in Brand Storytelling**



Source: <https://www.dei.ac.in>

**Figure 13: Eleven Global Competencies- Related Activities of DEI and the Most Influencing Attributes Inculcated: A Compilation**



The capacity for ongoing brand storytelling is cultivated through an awareness of the brand, direct experiences with it, and participation in brand narratives during their academic journey, as well as through their subsequent status as alumni of DEI.

The results of this study are summarised in Figure 13. It can be seen that the most influential attributes nurtured by the top two preferred activities of Dayalbagh Educational Institute for all eleven global competencies, by using the descriptive statistics, only above 80% the highest-scoring two activities were selected and the three attributes of each activity with the highest mean value above 4.00.

The outcomes revealed that DEI successfully addresses the comprehensive physical, mental, and spiritual needs of its learners while also fostering the development of attributes and traits at a notably younger age than typically recognised. These

findings challenge and redefine the conventional need-intensity framework of Maslow’s hierarchy in the context of DEI’s educational model.

### Acknowledgement

We express our sincere gratitude to all the esteemed faculty members of Dayalbagh Educational Institute, Agra, Uttar Pradesh for their invaluable insights and scholarly contributions.

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# Shripad Krishna Belvalkar: An Outstanding Indologist of the Last Century— Part-I<sup>#</sup>

K Paddayya\*

*“Oh, No. I am not a lion in its den. I am only a busy soldier in the anthill!”*

(Altekar, 1957: xi)

It is in this humble and self-effacing way that Professor S. K. Belvalkar described himself and his scholarly work. By all standards, Belvalkar was one of the truly outstanding Indologists of the last century. His broad range of scholarship in Sanskrit and Indological studies and the critical approaches which he adopted in their pursuit won worldwide acclaim. No less remarkable are his leadership abilities in institution-making. Belvalkar played a key role in the establishment of the Pune-based Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in 1917 and the revival of the Deccan College as a Postgraduate and Research Institute in 1939. A.S. Altekar published an informative biographical account of him in 1957 (Altekar, 1957). Belvalkar passed away in 1967 at the ripe age of 87. On the occasion of his first death anniversary, V.M. Bedekar presented a detailed paper giving abstracts of most of Belvalkar’s publications, but intriguingly, this appeared in print 32 years later (Bedekar, 2000). It is rather surprising that no general estimate of his organisational abilities and invaluable contributions to our understanding of ancient India has appeared since then. The present essay is an attempt to capture his rich and inspiring legacy and fill up the gap.

Belvalkar belonged to the Karhada Brahmin lineage and was born at Narsobachi Wadi in Kolhapur district of Maharashtra on 12 December, 1880. Having lost his mother in infancy, he was brought up by his paternal aunt. He completed his matriculation from Rajaram School in Kolhapur in 1897 and passed the Intermediate examination from Rajaram College in 1900. He received merit scholarships at both middle and high school levels. At the age of 16, he was married to a seven-year-old girl.

<sup>#</sup>The Article is in two parts, the second part will be published in the next issue of *University News* 63(28) July 14-20, 2025

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With the support of a Dakshina Fellowship awarded by the government, Belvalkar soon joined the Deccan College in Pune for higher education and completed a B.A. degree in Sanskrit and English in 1902. His talents for language proficiency began to flourish, and he won the Homji Cursetjee Dady prize for his essay on a comparative study of the poetry of Wordsworth and Shelley. He completed a Master’s degree in Sanskrit and English in 1904 and obtained a second Master’s degree in History and Politics in 1905. Belvalkar then took a B. T. examination, which fetched him the job of a teacher in the Elphinstone High School in Bombay. After serving there for a year, he returned to Pune and joined the Deccan College in 1908 as the curator (assistant professor) of the manuscripts library. His four-year (1908 - 1912) curatorship of the manuscripts saw multiple developments in his career. He worked on a catalogue of about 600 manuscripts, which was published later (Belvalkar, 1916). The familiarity which he obtained with the Sanskrit grammar manuscripts in the collection encouraged him to prepare a comprehensive essay on this topic, which won him the Viswanath Narayan Mandlik Gold Medal of Bombay University for the year 1908. This essay was later published as a monograph (Belvalkar, 1915). Side by side, as encouraged by his teachers Selby and Bain, who had sensed and appreciated his interest in philosophy, Belvalkar took a third Master’s degree in Greek and European philosophy in 1910.

While serving at the Deccan College, Belvalkar helped Professor J. H. Woods of Harvard University, who was visiting Pune in connection with his research on the Yogasutras. Impressed by his diligence, Woods suggested that he could pursue his doctoral research at Harvard University. So, with generous financial support provided by the Ghorpade chief of Ichhalkaranji principality, Belvalkar left for Harvard in 1912 and, creditably, in a short span of two years completed an excellent thesis on the famous writer Bhavabhuti’s Sanskrit play Uttara-Rama-Charita under the guidance of Professor C. R. Lanman. Harvard University authorities were so pleased with the high quality of Belvalkar’s

work that his thesis was published as a monograph in the Harvard Oriental Series (Belvallkar 1914). Belvalkar returned to Pune in late 1914. One can measure or sense his dedication to studies from the fact that while sailing on the sea, he completed a Marathi translation of his thesis.

Providentially, immediately after his return, Belvalkar found employment at the Deccan College as a Professor of Sanskrit, a post which was occupied by Sir R. G. Bhandarkar in the nineteenth century. Belvalkar held it with distinction for 18 years (1915 - 1933). This was a truly creative period in his career. In addition to teaching various courses in the Sanskrit language, ancient Indian culture, religion and philosophy and providing research guidance to students, he religiously pursued his research and published his writings extensively in India and outside. These writings encompass many and different branches of Indological scholarship. Simultaneously, he was actively involved in organisational activities, more particularly the establishment of a research institution in the name of Sir Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar and formulation of its various academic activities and projects. Consequent upon the government's decision to close down the Deccan College in 1934, Belvalkar joined Banaras Hindu University in 1933 as Professor and Head of the Department of Sanskrit. Upon superannuation, he returned to Pune in 1940 and, from his bungalow Bilvakunja, continued his academic pursuits with unabated interest and enthusiasm till his death on 8 January 1967. We shall now highlight three or four major aspects of his work.

### **Adoption of Critical and Scientific Approaches**

While Belvalkar was traditionally introduced to Sanskrit at the Intermediate level by his teachers like V. G. Vijapurkar, his approach to this language changed drastically once he joined the Deccan College for his degree courses. One may recall here that in the middle of the nineteenth century, Martin Haug and other teachers employed in this college had already initiated methodological changes in Sanskrit teaching in tune with the changing educational needs of the Presidency. Bhandarkar published his *First Book of Sanskrit* and *Second Book of Sanskrit* in 1864 and 1868, respectively, and these soon became very popular in the Presidency. Further, during his tenure on the Deccan College faculty from 1882 to 1893 Bhandarkar elaborated

and extended the scope of these radical changes in teaching Sanskrit to the whole range of Indological scholarship. He formulated the famous critical, comparative and historical method in 1888, which is the first clear statement about research methodology in the history of higher education in India (Bhandarkar, 1933). Bhandarkar adopted this new methodology in his own writings about Deccan history and other topics.

As a regular student of the Deccan College for five years for his B.A. and M.A. courses, Belvalkar obviously experienced the impact of this critical scholarship in ancient India studies prevailing at this place. The two prestigious prizes of Bombay University, which he received during his studentship -- the Homji Cursetjee Dady prize for his essay on the poetry of Wordsworth and Shelley and the Sujan Gokulji Zala Vedanta prize for the essay on Sankaracharya's refutation of Samkhya philosophy-- already marked the new frame of Belvalkar's mind. Exposure to Western methods of research during doctoral research at Harvard University for two years under the supervision of Professor Lanman further strengthened his scientific bent of mind.

This scientific approach soon found expression in two publications dealing with ancient manuscripts, which Belvalkar prepared in his late twenties when he was the curator of the Manuscripts Library at the Deccan College. This is a huge collection of about 18,000 manuscripts collected by Kielhorn, Peterson and Bhandarkar from different places in the Presidency over a period of half a century. The government invested two lakh rupees in this project. Belvalkar was given the arduous task of organising the whole collection and preparing descriptive catalogues. From this work arose his two writings titled *An Account of the Different Existing Systems of Sanskrit Grammar* (Belvalkar, 1915) and *Descriptive Catalogue of the Government Collections of Manuscripts* (Belvalkar, 1916).

The *Descriptive Catalogue* was the first attempt made to put on record for public use a section of the Deccan College Manuscripts Library. It deals with a total of 566 manuscripts concerning Samhitas and Brahmanas. It was actually ready in 1907 and sent to the government for publication, but was kept in abeyance due to the scarcity of resources. Belvalkar pursued the matter after joining the faculty of the Deccan College in 1915, and the

publication appeared in the following year. It is the 30-page-long Foreword that Belvalkar wrote to the volume which is of real interest to us (Belvalkar, 1916: xi-xlii). It is a clear statement about the aims of the whole manuscripts project – their collection, preservation and study, and preparation of catalogues. In the initial pages, Belvalkar informs us how, already commencing from the last quarter of the 18th century, persons like Sir R. Chambers, Sir William Jones and Colonel Colin Mackenzie started making their personal collections, many of which were transferred to libraries in Germany and England. And it was only in 1868 that the colonial government, partly inspired by the merits of private collections and also to appease the anti-colonial feelings generated by the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, sanctioned a nationwide official scheme for the procurement of Sanskrit and other manuscripts and provided a sum of Rs. 24,000 for this purpose.

The Bombay Presidency was given a sum of Rs. 3200. Actually speaking, even before this allotment, with the financial support from the provincial government, Martin Haug of the Deccan College and Georg Bühler of the Elphinstone College had already made small collections of manuscripts. After providing this information, Belvalkar then gives a detailed account of the various collections made in the Presidency from 1868 to 1915. He divides the whole period into three phases: a) the first period up to 1881 with Bühler and Kielhorn as the key figures; b) from 1882 to 1895 with Bhandarkar and Peterson as the main collectors; c) the third period in which A. H. Kathvathe and others continued the collection work but in a very attenuated way. Belvalkar writes that the manuscripts acquisition work witnessed “all-sided growth under the guidance of Dr. Bhandarkar and Peterson” (1916: xxv). The government doubled its funding and the number of manuscripts acquired during this period rose from 4088 to 15,375. Also, the Deccan College was selected as the repository, and a proper Manuscripts Library was formed with a provision for loaning the manuscripts to reputed institutions in India and outside.

Belvalkar’s Foreword is a remarkable piece of writing from more than one point of view. First, this account bespeaks his deep sense of historiography and is an indispensable reading for all those interested in manuscriptology in the country. Secondly, he makes a practical organisational suggestion for commencing work on a huge assemblage of ancient

texts like the present one. Preparation of descriptive catalogues was the second in his list of priorities. He felt that this work should be preceded by the preparation of a handwritten card catalogue for each manuscript, which gives details about the title, subject and author, age, date and name of the collection to which it belongs. This card catalogue, Belvalkar felt, serves the double purpose of recording and registering the document and supplying basic information to interested workers. Belvalkar further mentioned that from this card index, two more could be prepared – one for the subjects and titles of manuscripts and the other for authors.

Thirdly, Belvalkar’s final interest was not in the manuscripts per se nor in their staggering number. He recognised in these texts a true treasure-house of ancient learning. He was justifiably proud that the Deccan College Manuscripts Library was “the largest of its kind in the world. There is hardly any branch of Sanskrit literature the component works of which are not to be found in our library...” (*Ibid.*: xxxviii). He further hoped that this collection would be a cynosure of Oriental learning in the world and “exert a healthy influence on the growth of *Indian scholarship guided by sound principles of modern criticism* (emphasis added)” (*Ibid.*: xxxix). The whole collection, shifted to the Bhandarkar Institute in 1917 as per a government order, was worked upon in detail and critically edited by P. K. Gode and other workers.

Belvalkar’s *Different Existing Systems of Sanskrit Grammar* is another historiographical writing which reveals his familiarity with critical and comparative approaches (Belvalkar, 1915). As he admits, this is not a treatise but only an essay (actually it is a small monograph) for which he was bestowed the Viswanath Narayan Mandlik Gold Medal of Bombay University for the year 1909. Both the Sanskrit language and its grammar have long and rich traditions. It is known that Sanskrit grammar has more than a dozen different schools, over 300 writers and a thousand manuals. Undeterred by this magnitude of writings, Belvalkar boldly takes up the task of tracing the development of grammatical traditions from the Vedic period right up to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

He identifies three broad stages in the development of these grammatical traditions and says that the Vedic passages (Samhitas and Brahmanas),

occupied as they were with hymns to invoke nature-deities, hardly gave scope for the growth of any regular grammatical traditions. Later, when the hymns took the form of family books, phonetic formulations arose to facilitate their oral transmission without any violations. It is these incipient rules which led to or culminated in *Yaska's* text, *Nirukta*. Here we see a fourfold classification of words and also the notion that every noun has a verbal root. *Yaska's* philological work forms a link between the Vedic speculations and Panini's systematic treatment (*Ibid.*: 6-7).

Belvalkar devotes the next 45 pages of his essay (*Ibid.*: 12-57) to a discussion of Panini's system of grammar and its elaboration by various writers. Panini's work comprises 4000 sutras, which are grouped under eight *adhyayas* (hence the name *Ashtadhyayi* given to his text). These sutras govern the formation of sentences, i.e. combination of verbs and substantives with or without case terminations. Panini also strove hard to bring brevity to his sutras. He is therefore called the first grammarian of the world and the father of modern linguistics. Belvalkar compliments Panini by stating that "he has succeeded remarkably well in welding the whole incongruous mass of grammatical matter into a regular and consistent whole" (*Ibid.*: 22).

He recognises three stages in the subsequent development of Paninian grammar. In the first stage, workers like Katyayana and Patanjali perfected their structure by adding some new rules or modifying some of the existing ones. The second stage extended till the end of the first millennium and saw the rise of many commentators such as Jitendrabuddhi and Bhattoji Dikshita. This stage witnessed critical elaboration of the Paninian superstructure – according to the rules, changing the wording of some of the rules for achieving brevity, sometimes adding to these a word or two left out by earlier workers, and so on. The second millennium witnessed deterioration in the study of grammar and saw the rise of many popular schools, as dictated by contemporary socio-political factors. The remaining 100 pages of Belvalkar's essay are devoted to the Chandra, Jainendra, Hemachandra and other non-Paninian schools which had already started coming up in the first millennium.

Belvalkar's preparation of this short monograph was, in a way, inspired and facilitated by his work of cataloguing a vast collection of Sanskrit manuscripts available at the Deccan College. But

what is amazing is the fact that he, just about to reach the age of thirty, voluntarily took up the challenging task of scanning the relevant grammar manuscripts and framing up the whole history of Sanskrit grammatical traditions with full success. It is not a storytelling narrative but a text guided by critical and scientific lines of investigation. So, it is no surprise that his essay received high praise from scholars far and wide and is still cited in Sanskrit studies.

*Rama's Later Story or Uttara-Rama-Charita*, arising from his doctoral thesis approved by Harvard University, is another remarkable work where Belvalkar's scientific approach to ancient texts finds best expression (Belvalkar, 1914). Acquainted as he was with this famous play of Bhavabhuti even before enrolling for the degree course in Sanskrit, fascinated by "the real genius of the author, his greatness as a dramatic poet", and, of course, also swayed by the consideration that the Ramayana, far from being "a dead mythology, is full of the noblest examples of virtue and truth; of devotion and self-sacrifice. Its characters have been for centuries, and still are, living forces moulding the actions and aspirations of the men and women of India" (*Ibid.*: lxiii), Belvalkar chose this play as the subject for his doctoral thesis. Combining his admiration for the play with "the Western methods of research" he was introduced to by his supervisor Professor Lanman, Belvalkar completed his thesis in two years.

Belvalkar's work basically consists of an English translation of the play undertaken in order to bring it to the notice of people beyond "the little band of zealous Indianists in Europe and America" (*Ibid.*: xxix). The translation runs to 100 pages and is preceded by a 54-page Introduction, which is a masterly and critical assessment of Bhavabhuti's works with particular reference *Uttara-Rama-Charita*. In the Preface, Belvalkar tells us about the guidelines he adopted for translation. It is all in prose, although the Sanskrit original was a mixture of verse and prose. Secondly, in respect of word order, he has sometimes deviated from the original in the interests of intelligibility. Thirdly, with a view to carrying forward the moods and feelings of the ancient writer, literalness is avoided in the translation of words. Fourthly, he has sometimes introduced Indianisms in the translations, e.g. Ayushman rendered by "long-lived one", phrases like 'lotus feet', 'my father's feet', etc.

In the first part of the Introduction, Belvalkar gives some personal details about Bhavabhuti (he was born in the Berar region of present-day Maharashtra in the 7<sup>th</sup> century) and also refers to his other literary works (Mahavira-charita and Malati-Madhava). He then provides a summary of Valmiki Ramayana and its later versions in Jain, Buddhist and Hindu sources. (Readers will recall that half a century later, the Oriental Institute in Baroda took up the work of preparing a critical edition of *Ramayana*.) Bhavabhuti's own play is adapted from the Padma Purana version of Rama's story. Instead of the oft-depicted tragic end of all characters in the Valmiki Ramayana, Bhavabhuti's play provides for their happy reunion at the end. Belvalkar praises Bhavabhuti for giving us in *Uttara-Rama-Charita* a masterpiece in human psychology (*Ibid.*: lxxx-lxxxii). Bhavabhuti did not want the reunion to be a mere physical gathering of people. Rather, through the various dialogues in the Acts, he desired the reunion to be one of hearts. *Sita*, estranged and enraged though she was initially by the "dart of disgrace of abandonment" by *Rama*, finally rescinds and accepts the flow of happenings in which *Rama* was a helpless actor. Complimenting Bhavabhuti for his scheme of dialogues, Belvalkar writes: "It is also creditable to the poet that all through this mental evolution *Sita* does not appear as the stern jurist who refuses to be convinced until the last shred of evidence is in, but always as the true woman and loving wife that she had never ceased to be" (*Ibid.*: lxxx).

Belvalkar does notice some shortcomings in Bhavabhuti's plays, like long descriptions and contrived passages. But these do not deter him from placing Bhavabhuti alongside Kalidasa and saying that "...instead of seeking for artistic similies and figures of speech, which were Kalidasa's forte, Bhavabhuti likes to select a few typical aspects of a situation or an emotion and state them barely in succession..." (*Ibid.*: lxxxvii). In short, Belvalkar was eminently successful both in highlighting the place of Bhavabhuti among the classical writers of Sanskrit and in his own application of analytical skills in the assessment of ancient Indian texts.

What about the historical content of Rama's story? Belvalkar takes it to be a mixture of history and nature-allegory (*Ibid.*: lix). *Rama's* birth as the son of a regional chief of the *Ganga* valley, palace-intrigues and his exile, and long

sojourn to the southern tracts have strands of historical credibility. The considerations that the name '*sita*' means furrow in a farmland and she was found in a furrow, '*kusa*' is a kind of grass, '*lava*' means reaping, and *Sita's* final absorption into the earth all lead Belvalkar to treat *Sita* and her sons as part of mythology of an agricultural deity. In one of my papers, I offered a practical or archaeological explanation that *Sita*, found as she was in an agricultural furrow, probably as an abandoned baby, represented the rural component while *Rama* stood for the urban way of life (Paddayya, 2017:147). India of the first millennium B.C. witnessed the rise of numerous flourishing agropastoral communities with some chiefdoms propping up here and there. Dasaratha, *Rama's* father, held one such chiefdom.

Far from resting with these three works, Belvalkar extended these critical and scientific approaches to his other writings and teaching courses. Noteworthy among the former are his critical editions of Dandi's *Kavyadarsa*, Jaimini's *Sariraka Bhasya*, Kalidasa's *Sakuntala*, and *Bhagavadgita*. As early as 1925, he published a 25-page essay in which he listed his 'detached observations' about the discrepancies that exist between the various versions of *Sakuntala* (Belvalkar, 1925a). He proposes that by applying canons of higher and lower criticism one could construct a text of general acceptability. With this end in view, Belvalkar identifies many passages containing improper use of metres, grammatical improprieties and mistreatment of human feelings and emotions as well as nature. He, therefore concludes with the caution that "... while entertaining a pardonable pride for possessing a work like *Abhijnanasakuntala* among our national literary heritage, we should not, like some poor hirelings at the theatre, kick up a deafening applause without adequately understanding just what is that we do admire in the play and that deserves to be admired in it." (Belvalkar, 1925: 104).

Belvalkar's views about the various versions of *Bhagavatgita* are equally stringent; he has published half a dozen writings on this topic. In one of the papers, he does a careful sifting of 60 manuscripts and deposes the arguments of some German scholars authenticating the Kashmiri version and its priority over the commentary of Sankaracharya (Belvalkar, 1939). In another paper, he disputes the interpretation of some

German scholars that the *Bhagavatgita* was a Vedantic version woven around a Bhakti poem under the influence of Samkhya philosophy. While accepting that the text is not a unitary poem, he emphasises that it stood for a philosophical synthesis (Belvalkar, 1937: 64, 66).

Belvalkar made some important contributions to Sanskrit literary studies, too. He has writings on the literary strata in the Rigveda, authorship of Matharavritti, comparison of Sakuntala and heroines of Shakespeare, and other topics. He also saw in the ancient texts an important source for reconstructing India's culture and religion. Some of his other writings deal with topics like depiction of the elephant in ancient literature, condition of Jainism and Buddhism, the origins of the theatre, etc. (for details about Belvalkar's works, see Altekar 1957: xxv-xxx). As the editor of Shantiparvan of Mahabharata, Belvalkar was fully aware of the precepts of *Rajadharma* expounded by Bhishma in the epic and, as a student of political science, he was also aware of the history of European political thought. So, he was enticed to strike a comparison (Belvalkar, 1966:

clxxxvii-clxxxiii) and confidently assert that the principles of the origins and functions of the State enshrined in the great epic "easily bear comparison with those of Greek, French and English political thinkers like Aristotle and Plato, Rousseau, Locke, Hobbes, Burke, and Spencer" (*Ibid.*: cc). In fact, Belvalkar published a separate essay on this very topic in which he is "able to declare with confidence that what old Bhishma has to propound on the subject of the origins of the State, crude though it looks, and mythologizing in the outward garb, is more logical and realistic than what the above-mentioned (European) writers have to offer" (Belvalkar, 1949: 296). (Bhisma states that the history of human polity began with a kingless State, divinely created and controlled, in which the individuals are granted full freedom of action but with some internal and external checks.) So, it is no surprise that Belvalkar chose to write directly to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru Ji and secured a special grant from the central government for the publication of this particular Parvan of the epic.

(To be contd. in the next issue.....)

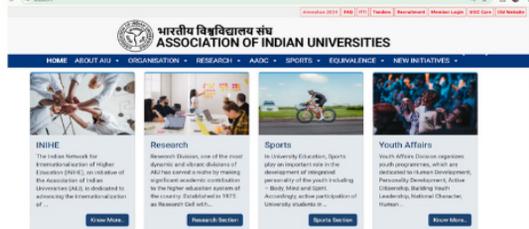




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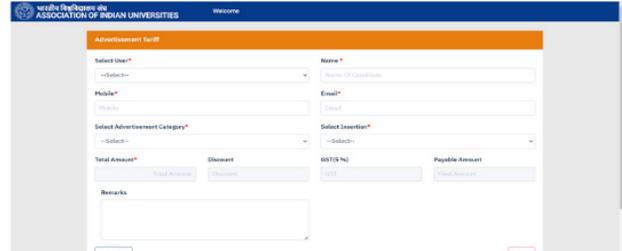
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# The Rise of the Gig Economy: Unlocking Opportunities for Graduates

M S Kurhade\*

The world of work is undergoing a radical transformation, and at the heart of this change is the gig economy, a dynamic and rapidly growing sector that is redefining employment models across the globe. A gig economy, also known as the sharing economy or access economy, relies heavily on temporary and part-time positions filled by independent contractors and freelancers rather than full-time permanent employees. Characterised by short-term contracts, freelance projects and platform-based employment, the gig economy is not just a passing trend; it is a powerful force shaping the future of work.

Gig workers have flexibility and independence but little or no job security. In gig economy, employers save money when they do not have to provide benefits such as health coverage and paid vacation time. Gig workers do not earn paid holiday or sick leave and experience fluctuating wages. A gig economy is based on flexible, temporary, or freelance jobs. The gig economy can benefit workers, businesses and consumers through a flexible model.

A wide variety of positions fall into the category of a gig. The work can range from managing short-term rentals, tutoring, writing code, driving for ride-share services, delivering food, or authoring freelance articles. Colleges and universities cut costs and match professors to their academic needs by hiring more adjunct and part-time professors.

The gig economy is a labour market characterised by temporary, contract, and freelance jobs rather than permanent positions. People earn money from providing on-demand work, services, or goods. The term 'gig economy' is derived from the music world, where performers book gigs, or single or short-term engagements at various venues. The gig economy benefits the employees by providing greater flexibility for individuals to set their schedules. It also offers various side-hustle opportunities to those who work regular full-time jobs. Also, remote positions allow gig workers to live anywhere that has an internet connection.

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The gig economy is more than just a new way of working –it is a redefinition of work itself. In traditional employment structures, individuals are bound by fixed roles, office hours, and hierarchical protocols. In contrast, the gig economy empowers individuals to take control of how, when and where they work. It places the individual at the centre, not as an employee, but as an independent service provider, an entrepreneur and a decision-maker.

Two pillars that form the core of the gig economy are flexibility and autonomy. For graduates, these are not merely job features—they are catalysts for career development, self-discovery and meaningful engagement with the business world. Digital platforms like apps and websites connect workers with consumers.

The graduates stepping into the job market, the gig economy presents an exciting array of opportunities that are flexible, diverse, and aligned with the evolving business landscape. This indicates exploring the global rise of the gig economy, its impact in India, particularly in metropolitan cities, and how graduates can leverage this trend to carve out a successful career. Gig workers operate outside traditional organisational structures, often working independently or through digital platforms that connect them with clients and customers. IBM, Oracle, Apple, Microsoft, Alphabet. Amazon, Meta, Berkshire Hathaway, etc., made applications/platforms for professional gig workers, such as consultants, freelancers and specialised service providers, to leverage their expertise to secure higher-paying assignments and prioritise quality to maintain their competitive edge. Of course, SAP, Web 2.0, Payment Gateways and Core Banking Systems are available for the smooth functioning of the work.

The phrase, i.e. gig economy, initially introduced by Tina Brow in 2009, referring to aspects of work that are shared through digital channels, with each task resembling a separate 'gig' –aimed at evoking associations with professional life. It means, 'On-demand Economy' and 'Platform Economy' are 'Gig Economy'. Indeed, the gig economy is not just about freelancing; it's about freedom. It allows individuals

to craft a portfolio of passions, blending professional skills with personal values. It enables graduates to engage with finance, business, or marketing in ways that are entrepreneurial, ethical, and independent.

The major opportunities lie in the form of employment opportunities. India is a country about to reap the demographic dividend. However, it depends on a number of skill sets in Indian youth. However, it is a fact that a large number of Indian youth lack scientific and technical skills. Against this backdrop, the gig economy encompasses a broader array of job facilities supported by digital platforms. Some of the examples are travel aggregators like Ola and Uber, food aggregators like Zomato and Swiggy and e-commerce giants like Amazon, Flipkart, and delivery etc. Currently, approximately 8 million people are engaged in the gig economy, which is likely to touch 24 million by 2029-30.

Another important aspect is that such digital platforms have democratic access to jobs with low or no entry barriers, flexible work hours, and a wider consumer base. With essential skills and training programs, this can really be a great employment opportunity for India.

### Examples of Gig Economy Work

- Ridesharing: Driving for a company like Uber or Lyft.
- Food delivery: working for a company like Door Dash.
- Freelance writing: writing for businesses and individuals.
- Graphic design: Creating visual concepts for clients.
- Online tutoring-Teaching students through e-learning platforms.
- Renting out your home: Letting people borrow your home when you're not using it. The gig economy has been growing, and it's expected to continue to grow in the future.

### Flexibility: Designing Your Own Work-Life Blueprint

Flexibility in the gig economy is not just about choosing work hours. It is about having the freedom to design a life that accommodates professional ambitions, personal goals and evolving interests. This is particularly appealing to today's graduates

who prioritise work-life balance, mental well-being, and continuous learning.

### Here's How Flexibility Manifests in the Gig Economy

- **Time Management on your Terms:** whether it's taking client calls in the morning and attending lectures in the afternoon, or working on financial models late at night, gig workers can align their schedules with their personal energy peaks and lifestyle choices.
- **Multiple Income Streams:** A graduate can freelance as a GST consultant during tax seasons, teach finance basics online in the evenings, and assist startups with market research, all in the same month.
- **Geographic Independence:** With remote work becoming the norm, freelancers can work from anywhere be it a library, a co-working cafe, or even while travelling. This opens up a world of global clients without the need to relocate.
- **Freedom to Explore:** graduates can experiment with different roles, taxation, auditing, social media budgeting, crypt advisory to discover their true calling without being tied to a single job title or department.

This kind of flexibility help graduates remain agile in a volatile job market, building resilience and the ability to pivot across roles and industries. The gig economy is not just about freelancing its about freedom. It allows individuals to craft a portfolio of passions, blending professional skills with personal values. It enables graduates to engage with finance, business, or marketing in ways that are entrepreneurial, ethical and independent. In today's digital world, work is becoming a form of self-expression.

While flexibility deals with how and when you work, autonomy addresses the why, what and for whom. In the gig economy, autonomy means that individuals are not passive recipients of job roles but active creators of their own professional journeys.

### Here's What Autonomy Offers

- **Client and Project Choice:** Unlike traditional jobs where work is assigned, freelancers can accept or reject projects based on interest, ethics, alignment with career goals or financial value.

- **Control Over Pricing:** Gig workers set their own rates. Graduates can build tiered service offerings (e.g. basic accounting vs full financial planning), giving them financial control and business strategy experience.
- **Creative Freedom and Ownership:** A freelance marketing analyst is free to propose bold ideas. A part-time finance tutor can design their own teaching modules. This fosters innovation, pride in work, and self-expression.
- **Faster Skill Development:** Independent work requires individuals to solve problems, communicate with clients, manage time and finances and learn new software often without formal training. This accelerates both technical and soft skill growth. Autonomy teaches the most valuable professional lesson: you are your own CEO.

As the gig economy reshapes traditional employment models, graduates must take a proactive approach to equip themselves for this evolving landscape. Success in the gig world hinges not only on technical expertise but also on self-presentation, adaptability, and legal awareness. One of the most crucial steps is to build a strong personal brand. This involves creating a professional online presence through platforms like LinkedIn, where graduates can highlight their skills, share achievements, and connect with industry professionals. Equally important is maintaining a well-organised online portfolio that showcases previous work, client testimonials, and certifications. Such portfolios serve as dynamic resumes that demonstrate credibility and attract potential clients or collaborators.

Continuous learning is another pillar of gig success. Graduates should seek certifications in digital marketing, accounting software such as Tally or QuickBooks, GST compliance, and financial analysis tools. These not only enhance employability but also allow gig workers to offer value-added services. Participation in webinars, workshops, online forums and business meetups helps in staying updated with market trends while also providing valuable networking opportunities. Moreover, an understanding of freelance legalities, such as drafting contracts, managing invoices, paying taxes, and protecting intellectual property, is essential to operate professionally and avoid common pitfalls in independent work.

India, recognising the immense potential of the gig economy, is taking deliberate steps to create a supportive environment for gig workers. Policy think tanks like NITI Aayog have released detailed reports outlining the need for social security frameworks, health benefits and skill development programs tailored for gig and platform workers. The government is also integrating gig workers into platforms like e-Shram, a national database aimed at ensuring formal recognition and access to welfare schemes. Additionally, startup incubators, digital literacy missions and state-sponsored skill enhancement programs are equipping youth across cities and towns with the tools to participate in the digital workforce. These initiatives reflect India's broader commitment to nurturing a future-ready generation of professionals who can thrive in both traditional roles and gig-based careers.

The gig economy is a recent trend, with a number of factors contributing to its rise. The two most important factors are the following:

1. The workforce has become more mobile.
2. Work is increasingly done remotely via digital platforms.

As a result, jobs and locations are being decoupled. That means freelancers can take a job or project with an employer anywhere in the world. At the same time, employers can select the best person for a specific project from a larger pool than is available in any given area.

The gig economy is a part of a shifting cultural and business environment that also includes the sharing economy, gift economy, barter economy and more flexible jobs. The cultural impact of the gig economy continues to change; for example, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on hiring trends.

A normal perception of readers is that gig works are low-end work, precarious in nature, and people in such work are usually deprived of benefits from the formal economy. However, the reality is on the other side. There are substantial benefits and opportunities hidden in countries like India, which has having tremendous young workforce.

For graduates stepping into the job market, the gig economy presents an exciting array of opportunities that are flexible, diverse, and aligned with the evolving business landscape.

Graduates entering the gig world learn to think entrepreneurially, manage reputations, build portfolios and develop long-term client relationships while learning to trust their instincts and make decisions with accountability.

Commerce education provides a solid theoretical foundation in finance, business law, taxation, economics, and management. In the gig economy, these skills move from textbooks to the real world, immediately applicable, income-generating and professionally empowering. For instance:

- A student studying cost accounting might freelance for an SME, helping them optimise expenditure and allocate resources.
- Sometimes proficient in Tally or Quick Books could offer bookkeeping services to startups.
- A digital marketing elective can turn into a freelancing profile managing Instagram pages for local brands.

Through flexibility and autonomy, students are no longer waiting to graduate to ‘start working’, they are already part of the workforce, experimenting, earning and evolving.

The gig economy nurtures a workforce that values independence, adaptability, and continuous self-improvement. For graduates, the flexibility to learn while earning and the autonomy to shape their careers from day one are invaluable advantages in a competitive world.

More than just a job market, the gig economy is a mindset that aligns perfectly with the aspirations of a new generation: to live purposefully, work meaningfully, and grow continually. In embracing this, graduates are not just entering the workforce; they’re redesigning it.

By combining personal initiative with the growing infrastructure being developed by the government, graduates can truly capitalise on the gig economy, not just as a temporary trend, but as a transformative way of life. Platforms in the gig economy prove to be not just a source of livelihood but an opportunity for dignity and upward mobility for workers in the sector.

The gig economy has been analysed by several economists and researchers. One notable figure is Tejvan Pettinger, who has written extensively on

labour markets and the gig economy’s impact on employment structures.

Regardless of the definition used, the gig economy is growing. CNBC reported that during the 2010s, the gig economy grew by 15%. Forbes describes the growth as ‘slow and steady’.

The economy represents a major shift in India’s labour market these days; youth are in favour of flexible and accessible employment opportunities. Many wish to work from home. Some wish to explore the entrepreneurial possibilities by investing in not factories but in digital platforms and exploring the skill set and talent to reach the horizon of earning possibilities.

Entrepreneurial spirit: In the last 10 years Government of India has innovated the entrepreneurial world through Make in India, Startup India, and Skill India Mission. Many gig platforms can really prove to be a helping hand in this regard. Many of the entrepreneurs in the gig world carry their middle-class background who aim to create an ethical and sustainable ecosystem for the business they are engaged in.

Disconnected from a corporate office, the people interviewed find places to work that protect them from outside distractions and pressures and help them avoid feeling rootless. Though many claimed their work was portable, they all still seemed to have somewhere to retreat. One writer said, “People fail because they don’t create a space and time to do whatever it is they need to do”.

In organisations, routines are often associated with safety or boring bureaucracy. However, a growing body of research has shown that elite athletes, scientific geniuses, popular artists, and even everyday workers use routines to enhance focus and performance. The professionals tend to rely on them in the same way.

Some routines improve people’s workflow: Keeping a schedule, following a to-do list, beginning the day with the most challenging work or with a client call; leaving a sentence incomplete in an unfinished manuscript to make an easy start the next day; sweeping the studio floor while reflecting on a new piece. Other routines, usually involving sleep, meditation, nutrition, or exercise, incorporate personal care into people’s working lives. Both kinds often have a ritual element that enhances people’s sense of order and control in uncertain circumstances.

For most people, striking out on their own initially involved doing whatever work would allow them to find a footing in the market. But they were adamant that succeeding means taking only work that clearly connects to a broader purpose. All could articulate why their work, or at least their best work, be it to empower women through film, expose harmful marketing practices, sustain the American folk music tradition, or help corporate leaders succeed with integrity more than a means of earning a living. Purpose creates a bridge between their personal interests and motivations and a need in the world. Matthew, for example, said that although at first he felt “a certain desperation around having clients and making an income”, over time his view of success shifted “to one that is a lot about living a life of service to others and making the planet a better place”.

An executive coach interviewed said that purpose keeps her steady, inspired and inspiring. “A big distinction between successful independents and the one’s who aren’t or go back (to corporate ones’ jobs) is getting to that place of knowing what you’re meant to do. That gives resilience for the ups and downs. It gives strength to decline work that isn’t in alignment. It gives me a quality of authenticity and confidence that clients are drawn to. It’s helpful to build or maintain the business and serve the people I am here to serve.”

We found that purpose, like the other connections, both binds and frees people by orienting and elevating their work.

Recently, a report was published by the World Economic Forum. This report is titled “The Future of Work”. Similarly, a report titled “India’s Booming Gig and Platform Economy” by the NITI Aayog of the Government of India, published (June, 2022, a report on the gig economy. These two documents are milestones in understanding different and diverse aspects of GIG as an emerging economy of India.

Humans are social creatures. Studies in corporate setting have long demonstrated how important other people are to our careers –as role models who show us who we might become, and as peers who help us progress by sharing our path. Researchers have also warned about a “loneliness epidemic” hitting the workplace, for which independent workers can certainly be at even greater risk. But those interviewed are keenly aware of the dangers of social

isolation and strive to avoid it. Though many are ambivalent about formal peer groups, which they often see as insipid substitutes for collegiality, all reported having people they turn to for reassurance and encouragement sometimes these are direct role models or supportive collaborators; in other cases they are family members, friends, or contacts in similar fields, who can’t always offer specific work advice but nevertheless help our study participants push through challenging times and embolden them to take the risks their work entails.

The first thing we realized when we began interviewing independent consultant and artists was that the stakes of independent work are enormously high-not just financially but also existentially. Unshackled from managers & corporate norms, people can choose assignments that make the most of their talents and reflect their true interests. They feel ownership over what they produce and over their entire professional lives. One study participant told us, “I can be the most I’ve ever been myself in any job”.

However the price of such freedom is a precariousness that seems not to subside over time. Even the most successful, well-established people interviewed still worry about money and reputation and sometimes feel that then identity is at stake. You can’t keep calling yourself a consultant, for example, if clients stop asking for your services. A well-published writer told us, “You become your work. If you write a good book –it’s really great and when you don’t achieve it, you have to accept..... that failure might define who you are to yourself”. An artist agreed: “There’s no arriving”.

For this reason, productivity is an intense preoccupation for everyone interviewed. It provides self-expression and an antidote to precariousness. Interestingly, however, the people we talked with aren’t just focusing on getting things done and sold. They care about both being at work-having the discipline to regularly generate products or services that find a market- and being into their work: having the courage to stay fully invested in the process and output of that labor.

Success in the gig economy comes from a balance between viability and vitality, Mathew, for example noted that reaching out to people in his inner circle helps calm his anxiety: “If I were just left on my own, I could sit here in the office and go down a

rat hole. You're left to your own inner voice, and it spirals down into ruminating". Karla told us that she, too regularly turns to a handful of peers with whom she's close. "All the work I do in the independent economy comes through these connections", she said. But their help goes well beyond referrals. "My ability to process, develop and grow as a human being and understand who I am in the work I'm doing comes from the conversations that I have with these folks", she explained. "These people are how I know what I am supposed to be doing".

Many we spoke to believe they wouldn't be able to find the same mental space or strength in a traditional workplace. Martha, the consultant who compared herself to a trapeze artist recalled that she became 'much more successful professionally' and 'much more comfortable in my identity personally' when a trusted counselor helped her reframe –and own her struggle, rather seek ways to evade it. She helped me understand that I could think of myself, which I now do, as a pioneer. I don't fit in any categories that exist in organizations, and its more effective for me to be independent". Seen this way, discomfort and uncertainty were not just tolerable but affirming-signs that she was just where she needed to be.

In popular management tales, career success usually comes with security and equanimity. For independent workers however, both are ultimately elusive. And yet most of those told us they feel successful.

Our conclusion is that people in the gig economy must pursue a different kind of success-on that comes from finding a balance between predictability and possibility, between viability (the promise of continued work). Those we interviewed do so by building holding environments around place, routines, purpose and people, which help them sustain productivity, endure their anxieties and even turn, those feelings into sources of creativity and growth. "There is a sense of confidence that comes from a career as a self-employed person", one consultant told us "You can feel that no matter how bad it gets, I can overcome this. I can change it. I can operate more from a place of choice as opposed to a place of need."

Back in 2016, a McKinsey study categorized independent workers into four segments:

1. Free agents, who choose independent work and derive their primary income from it.

2. Casual earners, who use independent work by choice for supplemental income.
3. Reluctant, who make their primary living from independent work but would prefer traditional jobs.
4. Financially strapped, who do supplemental independent work out of necessity.

Public policy-makers face the task of keeping all four of these groups in the gig economy happy, which may require adapting policy settings so that they are ready for the digital age. Challenges exist but are not insurmountable, the McKinsey Global Institute report said.

"Issues such as benefits, income-security measures, and training and credentials offer room for policy-makers, as well as innovators and new intermediaries, to provide solutions", the authors wrote "Independent workers and traditional jobholders alike will have to become more, proactive about managing their careers as digital technologies continue to reshape the world of work."

Gig workers face unique financial challenges that require careful management of income, expenses, and tax obligations. These workers must diligently track all income themselves, and report it accurately on their tax returns.

In the US, gig workers are also responsible for paying self-employment tax which covers both the employer and employee portions of social security and Medicare contributions, totaling 15.3% of their net income.

To offset these costs, gig workers can take advantage of various deductions including expenses related to car maintenance, gas, insurance, and even a home office if possible.

Budgeting becomes crucial, as gig workers need to set aside money for taxes, personal expenses, and potential fluctuations in income. It's recommended that gig workers in the US allocate 20-25% of their profits for federal taxes and 5% for state taxes to avoid unexpected tax bills.

Sustaining productivity is a constant struggle. Distress and distractions can erode it, and both impediments abound in people's working lives. One executive coach gave a poignant description of an unproductive day: "It's when there is so much to do that –I am disorganized and can't get my act together.

(In the evening), the same e-mails I opened in the morning are still open. The documents I wanted to get done are not done. I got distracted and feel like I wasted time. A day like that, he said leaves him full of self-doubt. “The problem with the entire gig economy is that you are not able to identify who your employer is so you do not know who is giving your labour right or who you should be holding responsible”. (The Times of India, 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2025). The platforms which are available do not consider themselves as employers but as some kind of facilitators.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has published many reports on gig work especially regarding job security and worker protections. This proves how lack of stability in the gig economy affects workers’ mental health. It’s fact that workforce protection is temporary. Employers has little incentives to invest in them or promote them. Gig workers themselves, thankful for jobs played significantly more than at their village in India. But the gig workers, who have not saved money will be leading measurable life. The Industrial Relations Code-2020 imposes higher penalties and procedural barriers for labor strikes, making it harder for gig workers to demand better conditions. It is true that gig work provides income, it also bring the challenges like;

1. Low Wages;
2. Job Insecurity;
3. Lack of Benefits;
4. No Leave, No Holiday;
5. No Complaint System for Workers;
6. Face Risks of Harassment or Abuse by Customers;
7. Exploitation by Intermediaries; and
8. Feudal System.

According to the National Institute of Health, gig workers reported lower mental health and life satisfaction than those employed full time and part time in 2022. Gig workers also experienced higher levels of loneliness and financial insecurity.

The Code on Security-2020 acknowledge gig workers. Unlike California’s Proposition 22 (USA), which grants gig workers minimum wage protection and benefits. The Code on Security -2020 was a milestone in acknowledging this shift as it formally defined terms like ‘aggregator’, ‘gig worker’ and

‘platform worker’. The Code provides security on matters relating to life and disability cover, accident insurance, health and maternity benefits, old age protection, etc. Section 2 (35) of The Code on Security defines a gig worker as “a person who participates in a work arrangement and earns from such activities outside of a traditional employer-employee relationship.”

In the Union Budget 2025-26, it is said: gig workers employed by online platforms would be registered on the e-Shram portal and granted access to public health insurance under the Prime Minister Jan Arogya Yojana. The budget 2025 allocated resources to provide healthcare benefits to approximately 10 million gig workers, while select state governments have introduced subsidies and insurance schemes to support those engaged in gig-based services. (Ministry of Labour and Employment-2024). Gig-Worker Welfare Policy, the Karnataka Government drafted the Ordinance to enact the Karnataka Platform-based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill 2024. This will help to gig workers’ rights to protect their welfare and security. (The Economic Times, 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2025). In December 2023, the Tamil Nadu Government established the Tamil Nadu Platform-Based-Gig Workers’ Welfare Board. (The Hindu, March 18, 2025).

Despite all the advantages, the gig economy has considerable downsides, including the following:

- *Lack of Benefits*: This may be the biggest downside. Gig workers are typically not eligible for health insurance or other benefits they would get working as a full-time employee. Companies are also typically not required to pay temporary workers minimum wage or overtime.
- *Work-life Management Challenges*: Gig work can be disruptive if the worker isn’t used to making their own schedule. Inexperienced workers can easily take on too many gigs, leading to overlook and burnout.
- *Insecurity and Inconsistent Income*: Having enough work to maintain a stable income is a challenge with gig work.
- *Work Culture*: Temporary workers who come and go in an organisation make it difficult to maintain consistent relationships among workers, employers and clients on a long-term basis.

- *Effect on the Job Market:* When temporary positions are all that are available, workers can find it difficult to establish and develop their careers.

The gig economy is composed of corporate entities, workers and consumers. The Internal Revenue Service defines the gig economy as “activity where people earn income providing on-demand work, services or goods”, noting that the activity is often facilitated through a digital platform such as mobile app or website and earnings may be in the form of “cash, property, goods, or virtual currency”. According to the Fair Work Ombudsman, the digital platforms or marketplaces connect individual service providers directly to customers for a fee. The BBC presented the following definition for the term: “a labour market characterised by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work, as opposed to permanent jobs”. The term “gig” comes from the slang term for individual appearances by performing artists like musicians and comedians. Instead of being paid a regular salary, gig workers are paid for individual gigs performed.

The gig economy is experiencing exponential growth worldwide. As of 2023, the sector was valued at approximately \$3.7 trillion. Notably, nearly 48% of this revenue was generated by independent contractors. Projections suggest this figure will triple to \$11.7 trillion by 2032, reflecting a fundamental shift in how work is perceived and delivered globally.

The growing demand for skilled, on-demand professionals across industries such as IT, Finance, creative services, logistics and education is fueling this trend. Companies are increasingly turning to gig workers to fulfil roles that require flexibility, innovation, and niche expertise- qualities that are often found in fresh graduates and freelancers.

The Asia-Pacific region has emerged as a hotspot for gig work. The market is growing at a remarkable compound growth rate (CAGR) of 20.2% and is expected to be worth \$ 8.9 billion by 2024. Countries like Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines have embraced gig work, with digital platforms making it easier for workers to access regional and global clients.

This growth is also fueled by a young tech-savvy population and an increasing emphasis on entrepreneurship and independent work.

India has become one of the fastest-growing gig economies in the world. With a CAGR of 17% the gig sector in India is projected to reach \$455 billion by 2025. Currently, 7-8 million people are engaged in gig work across the country. By 2030, this number is expected to rise to 23.5 million, forming approximately 4.1% of India’s total workforce.

Beyond urban hubs, gig work is expanding into tier-2 and tier-3 cities, offering employment avenues for youth, women, and semiskilled workers. The Indian Government has also taken note of this trend, introducing policy frameworks and labor codes to ensure social security and rights for platform and gig workers.

The gig economy is made up of companies, workers and consumers. All gig workers aren’t the same. They include the following:

- Freelancers who get paid per task;
- Independent contractors who perform work and get paid on a contract-to-contract basis;
- Project-based workers who get paid by the project;
- Temporary hires who are employed for a fixed amount of time; and
- Part-time workers who work fewer than full-time hours.

The gig economy provides consumers with an alternative to commercial products and industries. They turn to the gig economy for convenience, better service or both. This is the case with ride-hailing apps, like Uber, and food delivery services like Grubhub. Gig apps have also met consumer demand where a service is in short supply or expensive. This is a role Airbnb has played in places where hotel rooms are in short supply, making more temporary accommodations available, sometimes at lower prices.

Gig economy jobs include familiar positions found in diverse industries, including the following:

- Accounting and Finance - Independent Consultants and mortgage representatives.
- Administration- Administrative assistants.
- Art and design - Musicians or graphic designers.
- Construction - Carpenters and other construction trades.
- Education - Substitute instructors and tutors.

- Freelance writing - Content writers and copywriters jobs.
- Information technology- Various jobs, such as information security engineers and network analysts.
- Media and communications- Technical writers and photographers.
- Project management- Project or office manager jobs.
- Software development- Dev Ops engineers and user experience.
- Transportation- Ride-hailing drivers.

Gig apps are digital platforms that match workers to jobs and match consumers to services. The apps have a worker-facing side and consumer facing side.

The benefits of the gig economy vary, depending on whose perspective you take the business, worker or consumer.

### **The Business**

In a gig economy businesses save money and resources. They aren't responsible for providing employee benefits, such as sick leave and health insurance, and they often don't have to provide workers with office space, equipment and training. A gig model also enables businesses to contract with experts, who might be too expensive to hire as full-time staff for specific projects.

### **The Worker**

From the worker's perspective, a gig economy can improve work-life balance compared with many traditional jobs. Independent workers are able to select freelance jobs that they are interested in that provide new opportunities, and that look right for their preferences and schedule. They don't get stuck in a full-time job that doesn't interest them or have the flexibility they need. This sort of freelance economy also lets workers choose when they want to work and helps them avoid being locked into or dependent on a single employer.

### **The Consumer**

Consumers often find that a gig model provides more choices and convenience in service providers, as well as times and locations of offerings.

Shifting political, cultural and business environments affect the gig economy. For example, changing government regulations and company policies around the employment status of gig workers, who are considered full-time employees versus independent contractor-can alter the gig workforce. A full-time worker may be eligible for certain benefits and a base level of pay that an independent contractor would not automatically receive.

### **Downside of a Gig Economy**

The gig economy trend can make it harder for full-time employees to develop careers and establish a long-term reputation. The gig economy is often associated with eroding worker rights, loss of health insurance, and sick and vacation.

Employers are under little pressure to pay higher wages. Opening up positions to people living anywhere in the world, including places where the cost of living is much cheaper, allows employers to seek places with lower wages.

The flexibility of working gigs can disrupt the work-life balance, sleep patterns, and daily life. Long-term relationships between workers, employers, clients, and vendors can erode. This can eliminate the benefits of building long-term trust, customary practice, and familiarity with clients and employers.

Some other factors that have affected gig work and work in general include the following;

- **Digitisation:** AI and other automated technologies have had a significant effect on the job market. In some cases, digitisation has decreased jobs available as software replaces some types of workers, such as customer experience and content automation workers.
- **Flexibility Needs:** Other influences have increased the pressure on organisations to hire more gig workers. These include financial pressures on businesses, leading to the need for a more flexible workforce that can be expanded or contracted quickly.
- **Generational Effects:** Younger workers, such as millennials and Gen Zers, also tend to change jobs more frequently than older, more traditional workers. The gig economy is part of that trend.
- **COVID-19:** The pandemic has also put pressure on many businesses and organisations to remain visible and solvent. The growing digital

marketplace and the gig economy have helped there. For example, some traditional brick-and-mortar restaurants, needing to provide contactless delivery, have added food delivery apps, like DoorDash, in the last two years.

Virtual-only restaurants have also emerged out of the gig economy for example, Mr. Beast Burger is a virtual-only restaurant that operates out of existing restaurant kitchens but is only available via food delivery services. These virtual businesses, sometimes called ghost kitchens or cloud kitchens, also enable existing restaurants to test new menu items without affecting their original brand.

The size of the gig economy depends on how one defines it and whose statistics one uses. The Bureau of Labour Statistics uses the term “electronically mediated work” to represent “short jobs or tasks that workers find through websites or mobile apps that both connect them with customers and arrange payment for the tasks”. A work published in September 2018 determined that such work accounted for 1.0 per cent of total employment in May 2017. At the same time the Government Accountability Office stated that “the definition and the data source variations support claims from below 5% to over one third of the labor force engage in non-traditional employment. According to Forbes, the gig economy is a \$ trillion sector of the United States economy.

Maharashtra, particularly Mumbai, is at the forefront of India’s gig economy revolution. In 2024 alone, over 1.2 million gig jobs were posted in the state, a 23% increase from the previous year. Mumbai’s vibrant economy, digital infrastructure and diverse industry base make it a fertile ground for freelance work.

In sectors like e-commerce, logistics, retail, finance and entertainment, gig roles are now commonplace. Many college students in Mumbai are already working part-time as freelance accountants, social media managers, online tutors, and marketing consultants, gaining practical experience while still pursuing their degrees. Commerce graduates are uniquely positioned to benefit from the rise of gig work. With foundational knowledge in accounting, finance, business law, taxation, marketing and entrepreneurship, they can apply their academic learnings to real-world assignments across various sectors.

## Here’s How

1. **Diverse Career Paths:** Whether it’s offering booking services, preparing tax returns, managing digital campaigns, or providing investment advice, gig platforms provide a wide range of roles tailored to commerce skills.
2. **Flexibility and Freedom:** Graduates can choose clients, manage their schedules, and gain exposure to various industries, helping them identify their interests and strengths in their careers.
3. **Entrepreneurial Launchpad:** Many freelancers evolve into entrepreneurs. A commerce graduate can start as a solo tax consultant and grow into a full-fledged financial services firm.
4. **Skill Development:** Working on multiple projects hones problem-solving, communication, negotiation and digital skill qualities highly valued in the modern business world.

In 2024, the so-called gig economy had a market size of \$556.7 billion. By 2032, that’s expected to more than triple to \$1,846 billion. For millions of people, working nine-to-five for a single employer or being on the payroll is no longer a reality. Instead, they balance, various income streams and work independently, job-by-job.

The gig economy is in focus not just because it’s growing, bringing economic benefits in terms of productivity and employment, but also because it raises questions about levels of consumer and work protection and labour market policies.

While gig-economy workers often eschew the rights offered to employees on the payroll, in February 2021 a UK Court found that drivers for a car ride-hailing app were entitled to benefits including paid holidays, a minimum wage and a pension. Court rulings in other countries could potentially set a precedent for the gig economy as a whole.

A McKinsey survey in 2022 found that more than a third (36%) of the US workforce identified, as independent workers.

As the market grows and the companies at the top of the chain get larger, the challenge for policymakers and officials is to balance the innovation that creates jobs against the need to ensure the companies are offering workers a fair deal. Gig economy companies present complications for product–market regulation, competition policy, tax and labor market policies.

Independence and flexibility were cited as the main aspects that people working in the gig economy were often satisfied with, according to a UK Government Survey. Respondents were less satisfied with work-related benefits and the level of income, with one in four saying they were very or fairly dissatisfied with those aspects of their work.

For students who want to earn an income while studying, or primary careers who want to fit work around school or daycare hours, these companies can offer flexible working patterns.

The gig economy is more than just a labour trend. It's a transformative movement that aligns perfectly with the aspirations of the new generation. For commerce graduates, it opens doors to meaningful work, financial independence, and entrepreneurial dreams. By embracing this shift with agility and innovation, they cannot only shape their own careers but also contribute significantly to the evolving business ecosystem.

As we move further into a digital, flexible and skills-driven world, graduates who adapt to the gig economy will find themselves ahead of the curve, leading, innovating and thriving in a future of their own making.

The rise of the gig economy has significantly altered how employers manage their workforce and production output. In a world of talent scarcity, companies are increasingly turning to freelancers, gig workers, and independent contractors to create a more flexible and agile labor force. This shift allows employers to quickly adjust their workforce size and expertise based on business needs, potentially saving time and money on recruitment and training.

Employers can now access specialised skills on demand without the long-term commitment of full-time employees.

However, this new dynamic also presents challenges, such as maintaining team cohesion and motivating a workforce that may not be as invested in the company's long-term goals. Legal considerations have also become more complex, with employers needing to carefully navigate workers classification to avoid misclassification issues.

Despite these challenges, many organisations find that incorporating gig workers into their labour strategy allows them to become more competitive and responsive to market demands.

*"Be regular and orderly in your life ....so that you may be violent and original in your work".*

-French Novelist, Gustave Flaubert

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## Nurturing Future Business Leaders

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**Droupadi Murmu, Hon'ble President of India delivered the Convocation Address at the National Students' Convocation Ceremony at the Institute of Cost Accountants of India, New Delhi on June 23, 2025. She said, "As you stand at the threshold of your professional journey, keep in mind that your responsibilities extend far beyond financial accounting. As cost accountants, you are uniquely positioned to contribute to India's transformation into a *Viksit Bharat* by 2047." Excerpts**

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I am pleased to be with you today on the occasion of the National Students' Convocation of the Institute of Cost Accountants of India. Let me begin by offering my congratulations to all newly qualified professionals, and best wishes for a successful career.

The practice of accounting has a long history in India. Kautilya's *Arthashastra* offers detailed guidance on account-keeping not only for the kingdom's treasury, but also for its manufacturing units. It speaks of the cost factor too, and its lessons can be easily applied to today's governments and private corporations. Throughout our history, accountants have enjoyed high esteem in our society. The reason for that, I believe, is that accounting and accountability are deeply connected. We value accountability; therefore, we attach special significance to accounting.

In modern times, this rich legacy is carried forward by, among others, the Institute of Cost Accountants of India. The ICAI was founded in 1944 for the regulation and development of the profession of cost and management accountants in the country. That makes it a witness to the saga of India's economic transformation after Independence. Not only a witness, in fact, it has been a very crucial player in making the Indian economy one of the strongest in the world today. It has played its role away from the limelight, but experts in economic and corporate history appreciate the significance of the inputs of cost and management accountants in our industrial growth.

I am glad to learn that this institute is the largest cost and management accounting body in the world, with about 1,00,000 qualified CMAs and around 5,00,000 students pursuing the CMA course. It has also been nurturing talent, producing cost accounting professionals who help businesses achieve cost competitiveness. With their inputs, our corporate sector has improved its performance, efficiency, productivity and profitability.

ICMAI has been a partner in the country's progress as it provides highly valuable support to policymakers, to central and state governments as well as to various organisations in developing cost-efficient strategies, systems and manuals. CMAs have meanwhile seen their functions growing from cost accounting in factories to management accounting in boardrooms. They now work in fields such as direct and indirect taxation, corporate laws, arbitration, insolvency, valuation, social auditing, independent directorship, banking and insurance.

The CMA syllabus 2022 also aligns well with the curriculum of eminent national and international accounting bodies as well as the National Education Policy. This curriculum will help nurture the future business leaders.

On today's occasion, I would like to commend the entire CMA fraternity for their hard work and dedication that have contributed to not only our economy but also to our society. The achievements of the Institute and its members are a matter of great pride for our nation.

Dear Students, Today is a memorable day in your life as you have crossed a milestone. You have learned the skills of cost and management accounting, and now you are ready to start your career. At this juncture, it would not be out of place if I offer a few words of advice to you.

I am thinking here of Mahatma Gandhi. The court case that brought him to South Africa centred on book-keeping matters. Though he did not know any accounting then, he bought a book, studied hard and soon mastered the basics of accounting.

In South Africa and later in India, he took scrupulous care to ensure efficient use of funds of public bodies he was associated with. In his Autobiography, he wrote, "Carefully kept accounts are a *sine qua non* for any organization. Without them it falls into disrepute. Without properly kept accounts it is impossible to maintain truth in its pristine purity."

Gandhiji obviously held your profession in high esteem. He knew that accounting and accountability are deeply connected. For him, cost- efficiency was a way of life. It is not about saving money but about saving invaluable and often irreplaceable resources. The world is facing the crisis of climate change. Sustainability is no longer a slogan; it has become a necessity. That time is over when corporate organisations worked solely with the profit motive. Now they have to keep the environmental costs in mind. And this is where you, with your skills, can bring about a great change in the future of the planet.

As you stand at the threshold of your professional journey, keep in mind that your responsibilities extend far beyond financial

accounting. As cost accountants, you are uniquely positioned to contribute to India's transformation into a *Viksit Bharat* by 2047. I am confident that the education imparted by this Institute will enable you to become not only successful professionals, but also nation-builders. May you all lead with integrity, inspire with your work, and make India proud.

Once again, I offer my congratulations to all the newly qualified students as well as the office-bearers of the ICMAI and the entire CMA community. My best wishes to you for a bright future.

Thank you.  
Jai Hind!  
Jai Bharat!

### **Invitation to Authors**

Authors are invited to contribute articles on contemporary issues in higher education in general and Indian higher education in particular for publication in the 'University News'. The articles addressing the Editor University News be sent as an e-mail attachment in MS WORD to: [unaiu89@gmail.com](mailto:unaiu89@gmail.com); [ramapani.universitynews@gmail.com](mailto:ramapani.universitynews@gmail.com); [universitynews@aiu.ac.in](mailto:universitynews@aiu.ac.in).

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## CAMPUS NEWS

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### Seminar on Sustainable Growth Strategies

The one-day State-level Seminar on 'Sustainable Growth Strategies for MSMEs in India: Challenges and Opportunities' was jointly organised by the Department of Economics and the Department of B. Com (CA), GTN Arts College, Dindigul, recently. About 270 participants, including students, faculty members, industry professionals, and MSME owners, attended the event. The event aimed to explore government support, job creation, inclusive growth, financing, and investment opportunities for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Dr. S Arun, Assistant Professor of Economics, was the Coordinator of the event. The event commenced with a welcome address by the Convener, Dr. P Ravichandran, Associate Professor and Head, Department of Economics. He briefed the gathering on the theme of the seminar and its relevance in the current economic scenario. Dr. S Saravanan, Principal, GTN Arts College delivered the Presidential Address, emphasising the importance of MSMEs in driving economic sustainability and growth. He discussed how MSMEs contribute significantly to job creation and economic inclusiveness, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. The event was formally inaugurated by Lion Dr. K Rethinam, College Secretary, who acknowledged the theme as both timely and essential, given the rapid shifts in the Indian business ecosystem. He stressed the importance of supporting MSMEs through policy frameworks and financial assistance. Director, Dr. Durai Rethinam, Academic Director, Dr. N Markkandeyan, and Vice Principal (SSC) Dr. U Natarajan felicitated the event, commending the organisers for addressing a critical theme that aligns with national economic objectives.

The Technical Session on 'Government Policies and Support for MSMEs' was led by Ms S Vijayashanthi, Financial Counselor, Financial Literacy Centre, Canada Bank. Her session provided an in-depth analysis of the various policies and programmes initiated by the Government of India to promote and support MSMEs. She covered the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE), and MSME Champions Scheme, among others. Ms.

Vijayashanthi also highlighted the importance of technology upgradation and innovation in ensuring the sustainable growth of MSMEs. She urged the participants to stay informed about the changing policy landscape and make the most of the government's support initiatives. She comprehensively covered both the central and state-level schemes and the practical insights offered regarding how MSMEs can access these benefits.

The next session was on 'Role of MSMEs in Job Creation and Inclusive Growth', which was presented by Dr. J Suhashini, Assistant Professor, Management Studies, GTN Arts College. She focused on the integral role of MSMEs in creating employment opportunities across various sectors of the economy. Dr. Suhashini emphasised that MSMEs are the backbone of the Indian economy, employing over 120 million people and contributing approximately 30% of the nation's GDP. She explained how MSMEs create a ripple effect in both urban and rural economies, generating jobs not just directly but through supply chain linkages as well. She also delved into the potential of MSMEs to foster inclusive growth, as they can employ marginalised communities, women, and individuals in underserved areas. Her session underscored the need for skill development, entrepreneurship training, and improved market access to help MSMEs continue playing this crucial role. She also highlighted case studies of successful MSMEs that have driven both job creation and community development.

The Session on 'Financing and Investment Opportunities for MSMEs' was delivered by Ms R Uma Chandrika, Assistant Director, MSME Branch, Development and Facilitation Branch, Madurai. Ms Chandrika's session provided a detailed overview of the financing options available to MSMEs, ranging from traditional bank loans to modern financial instruments like venture capital, angel investors, and crowdfunding platforms. She explained the various funding schemes under SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India), MUDRA loans, and sector-specific financial aids aimed at promoting MSME growth. A key highlight of her lecture was her focus on the practical steps MSME owners

must take to secure financing, such as improving credit scores, preparing sound business plans, and leveraging collateral-free loans. She encouraged participants to actively seek out investment opportunities and make use of government initiatives designed to ease access to credit. She also discussed the need for financial literacy among MSME owners to effectively manage their funding and ensure sustainable growth. Her emphasis on golden opportunities available through government schemes resonated with the audience, many of whom were entrepreneurs and students aspiring to enter the MSME sector.

Dr. S Manimaheswaran, Assistant Professor and Head, B. Com (CA) proposed the Vote of Thanks. He expressed his gratitude to the guest speakers for sharing their knowledge and insights and thanked the participants for their active engagement.

### **Environment Conclave on Combatting Plastic Pollution**

The One-day Environment Conclave-2025 on 'Combatting Plastic Pollution' was organised by the Bir Tikendrajit University, New Delhi, in collaboration with the Directorate of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Manipur on June 19, 2025. The Chief Guest of the event was Dr. T Brajakumar Singh, Director, Environment and Climate Change, Government of Manipur. The President, Dr. Pawan Kumar Choudhary, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Bir Tikendrajit University and Guests of Honour, Dr. Elangbam Jadu Singh, former Principal, DM College of Science, Dhanamanjuri University, and Dr. Huidrom Birkumar Singh, Chief Scientist and Professor, CSIR-NEIST, Lamphelpat, Imphal, were also present. Dr. T Brajakumar Singh highlighted that it is our bounden duty to save our mother nature. To save our environment, it is inevitable for us to reduce the demand and minimise plastic use at possible. He emphasised that environmental research is essential for protecting the environment and converting it into policies that will benefit future generations.

The Convenor of the programme, Dr. Johnson Luwang Wahengbam delivered a keynote speech and emphasised the significance of commemorating World Environment Day. He explained in his lecture that people are constantly exposed to plastic in all forms. He underlined that

we must defeat plastic pollution before it defeats us and emphasised the importance of implementing the three principles of reduce, reuse, and recycle in our daily lives for environmental protection. He later presented an awareness lecture to raise awareness of the negative effects of microplastic and nanoplastic exposure.

The Pro-Vice Chancellor, Bir Tikendrajit University, Dr. Pawan Kumar Choudhary, stressed the significance of the university's observance of World Environment Day in his Presidential Address. Climate change is happening, he explained, but we must be careful and approach the problem sensibly. Every person has a responsibility to contribute to the solution of environmental issues and to the preservation of Mother Nature's environment. He encouraged staff and students at the university to make the easy move of using less electricity and throwing away trash in the right place. These small traditions would have a huge positive impact on society.

Dr. Elangbam Jadu, former Principal, DM College of Science, emphasised the significance of environmental protection in the modern day. Forest ecosystems are crucial to combating climate change and emphasise the need for coordinated action. A thorough presentation on 'Scope of Bioprospecting and Bioeconomy in Manipur: A Few Viable Technologies of CSIR-NEIST' was given by Dr. Huidrom Birkumar Singh, Chief Scientist, CSIR-NEIST, Branch Laboratory Lamphelpat, Imphal. He encouraged the younger generation to pursue entrepreneurship as an inspiring career path and emphasised his desire to explore the state's unique bioresources.

Later, during a Vote of Thanks, Registrar, Dr. Pradeep Kumar Dey, emphasised that the primary objective of the conclave is to establish a dynamic forum for students, academicians, researchers, environmentalists, policymakers, and community leaders to work together and discuss urgent environmental issues. The conclave programme also included poster presentations for environmental protection and the fight against plastic pollution. The poster competition was participated in by the university students from different departments. Cash awards and certificates were given to the first, second, and third-place finishers.

## **International Conference on Digital Intelligence**

A two-day International Conference on ‘Digital Intelligence for Green Mining and Industrial Networks’ is being organised by the Department of Mining Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines), Dhanbad, Jharkhand from September 12-13, 2025. The event will serve as India’s flagship conference at the intersection of digitalisation, intelligent automation, and sustainable mining practices. It is envisioned as a premier event focused on accelerating the digital transformation of the mining sector. Anchored on the pillars of Digitalization, Intelligent Systems, Green Technologies, Mining 5.0, Industrial Integration, and Next-generation Infrastructure, it aims to bring together mining professionals, regulatory personnel, academic researchers, technologists, sustainability experts, policymakers, and industry leaders to deliberate on the accelerated adoption of next-generation digital technologies in mining and allied industrial ecosystems. The event will showcase AI/ML-driven risk prediction advancements, robotics, IoT-enabled automation, and eco-efficient mining practices. The event will foster collaboration between public institutions, private players, and startups through panel discussions, technology exhibitions, and policy roundtables. The goal is to unlock hidden opportunities in mining through smart digital systems, drive sustainable resource management, and build a roadmap for a resilient, technology-integrated, and environmentally responsible mining ecosystem in India. The Themes of the Event are:

### ***Digital Foundations for Smart Mining***

- Integration of IoT, Cloud, and Edge Computing in Mine Operations.
- ***Robotics and Automation in Harsh Mining Environments***
- Autonomous Drilling, Blasting, and Hauling Systems.
- Swarm Robotics for Exploration and Maintenance.
- Human-robot Collaboration in Underground and Conined Spaces.

### ***Edge AI and Real-Time Analytics in Mining***

- Low-latency AI Applications for Critical Mine Operations.
- Edge Devices for Environmental and Structural Monitoring.

- Federated Learning in Distributed Mine Networks.

### ***AI-Driven Mineral Intelligence: Innovations in Critical Mineral Reserves Estimation***

- Critical Mineral Mapping and Targeting.
- AI-guided Exploration for Rare Earth Elements and Strategic Minerals.
- Predictive Analytics for Grade Distribution and Tonnage.

### ***Digital Resilience and Disaster Management in Mining***

- Design of Intelligent Operation Centers.
- Integration of AR/VR for Remote Inspections and Diagnostics, Enabling Remote. decision-making with Digital Twins.

### ***Energy Efficiency and Process Optimisation***

- AI for Optimising Crushing, Grinding, and Material Handling.
- Dynamic Control of Furnaces and Kilns using Digital Feedback.
- CPS-enabled Real-Time Energy Monitoring and Reduction Strategies.

For further details, contact Convener and Chairman, Prof. Anindya Sinha, Department of Mining Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines), Dhanbad-826004, Jharkhand, Mobile No: 7766908001, E-mail: [anindya@iitism.ac.in](mailto:anindya@iitism.ac.in). For updates, log on to: <https://www.iitism.ac.in>

## **Short-term Training Programme on AI-enabled Design**

A twelve-day Short-term Training Programme on ‘AI-enabled Design for Additive Manufacturing’ is being organised by the Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing, Kancheepuram, Chennai from July 14-25, 2025.

AI has become a quintessential tool to optimise and generate designs for increased functional integration, product structure, part geometry and high-stiffness designed materials. Today’s designers and engineers are tasked with the burden of a nuanced understanding of the algorithms and methods for AI-enabled design for AM (AI-DfAM). This course provides a practical approach to understanding applied design principles and algorithms to optimise existing designs or generate a whole new design

with a fraction design/redesign cost compared to conventional practices. Automotive, Aerospace, Healthcare and Consumer electronics industries are embracing this new trend of design freedom using AI-DfAM tools and techniques. The Topics of the event are:

- Advancement in Design for AM.
- Generative AI and Hyper Customisation.
- Enhancing Topology Optimisation Using AI.
- Artificial Intelligence Driven Light Weighting.
- Designed AM Materials and Process Capabilities.
- Multimaterials and Hierarchical Structures.

For further details, contact Organising Secretary, Dr. Senthilkumaran Kumaraguru, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing, Kancheepuram, Chennai-600127, Phone No: 044-27476364, E-mail: [skumaran@iiitdm.ac.in](mailto:skumaran@iiitdm.ac.in). For updates, log on to: <https://www.iiitdm.ac.in/events/>

#### **Short-term Training Programme on High Performance Computing**

A five-day Hybrid Short-term Training Programme on ‘High Performance Computing with Applications in Parallel Metaheuristics’ is being organised by the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, S.V. National Institute of Technology, Surat, Gujarat from July 21-25, 2025. The faculty members from academic institutes and universities, research scholars/UG, PG students, and industry personnel working in the concerned /allied discipline may participate in the event.

High Performance Computing (HPC) powered by CUDA and Open MP enhanced the capabilities

of computing hardware for solving large-scale real-world problems. Today’s multicore processors and general-purpose graphics processing units (GPGPUs) are well developed to provide high-performance computing for solving various real-world real-time tasks. Many optimisation problems can be efficiently solved in real time by exploiting the power of GPUs and multiple processing cores inside a processor chip. This short-term training programme helps participants to understand basic concepts of high-performance computing and enrich their skills for solving real-world optimisation problems related to diverse computational fields using OpenMP and CUDA. The Topics of the event are:

- Introduction to High Performance Computing.
- Basics of OpenMP.
- Task Decomposition in OpenMP.
- Basics of CUDA C.
- Block and Thread Level Parallelism in CUDA C.
- Introduction of Metaheuristics.
- Advancements in Metaheuristics.
- Introduction to Parallel Metaheuristics.
- Applications of Parallel Metaheuristics.
- Hands-on: OpenMP and CUDA C.
- Hands-on: Sequential Metaheuristics.
- Hands-on: Parallel Metaheuristics.

For further details, contact Coordinator, Dr. Anugrah Jain, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, S.V. National Institute of Technology Surat, Gujarat– 395007, Mobile No: 9461030669, E-mail: [ajain@coed.svnit.ac.in](mailto:ajain@coed.svnit.ac.in). For updates, log on to: <http://www.svnit.ac.in> □

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# THESES OF THE MONTH

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## HUMANITIES

A List of doctoral theses accepted by Indian Universities  
(Notifications received in AIU during the month of April-May, 2025)

### Geography

1. Manendra Kumar. **Digital inclusion-exclusion and its role in regional and social development in India.** (Prof. Vijay Kumar Baraik), School of Sciences, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.
2. Manoj Kumar. **Urban expansion and slope stability analysis around Shimla City in Himachal Pradesh.** (Dr. Krishna Kumar), School of Sciences, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.
3. Parmar, Ashwani. **Climate change agriculture and gender gap a comparative study of semi arid and dry sub-humid parts of Haryana.** (Dr. Vishal Warpa), School of Sciences, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.
4. Thakor, Irshad Ahmad. **Evaluation of the Joint Forest Management Programmes for the forest resource conservation in Kashmir Division, J&K.** (Dr. Mohd Shafi Bhat and Dr. Shamim Ahmad Shah), Department of Geography & Disaster Management, University of Kashmir, Srinagar.

### History

1. Bashir, Umar. **Marginalization in History: A study of women in Kashmir (1846-1947).** (Prof. M Y Ganai), Department of History, University of Kashmir, Srinagar.
2. Daimari, Bhanupriya. **Religion and politics in medieval Assam with special reference to the Ahom Period (1228 A D-1826 AD).** (Dr. Frances Fernandez), Department of Comparative Religion, Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati, Assam.
3. Mukherjee, Pratishtha. **Sculptural analysis of the Yaksa figurines from North India with special reference to Ganga Valley.** (Prof. Sushmita Sen), Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.
4. Sharma, Sarang. **Studies into the origin and development of the Chamba School of Painting from mid-seventeenth to mid-eighteenth Century: An analysis of the evolution of style, patronage and subject-matter in the painting tradition.** (Dr. Rita Ghanshyamsinh Sodha), Department of Art History & Aesthetics, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.

### LANGUAGES & LITERATURE

#### English

1. Ahar, Elias Khudhair. **Search for identity in selected Arab-American novels of Diana Abu Jaber, Mohja Kahf and Samia Serageldin.** (Dr. Nutan Kotak), Department of English, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad.
2. Boruah, Bhagirath. **Understanding violence: A study of select novels from Assam.** (Dr. Rachel Bari), Department of English, Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta.
3. Hammood, Mohammed Sami. **Strategies of survival in the selected novels of Abdulrazak Gurnah: An appraisal.** (Prof. Umed Singh), Department of English and Foreign Languages, Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa.
4. Lohat, Akshay. **A critical analysis of Hindi translation of English subtitles of film 'Titanic'.** (Dr. Jyoti Chawla), School of Translation Studies and Training, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.
5. Manjunatha, G P. **Colonial law and social reformation in India: A study of select colonial novels.** (Dr. Veena M K), Department of English, Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta.
6. Rabri, Mukeshbhai Arjanbhai. **Gandhi's theory of non-violence in selected Indian novels.** (Dr. Divyesh Bhatt), Department of English, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad.
7. Raushan, Ragini. **Hrishikesh Sulabh ke natakaoan ka loktatavik adhyayan.** (Dr. Yogendra Mahto), Department of English, T M Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur.
8. Saini, Raj Kumar. **Cityspace: A critical study of the selected works of Arvind Adiga, Chetan Bhagat and Anita Desai.** (Prof. Umed Singh), Department of English, Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa.
9. Tiwari, Shivangi. **Women centric changes in Indian English novel with special reference to the select works of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Kavita Kane: Literary and legal insights.** (Dr. Alka Singh), Department of English, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya National Law University, Lucknow.

10. Varia, Drashti Rushabhbbhai. **Storied spaces in the folk narratives of Jhaverchand Meghani.** (Dr. Anshu Surve), Department of English, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.
11. Wahad, Kalil Hashem. **Challenges of disabled women in selected novels of Sharon Draper, Kathryn Erskine and Dusti bowling.** (Dr. Rishi Thakar), Department of English, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad.

#### Gujarati

1. Makwana, Nisha Laljibhai. **Dalit consciousness in the poetry of dalit poets of Saurashtra: A study.** (Dr. Sanjay Makwana), Department of Gujarati, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad.
2. Valvi, Barkhaben Sangalyabhai. **Folk literature of Vasava Tribe of Kukarmunda: A critical study.** (Prof. Pundlik C. Pawar), Department of Gujarati, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.

#### Hindi

1. Bamaniya, Varshabhen Somabhai. **Shashiprabha Shastri ke katha-sahitye ka samasyagat anusheelan.** (Dr. Kapil Trivedi), Department of Hindi, Saurashtra University, Rajkot.
2. Dileep Kumar. **Stri vimarsha ke pari parshva mein Mrinal Pande ka rachana sansar: Ek adhyayan.** (Dr. Anita Shukla), Department of Hindi, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.
3. Gaikwad, Vaishali Kashinath. **Daya Prakash Sinha ke natkoan kee aitihāsik evam manchiyeta ka anusheelan.** (Dr. Alka N Gadkari), Department of Hindi, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad.
4. Gaikwad, Vaishali Kashinath. **Daya Prakash Sinha ke natakaon kee aitihāsik evam manchiyeta ka anusheelan.** (Dr. Alka N Gadkari), Department of Hindi, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad.
5. Giri, Jyoti. **Samkaleen kavita mein manavadhikar: Alochnatamak vishleshan.** (Prof. Chanda Bain), Department of Hindi, Dr Harisingh Gour Vishwavidyalaya, Sagar.
6. Makvana, Umeshkumar Dalsukhbhai. **Manohar Shyam Joshi ke katha sahitye mein vyakt samajik evam rajnaitik chetna.** (Dr. B K Kalasva), Department of Hindi, Saurashtra University, Rajkot.
7. Mehta, Aneja Sureshchandra. **Harishanker Parsai ke vyangey sahitye kee prasangikta.** (Dr. Shailesh K Mehta), Department of Hindi, Saurashtra University, Rajkot.

8. Noor, Shagufta. **Dr Rahi Masoom Raza ke upanyasoan mein samajik parivesh.** (Prof. Shailja Bhardwaj), Department of Hindi, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.
9. Padhiyar, Pinal Dahyabhai. **Gujarat ke Bhavai loknatya ke samajik evam sanskritik adhyayan.** (Prof. Kalpana Gavli), Department of Hindi, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.
10. Preeti Kumari. **Mannu Bhandari ke katha sahitye mein madhye varg evam shilp vidhan.** (Dr. Rajesh Kumar Sharma and Dr. Shivani Sharma), Department of Hindi, Bhagwant University, Ajmer.
11. Raushan, Ragini. **Hrishikesh Sulabh ke natakaon ka loktatavik adhyayan.** (Dr. Yogendra Mahto), Department of Hindi, T M Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur.
12. Salve, Asha Govindrao. **Suryabala ka Gadya Sahitya: EK adhyayan.** (Prof. Kalpana Gavli), Department of Hindi, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.
13. Sharma, Maya. **Samkaleen dalit kahaniyoan mein samajik chetna evam Sanskrit bodh.** (Dr. Rajesh Kumar Sharma and Dr. Shivani Sharma), Department of Hindi, Bhagwant University, Ajmer.
14. Shelkar, Sheetal Rama Kautik. **Sant Kabir aur Harishankar Parsai ke sahitye mein vyangyatamak drishtikon: Ek anusheelan.** (Dr. B K Kalasva), Department of Hindi, Saurashtra University, Rajkot.
15. Tilala, Varsha Babubhai. **Hindi kee pratidinhi mahila sahityekaroan ke upanyas sahitye mein chitrit nari-patroan kee manh isthithi (Chune huye upanyas ke sandarbh mein).** (Dr. Dipatiben B Parmar), Department of Hindi, Saurashtra University, Rajkot.
16. Yadav, Suneel Kumar. **Nari vimarsh ke pariprekshya mein Neerajaa Madhav ka katha sahitya: Ek adhyayan.** (Dr. Thakkar Manisha Ketankumar), Department of Hindi, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.

#### Marathi

1. Vasta, Purva Pandit. **Navvadottari Gomantakiy MarathiKatha: Ek Chikitsak Abhyas (Pratinidhik Kathakaranchya Kathanchya Anushangane).** (Prof. Sanjaykumar Karandikar), Department of Marathi, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.

#### Persian

1. Ganie, Mehboob Hussain. **Resistance poetry of Ali Reza Qazveh: A critical study.** (Dr. Abid Gulzar), Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar.

## Sanskrit

1. Daulat Singh. **Sanskrtavanmaye balsahityasya paryalochanam.** (Dr. Saurabh Dubey), Department of Sahityam, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University, New Delhi.
2. Jain, Vipasha. **Dhwanayaloklochanshalokanam swayakhyanam shastriyanam samikshanam.** (Prof. Ramkumar Sharma), Department of Sahitya, Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi.
3. Mishra, Shubham. **Vaiyākaraṇasiddhāntabhūṣaṇasya lakārthasubarthanāmārthani rñayesu Niranjaniṭikāyāḥ dārśanikadr̥ṣṭyā samikṣātmakamadyayanam.** (Prof. Vinod Kumar Jha), Department of Vyākarna, Shree Somnath Sanskrit University, Veraval.
4. Mohapatra, Sakuntala. **Aryasaptasattyah prakasikavyakhyayah samiksatmakam sampadanam.** (Prof. Udaynath Jha), Department of Sahitya, Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi.
5. Nayak, Madhab. **Satikvyakarandeepestey sampadanam.** (Prof. Anupama Prusty), Department of Vyākarna, Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi.
6. Parminder Kaur. **Vartmankale manavswastheysarankshanartham Patanjalayogadarsanasya upadeyata (Visisya-yogakarnikasandarbhē).** (Prof. Prabhakar Prasad), Department of Sarva Darshana, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University, New Delhi.
7. Ranpurwala, Vandan Harshad. **A critical analysis of consistency in the Prasthānatrayī's Vedāntic principles in light of the Svāmīnārāyaṇa Bhāṣyam.** (Prof. Rabindrakumar Panda), Department of Sanskrit, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.
8. Raunak. **Ksiranavagranthasya samiksatmakamadyayanam.** (Dr. Yogendra Kumar Sharma), Department of Vastushastra, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University, New Delhi.

9. Ravaiya, Manoj Dhirajlal. **Sidhaddhaimshabdandushasne anubandhanam pryojansamiksha.** (Dr. Mayuriben Bhatia), Department of Sanskrit, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad.
10. Sharma, Vishnuprasad Durgaprasad. **Jyotishiya-horasandarbhē navmanshavargasya vishishtamadyayanam.** (Dr. Yogesh Trivedi), Department of Sanskrit, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.

## PERFORMING ARTS

### Dance

1. Shah, Ragini Jitendrabhai. **Bharat ke natyashastra tatha bharatiya yog ka parasparik sambandh: Ek tulanatmak adhyayan.** (Dr. Smruti Vaghela), Faculty of Performing Arts, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.

### Music

1. Pandya, Pranav Hitendrakumar. **Dwanilekhagar paramparao ka khazana (Uttar Bhartiya Shashtriya Gayan ke Paripreksh mein): Ek adhyayan.** (Dr. Ashwinikumar R Singh), Department of Music, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.

### Tabla

1. Bajpai, Akshita. **Pt Narad krut "Sangeet Makarand" granth me varnit taal evam Avanaddha vaadhyo ka samagralakshi adhyayan.** (Prof. Gaurang Bhavsar), Department of Tabla, M S University of Baroda, Vadodara.

### Philosophy

1. Nag, Rupon. **The concept of being: An existential approach.** (Prof. Debika Saha), Department of Philosophy, University of North Bengal, Darjeeling.

□

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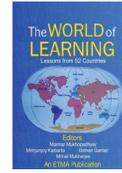
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3	Assistant Professor	Commerce /Business Law	02	OPEN-02
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6	Assistant Professor	Hindi	01	Open-01

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2	Assistant Professor	Commerce	02 CHB	OPEN - 02
3	Assistant Professor	Zoology	01 CHB	OPEN - 01
4	Assistant Professor	Chemistry	05 CHB	OPEN - 05
5	Assistant Professor	Physics	02 CHB	OPEN - 02
6	Assistant Professor	Marathi	01 CHB	OPEN - 01
7	Assistant Professor	Mathematics/Statistics	04 CHB	OPEN - 04
8	Assistant Professor	Economics	02 CHB	OPEN - 02

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