

MINDSCAPES

Department of English & Humanities

University of Engineering and Management
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Editor's Message

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the latest edition of *Mindscales*, the biannual magazine of our department. This volume, covering the first half of 2025, stands as a testament to the creativity, insight, and intellectual energy that define our academic community. In a world where change is the only constant, the written word continues to anchor us—to reflect, to question, to connect. The contributions in this edition span across a rich spectrum of thought: from critical essays and creative writing to reviews, reflections, and department highlights. Each piece resonates with the unique voice of its author, offering a glimpse into the many minds that shape our shared space of learning.

This edition also captures moments of departmental life that go beyond the classroom—seminars, cultural events, student achievements, faculty research, and collaborative ventures that have added to the vibrancy of our academic calendar. As editor, I am grateful to all the contributors, student volunteers, and faculty members who supported the making of this issue. Your enthusiasm and dedication continue to make *Mindscales* a meaningful platform for expression.

I hope this edition inspires you to think, to create, and above all, to engage—with ideas, with people, and with the evolving landscape of knowledge.

Warm regards,

Krishna Kumar Sharma

Editor, *Mindscales*

Department of English

UEM Jaipur



Chief Editor:
Krishna Kumar
Sharma



Editor
Sushant Pathak
B.Tech.
IIIrd Year
Electrical

DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITIES

Global Academic Exchange at UEM: Multidisciplinary Conference with ICERT India & USA

In a remarkable display of academic collaboration, the UEM Campus recently hosted a multidisciplinary conference in association with ICERT India & USA. Held on February 15th, 2025, the event saw the active participation of ICERT officials on campus.

Over a hundred papers were presented both online and offline, showcasing cutting-edge research across various disciplines. The conference provided a platform for scholars to exchange ideas, discuss emerging trends, and foster interdisciplinary dialogue.

This initiative not only highlighted UEM's commitment to academic excellence but also reinforced its role as a hub for innovative research and scholarly discourse. The event's success underscores the importance of international partnerships in advancing knowledge and addressing global challenges.



Panel Discussion Participation by Dr Mukesh Yadav

On behalf of UEM Jaipur - IEM-UEM Group, Prof. (Dr.) Mukesh Yadav, Associate Dean - Academics and Foreign Relations, participated as a Speaker in a Panel Discussion on "The Power of Tools in Education" at the Observe Now 9th Education Leaders Conclave event held at Hotel Eros, Nehru Place, New Delhi. The final panel of the day, titled "The Power of Tools in Education: Enhancing Learning through Technology," explored how educational tools are transforming learning. Dr Yadav shared the stage with several other experts of the industry.

Also, the University of Engineering and Management (UEM), Jaipur - IEM-UEM Group has been honored as the Most Promising University (Research and Development) 2025 at the same event, presented by Casio India and co-powered by LEO1.



Toastmasters Club Hosts a Voice Modulation Workshop

Toastmasters Club hosted a Voice Modulation workshop on February 24, 2025 led by voice coach and artist Saurav Thakuriya. Participants above 50 in number engaged in facial exercises including jaw loosening, lip trills, and tongue twisters to improve articulation. Vocal warm-ups featured humming scales, sirens, and resonance exercises to enhance projection and clarity.

Thakuriya demonstrated breathing techniques and pitch variation methods essential for dynamic speaking. Members practiced controlling pace and incorporating strategic pauses during interactive drills. The session concluded with personalized feedback, providing attendees with practical tools to elevate their vocal delivery and speaking effectiveness. The faculty coordinator of this event was Prof. Sanchari Basak. Student coordinators were Sagnik Dey, CSE AIML 2nd year, Abhishek Gupta, CSE 2nd year, and Khushi Kumari, BBA 2nd year.



Dr. Snehlata Dhaka Represents the Department at Prestigious Conference

Dr. Snehlata Dhaka, Associate Professor, Dept. of English and Humanities, Chaired the Session in the International Conference on Decolonising Narratives and Interpretations: Literary and Cultural Studies in India from 28 Feb. -1 March 2025. She also presented a paper titled Cultural Intelligence Or Cultural Imperialism in Present Era.



AICTE-Approved Faculty Development Program on Universal Human Values

3-Day Faculty Development Program (FDP) on Universal Human Values (UHV), approved by AICTE, was held at the University of Engineering and Management (UEM), Jaipur. A total of 65 faculty members from diverse institutions participated in the FDP, demonstrating their dedication to integrating universal human values into their teaching practices.

The stage proceedings were seamlessly conducted by Prof. Shivani Saini, ensuring the smooth progression of the event. The FDP aimed to provide faculty members with a foundational understanding of Universal Human Values, emphasizing ethics, meaningful human relationships, and societal well-being in education. This initiative aligns with AICTE's vision to promote holistic development among educators, fostering a value-based approach to teaching and learning.



On the last day of FDP, the participants enthusiastically shared their insights and learnings from the 3-day FDP program. Their reflections underscored the profound impact of the FDP on their understanding of universal human values and its relevance in academia. This was followed by the Valedictory Address delivered by Prof. (Dr.) Biswajoy Chatterjee, Vice Chancellor, UEM Jaipur. In his inspiring speech, he emphasized the importance of fostering brotherhood and harmony in society. Drawing from the lives of luminaries like Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Swami Vivekananda, he highlighted the timeless principles of compassion and service that underpin universal human values.





The FDP was graced with the presence of the resource persons- Dr. Piush Sharma, Dr. B.K. Sharma, and Dr. Alka Swami (Observer). Dr. B.K. Sharma delivered the concluding remarks, appreciating UEM Jaipur for its commendable efforts in organizing the FDP. The convenor of this event was Prof. (Dr.) Mukesh Yadav, Associate Dean – Academics and Foreign Relations. All members of the department attended this program and earned certificates provided by AICTE.

Prof. Sanchari Basak Completes FDP on AI-Driven Communication Pedagogy

Prof. Sanchari Basak, Assistant Professor, completed a five-day online Faculty Development Program on "Enhancing English Communication with AI: Tools, Trends, and Teaching Strategies." The program was organized by the Department of Science & Humanities (English) at Nehru Institute of Technology, Coimbatore, and took place on February 17-21, 2025. She has acquired skills in utilizing AI tools, understanding current trends, and implementing innovative teaching strategies for enhancing English communication instruction.

UEM LitFest 2025: A Celebration of Literature, Storytelling, and Cultural Dialogues

The UEM LitFest 2025, hosted by UEM Jaipur in collaboration with Voices, brought together an esteemed gathering of literary minds, scholars, and creative voices for an enriching day of discussions, readings, and reflections. The theme, "A Journey from Puranas to New Stories," captured the essence of bridging classical narratives with contemporary storytelling.

Inaugural Session

The festival commenced with a Welcome Tea, followed by the ceremonial Lighting of the Lamp, marking the auspicious beginning of the event. Prof. (Dr.) Biswajoy Chatterjee, Vice Chancellor, UEM Jaipur, delivered the Welcome Address, setting the tone for an intellectually invigorating day. Prof. Rajul Bhargava, Founder and Editor of Voices, shared her Opening Remarks, emphasizing the evolving landscape of literature.



Prof. (Dr.) Pradeep Kumar Sharma, Registrar, UEM Jaipur, provided insights into the university's contributions to literature and academia. The Chief Guest Address was delivered by Prof. Sudhi Rajiv, Vice Chancellor, Haridev Joshi University of Journalism and Mass Communication, Jaipur, who spoke on "Making the World Women Fit", highlighting gender narratives and empowerment in literature. The session also included a felicitation of the distinguished guests.

Poetry, Conversations, and Storytelling

The festival featured a series of engaging literary discussions:

- **Meenakshi Bharat & Neha Bansal** in conversation with **Sudha Rai** explored *Troubled Testimonies & Nostalgic Reminiscences*, delving into memory, trauma, and literature.
- **Rachna Singh & Tabeenah Anjum** engaged with **Mini Nanda** on *Myriad Musings and Pictorial Storytelling*, highlighting the visual and textual interplay in storytelling.

- **Ashutosh Singh** discussed *Mythopoesis & Mythology Revisited* with **Jaishree Bhargava**, reinterpreting ancient myths in modern contexts.
- **Misna Chanu & Urmil Talwar** sharing insights on *Flames of Distant Mountains*, exploring themes of displacement, identity, and belonging.
- The final session featured **Ronojoy Sircar & Maheeka Nanda** in an insightful discussion on *Ways of Seeing—Reseeing*, encouraging new perspectives on literature and art.



Honoring Literary Excellence

The day concluded with the Literary Excellence Icon Awards, recognizing outstanding contributions to the field of literature. The event wrapped up with a heartfelt Vote of Thanks by Dr. Mukesh Yadav, expressing gratitude to the speakers, organizers, and participants for making the LitFest a resounding success.

The UEM LitFest 2025 stood as a testament to the transformative power of literature, bridging the past with the present and inspiring the future. It was a confluence of diverse voices, thought-provoking discussions, and creative expressions, reaffirming the enduring relevance of storytelling in all its forms.



Day Two:

Litfest 2025: A Celebration of Creativity and Talent

The University of Engineering & Management, Jaipur successfully hosted Litfest 2025 on March 9, 2025, bringing together 150 enthusiastic students from diverse academic backgrounds. The event was a vibrant platform that showcased talent, creativity, and intellectual engagement through various competitions and activities.

Diverse Events, Unmatched Enthusiasm

The festival featured a range of literary, artistic, and intellectual competitions, ensuring active participation from students across disciplines.

- **Anime Quiz (Seminar Hall, First Floor)**

Students tested their knowledge of anime culture, engaging in a thrilling contest of wit and trivia.





- **Model United Nations (MUN) (Board Room, First Floor)**

Participants demonstrated diplomatic skills, debating global issues with compelling arguments and innovative solutions



- **IQ Arena (Seminar Hall, First Floor)**

A battle of intellect unfolded as students competed in this high-energy quiz competition.

- **Mehendi Sparkles (Ground Floor Hall)**

Artistic expression flourished as students showcased intricate mehendi designs, blending tradition with creativity.



- **Awaaz-e-Hunar – The Speech Contest (Basement Auditorium)**

The power of oration came alive as participants delivered impactful speeches on diverse topics.

- **Vichar – The Creative Writing Challenge (Basement Auditorium)**

Budding writers poured their thoughts onto paper, crafting compelling narratives and thought-provoking essays.

- **Exposure Control Shot (Ground Floor Hall)**

Photography enthusiasts captured mesmerizing shots, playing with angles and lighting to create visual masterpieces.

- **Cultural Program (Ground Floor Hall)**

A vibrant display of music, dance, and drama brought the festival to life, celebrating artistic diversity.



A Day of Celebration and Recognition

The event concluded with a **grand Prize Distribution Ceremony**, honoring the winners of various competitions. The students were honoured with Cash Prize, Medals and Certificates. An extended interaction session allowed participants to reflect on their experiences, fostering a spirit of learning and camaraderie.





The Spirit of Litfest 2025

With 150 students actively participating, Litfest 2025 was a true celebration of intellect, culture, and artistry. The University of Engineering & Management, Jaipur, successfully provided a dynamic platform for students to express, compete, and excel, ensuring that the legacy of Litfest continues to inspire in the years to come.



Toastmasters Club Excels in Speech and Table Topics Contests

UEM Jaipur Toastmasters Club participated and demonstrated exceptional prowess in Convergence 2.0, Area contest of Division C District 98 on 23rd March, securing outstanding results in two key categories.

In the International Speech Contest, club members TM Aastha (Secretary) and TM Shibagni (VP-Education) showcased remarkable oratory skills, delivering compelling and thought-provoking presentations that resonated with the judges. Similarly, in the Table Topics Contest, TM Abhishek (VP-Membership) and TM Shibagni (VP-Education) exhibited remarkable spontaneity and quick thinking, effectively articulating impromptu speeches with confidence and creativity. TM Sanchari (Treasurer) presented the club report of last six months educational session highlighting Club Awards, Executive Committee Training and PR activities. The club's performance highlighted the members' strong communication abilities and strategic speech preparation, reflecting their commitment to personal and professional development through Toastmasters. Faculty Coordinator, Prof. Sanchari Basak



National Recognition for Dr. Mukesh Yadav at AICTE UHV Conference

Prof. (Dr.) Mukesh Yadav attended the 3-day National Conference for UHV Volunteers, organized by AICTE from April 3-5, 2025.

The conference brought together over 110 UHV volunteers from across India, invited by AICTE. During the Conference, Dr Mukesh Yadav was unanimously nominated as* Representative* of UHV AICTE of North Western Region.

❁The Conference began with an inaugural session graced by our **Hon'ble Chief Guest Prof. T.G. Sitharam, Chairman, AICTE.**

📖The volunteers dove into deep and meaningful sessions discussing the need and impact of Universal Human Values (UHV) in education.

🌐Volunteers and educators from every corner of the country — *NR, NWR, NER, SR, SWR, CR regions* — came together in the spirit of unity and growth.

What made the Conference truly special was meeting two inspiring individuals:

□ **Prof. H.D. Charan, Former Chairman, NCCIP-UHV**

🏠 **Gajnes Bagaria ji, a foundational force behind the UHV movement**

Though it was called a "conference," it felt more like a family reunion 🏠🔄 The genuine care, shared values, and heartfelt exchanges made me feel at home, surrounded by an *extended family of changemakers*

Truly grateful for the learnings, the soulful conversations, and the reaffirmation that education rooted in *human values* can *transform lives and communities* 🌱🌐



Prof. Krishna Kumar Sharma Completes MHRD Innovation Cell's Online Training on Innovation and IPR

Prof. Krishna Kumar Sharma, faculty member in the Department of English and Humanities, has successfully completed the Innovation Ambassador Foundation Level Online Training for the academic year 2024–25.

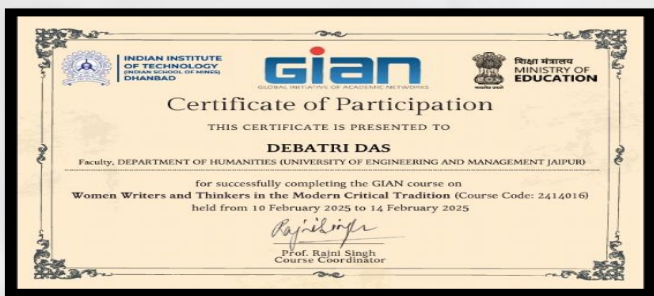
This training was conducted by the Ministry of Education's Innovation Cell (MIC) under the aegis of the Government of India. The training aimed at building awareness and foundational knowledge on Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) among faculty, empowering them to foster an ecosystem of creativity and innovation within educational institutions. Through structured modules, participants were introduced to the fundamentals of idea generation, design thinking, IPR processes, and innovation promotion strategies. The certification reflects Prof. Sharma's proactive engagement with national innovation initiatives and his commitment to integrating contemporary skillsets and entrepreneurial thinking into the academic framework. His successful completion of this program contributes to the department's broader vision of cultivating a culture of innovation and interdisciplinary excellence.



Prof. Debatri Das Excels in GIAN and NPTEL Courses

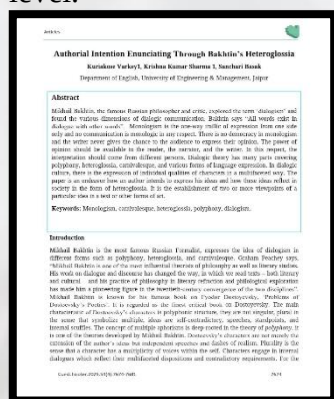
Debatri Das, Assistant Professor, Department of English and Humanities, has successfully completed 4 Week NPTEL Online Course on Indian Feminism: Concepts and Issues. She is placed among 5 percent Top rank holders. She has also successfully completed a GIAN course on Women Writers and Thinkers in the Modern Critical Tradition (Course Code: 2414016) held from 10 February 2025 to 14 February 2025.





Collaborative Research Published in Scopus-Indexed Journal

Prof. Kuriakose Varkey, Prof. Krishna Kumar Sharma, and Prof. Sanchari Basak, esteemed faculty members from the Department of English and Humanities, have jointly authored a research paper titled **“Authorial Intention Enunciating Through Bakhtin’s Heteroglossia.”** This scholarly work has been published in **Cuestiones de Fisioterapia**, a Scopus-indexed international journal, marking a significant academic achievement for the department. The paper delves into the concept of heteroglossia as theorized by Mikhail Bakhtin, exploring how multiple layers of meaning and authorial intention can be articulated through diverse voices in literary texts. The authors offer a nuanced reading of dialogism and its critical implications, thereby contributing to contemporary literary discourse and interdisciplinary research. This publication not only reflects the faculty’s ongoing commitment to scholarly excellence but also enhances the department’s academic visibility at the global level.



Prof. Sanchari Basak Excels in NPTEL Course on Employment Communication

Prof. Sanchari Basak, Assistant Professor in the Department of English and Humanities, University of Engineering and Management, Jaipur, has successfully completed an **8-week NPTEL online course** titled **"Employment Communication: A Lab-Based Course"**, securing an impressive **84% score**.

This course, offered by the National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), focused on enhancing practical communication skills essential for professional environments, including resume writing, interview techniques, group discussions, and workplace interactions. Prof. Basak's achievement demonstrates her ongoing commitment to professional development and her dedication to integrating industry-relevant communication strategies into academic practice. Her success also reinforces the department's mission to continuously update pedagogical approaches through structured learning and skill enhancement.



Monika Daria Successfully Completes Ph.D. Viva Voce – A Historic Milestone for the Department of English

We are delighted to share that Ms. Monika Daria has successfully completed the Final Defense Viva-Voce of her Ph.D. on May 5, 2025, marking a historic academic achievement. She is the first Ph.D. scholar to be awarded the Doctoral Degree from the Department of English, University of Engineering and Management, Jaipur.

Ms. Daria pursued her doctoral research under the supervision of Dr. Snehlata Dhaka, Associate Professor, Department of English, UEM Jaipur. Her thesis, titled **"Communal and Humanitarian Issues in Selected Partition Fiction and Films,"** offers a deeply analytical and timely exploration of one of the most defining and traumatic events in the Indian subcontinent's history. Bridging literature and cinema, her work investigates the complex social, political, and humanitarian issues that emerged from the Partition, using both narrative and visual media as her critical lenses. The viva voce was conducted at 10:30 AM in the Board Room, First Floor, Academic Building I, and was graced by a distinguished panel of scholars:

- Dr. Anita Singh, Professor and Head, Department of English, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi – joined virtually as the External Expert
- Dr. Srinivas Rao, Tabuk University, Saudi Arabia – joined virtually as an External Expert

- Dr. Preeti Bhatt, Head, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, MNIT Jaipur – attended as the Observer
- Dr. Rajul Bhargava, Professor and Former Head, Department of English, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur – attended as an External DRC Member
- Dr. Pradeep Kumar Sharma, Registrar, University of Engineering and Management, Jaipur

The defense was attended by members of the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) and Departmental Research Committee (DRC) of English and Humanities, the University Research Board, Heads of various departments, and numerous faculty members who came together to witness and celebrate this remarkable occasion.

Monika Daria's achievement is a personal academic triumph and a symbolic milestone for the department. It not only reinforces our growing research culture but also opens the door for future scholars and doctoral aspirants in English at UEM Jaipur.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Ms. Monika Daria on this outstanding accomplishment and wish her continued success in her academic and professional journey.



ICELTS-2025/ICAELS-2025 A Resounding Success at the University of New South Wales, Australia

The International Conference on English Language and Teaching Skills (ICELTS-2025) and the International Conference on Advances in English Language Studies (ICAELS-2025), held at the prestigious University of New South Wales, Australia, emerged as a truly unforgettable academic celebration. Exceeding all expectations, the twin conferences brought together scholars, educators, and researchers from around the globe in a dynamic blend of intellectual exchange, cultural connection, and global collaboration.



The event witnessed:

- 25 distinguished speakers and 31 presenters showcasing cutting-edge research and pedagogical innovations.
- Participation of 200+ delegates from over 10 countries, creating a rich platform for international academic dialogue.
- Foreign collaborations and MoUs, opening new pathways for cross-border partnerships and academic exchange.
- A variety of academic formats including hands-on workshops, poster presentations, and thematic group discussions, creating an engaging and immersive learning atmosphere.
- An industrial visit, offering practical insights into the application of communication and language training in professional contexts.
- A vibrant award ceremony, celebrating excellence in scholarship, with special recognition for Best Paper Awards.

- A nostalgic and joyful Alumni Meet, rekindling bonds and shared memories.
- A memorable city tour of Sydney, featuring iconic landmarks such as the Sydney Opera House, panoramic views from the Sydney Tower, and explorations of the city's cultural and commercial hubs.



The conferences provided not just a forum for sharing knowledge but a global platform for building lasting academic and professional relationships. The Department extends its heartfelt gratitude to the organizers, keynote speakers, delegates, volunteers, and participants whose efforts made ICEELTS-2025/ICAELS-2025 a grand success. We look forward to the next chapter in this exciting journey of academic collaboration and excellence.



WRITING SECTION

The Legend of Sharma Sir: A Satire

Krishna Kumar Sharma
Assistant Professor,
Department of English



At the prestigious office of VisionTech Solutions Pvt. Ltd., where walls were decorated with inspirational quotes no one read and people nodded thoughtfully at graphs they didn't understand, there existed a legend. A man so powerful, so omnipresent, so perpetually correct, that employees whispered his name as if it were an HR-approved mantra. His name? Sharma Sir. Nobody knew exactly what Sharma Sir did. His job title changed more often than the office Wi-Fi password: sometimes he was "Strategic Innovation Head," other times "Mentor of Global Excellence," and once, for a brief but glorious period, "Ambassador of Purpose."

What Sharma Sir did do was speak. Profusely. In long-winded metaphors involving cricket, the Mahabharata, and once, confusingly, Maggi noodles. "Let me tell you," he'd declare in Monday meetings, "a team is like a tiffin—if one dabba is empty, the whole lunch is incomplete." Applause would erupt. It was unclear what it meant, but who were they to question wisdom? His most loyal devotee was Priya Ma'am, self-declared "Sharma Sir's biggest fan" and official head of agreeing with him. "Sir, what you said just now—pure brilliance. It's like... spiritual corporate enlightenment," she'd gush after he used the word "synergy" fourteen times in a single sentence. Then there was Tapan, the office yes-man. His main responsibilities included laughing before anyone else did, clapping after Sharma Sir's pauses (even accidental ones), and ensuring all emails ended with "As per Sharma Sir's vision..." One day, Sharma Sir called a Town Hall to unveil his latest initiative: Project G.R.O.W. (Gratitude, Resilience, Ownership, Wisdom—a list he came up with while stuck in traffic). "This," he proclaimed, adjusting his Nehru jacket, "is not a project. It's a movement. It's not just about growing revenue; it's about growing ourselves." Priya Ma'am began writing a poem on the spot. Tapan fainted briefly. Someone from HR offered to frame Sharma Sir's words next to the biometric scanner. In the crowd sat Ankit, a young software engineer who had joined

last month. Full of dreams and logic, he made the fatal error of asking, "Sir, is this connected to our stalled product release or is it more of a motivational... theme?"

The silence was immediate. The coffee machines stopped. A crow cawed dramatically outside. Sharma Sir smiled the kind of smile that says, "I will forgive, but I will never forget." Priya Ma'am gasped. Tapan clicked "Unfollow" on Ankit's LinkedIn without breaking eye contact. Ankit was soon transferred to the "Special Research Desk," also known as the corner seat behind the pantry, and told to "reflect deeply on alignment with organizational values." Project G.R.O.W. eventually evolved into G.L.O.W. (Gratitude, Loyalty, Obedience, Worship), and then finally just "Project SIR," a monthly celebration of Sharma Sir's contributions. Office walls were redecorated with his quotes. One door was renamed "The Sharma Gateway." Product releases remained delayed, budgets were revised, and clients grew impatient—but morale, according to internal surveys conducted by Priya Ma'am herself, was at an "all-time inspired high."

And as for Sharma Sir? He was nominated for "Thought Leader of the Year" at an awards function he personally sponsored. In the end, no one remembered what Sharma Sir's original job was. But everyone remembered to agree with him. And that, in Vision Tech Solutions Pvt. Ltd., was more than enough.

Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities for Language Learning in the Global Educational Landscape

Dr. Snehlata Dhaka
Associate Professor,
Department of English



Technological advancements, educational paradigms, and the increasing interconnectedness of the world have shaped the way languages are taught and learned. The global educational system presents both challenges and opportunities for language learning in contemporary times. Landscape of language learning is marked by a dynamic interplay of challenges and opportunities. While issues like technology distractions, resource disparities, and standardized testing can hinder language acquisition, but digital revolution, globalization, and evolving pedagogical approaches provide new avenues for enhancing and expanding language learning experiences. By embracing these opportunities and addressing the challenges, educators can help create more inclusive, effective, and engaging language learning environments.

A language is not merely a tool of communication; it carries within a worldview, a way of life, and an entire cultural and spiritual lineage. In India we speak hundreds of languages, and each one tells a unique story with a deep sense of belonging. India's National Education Policy (NEP) in the year 2020 introduced the idea of a three-language policy. The stated aim is simple: students would learn three languages throughout their formal education years—their mother tongue (regional language), Hindi, and English. The goal is to prepare students for a globalized world and at the same time encourage multilingualism and national unity. There is sometimes hesitation in embracing our own linguistic traditions. If one suggests that a child should learn an Indian regional language, a common response might be: "What practical advantage does that offer? Wouldn't Mandarin, Spanish, or Japanese be more beneficial?" Proficiency in widely spoken languages such as Hindi and English offers practical benefits, and preserving and learning one's native language is crucial for maintaining cultural, philosophical, and spiritual heritage. Unity grows when all languages are valued, rather than when one takes precedence over others. India's linguistic diversity can be one of its greatest strengths.

Multiple languages of India should not be viewed as barriers but as contributors to a shared, enriched cultural and spiritual discourse. Languages are not competing for survival but are coexisting as pathways to wisdom, and where linguistic diversity is not seen as a challenge but an opportunity for richer literature and deeper connections. The government's initiatives, including bilingual teaching approaches, the translation of course materials, and the promotion of technical education in regional languages, reflect a commitment to making education more accessible, inclusive, and effective for every child in India.

The Role of Press and Social Media in Modern Indian Protest

Dr. Kuriakose Varkey
Assistant Professor,
Department of English



Social media plays a great role in spreading the elements of protest. Protest becomes a global phenomenon, where anything new changes arise from any corner. It is the right of an individual to protest when his mind does not feel it is right. In ancient days, there was no medium to express the opinion in public domain; the protest and freedom of expression were limited to certain aspects. Social media help to extend the elements of protest to a large mass. Social media are so powerful in these revolutionary eras of information technology. It can have its specific role in the propagation of social protest. It is one among the public platforms of the freedom of expression. Recent protests against National Register of Citizens, Citizens Amendment Act, protest against the Farm Law, and protest against Nirbhaya's brutal killing and other sexual atrocities. Protest a voluntary right of a social being and media is the mouth piece of the people in a democratic country. Being the biggest and greatest democracy, the Indian media have a great role to highlight the social issues and enlighten the mass, and only through the social media, people can raise the burning social issues. Due to the absence of media presence, there is violation of democratic elements and can be the reason for the increase in atrocities. When a totalitarian ruler grabs power, first he tries to restrict the powers of press and social media i.e. either regulate the power or bans the potentials of press. The Indian Constitution has granted equal rights to the citizens but its way of interpretation is something different. Then the only hope of the common mass is media, it is the third eye of the democracy. India is the second largest populated country with an enormous population, where the role of media is immense. Press and social media are the way to communicate with the people and socialize the problems. If any social stigma like rape, casteism brutal killings and other issues occurs in the society, the media enlighten the public through different articles, blogs and other pages of opinions and comments. The press and social media can make great impact on business, politics and behavioural changes. The press media report on the protest of farmers against Farm laws.

The central government led by Narendra Modi imposed three farm laws, which was against the interests of the farmers. They protested far and wide of North India against these anti- farmer laws and at last the government had to bend in front of the farmers and withdrew the laws and it became the victory of the entire farmers. In this juncture, the role of Bhartiya Kishan Union and the All-India Kishan Sabha, led by joint secretary Vijoo Krishnan.

Farmers take out tractor march against farm laws

"There were about 300 tractors when we flagged off the march from the Sampla toll gate. But as we joined the KMP [the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal] expressway, there were thousands more, it is no exaggeration to say there were thousands of tractors and farm vehicles joining is on the road," said AIKS joint secretary Vijoo Krishnan, who took part in the first stage of the march.

"This is a clear warning to the Modi-led BJP government that unless the three Acts and the draft Electricity Bill are withdrawn, the struggle will continue. This is only a rehearsal, nothing in comparison to what will happen on Republic Day. Not only in Delhi, but in every state, in every district of the country, we are preparing for similar tractor parades," he added. Haryana farmers affiliated to the Bhartiya Kisan Union faction headed by Gurnam Singh Chaduni are part of the large group moving from Singhu towards Tikri. "There are several kilometres of tractors here with us, I cannot even estimate how many people," said Rakesh Bains, a BKU-Chaduni spokesperson who is on the road with this group. "We are sending the message that we are preparing like this for January 26. The government should accept this. To our farming community, we send the message that they should all come out on January 26, for the sake of our country, and to raise the issues important to us," [1] he added.

"In the coming days, we will intensify our agitation against the three farm laws. Around 2,500 tractors from Haryana have participated in today's march. "We want to warn that if the government does not accept our demands, farmers' protest will get intensified further," Abhimanyu Kohar, a senior member of Samyukta Kisan Morcha.

Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), National Register of Citizens (NRC).

“In the widespread protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, many outside the Northeast are looking at it in combination with a proposed nationwide NRC. Why does that worry so many people, particularly Muslims? How will Indians prove citizenship?” [2].

There were violent protests occurred against CAA and NRC last few years back in many parts of the country as the central govt. passed certain rules in the parliament regarding CAA and NRC. The agitation spread violently especially in north eastern parts of our country. The print and social media had a great role to get the reach of these agitation to the common mass lively through their respective platforms. Few years back India govt. decided to give the citizenship to the minorities such as Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, Jains and Christians etc. dwelling the neighbouring countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh Malaysia, Indonesia and other Muslim countries. In all these countries, Muslims are the major population and other communities are being treated as second grade citizens, as the centre says. It becomes a great problem for the Indian Muslims residing especially the north east for many centuries like the Rohingyas. Their forefathers migrated from Myanmar for centuries back and most of them had Indian ration card like any other Indians. A lion's share of Bengali population is the migrants from Bangladesh but they have already the ration card and other documents related to the Indian citizenship. This Act also violates the article 15 because this act doesn't give citizenship to Muslim against Secularism [3].

Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case 2012

The press and social media played a great role in this case. It was a brutal murder of girl, who was coming to her hostel with her friend by a bus, the employees of the bus, driver, conductor and cleaner brutally raped and murdered her and fatally injured her friend, thrown out of the bus near a bush. It was a shocking news to the entire Indians. Still the parents of all girls live in terror when they think about the barbarous incident. The media stepped into the role of empowering the entire nation and people conducted nationwide protests. One of the convicts,

Ram Singh died during the trial period four adult convicts sentenced to death; all were executed on 20 March 2020 at 5:30 AM IST at the Tihar Prison Complex, New Delhi. Juvenile convict Mohammed Afroz released on 20 December 2015. Looking into the bare need of the definition of the minor

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill 2015 was passed by the Rajya Sabha. Juvenile convict served the maximum imprisonment of three years under Juvenile Justice laws applicable when the crime was committed.

The 2012 Delhi gang rape and murder case involved a rape and fatal assault that occurred on 16 December 2012 in Munirka, a neighbourhood in South West Delhi. The incident took place when Jyoti Singh, a 22-year-old physiotherapy intern, was beaten, gang-raped, and tortured in a private bus in which she was travelling with her male friend. There were six others in the bus, including the driver, all of whom raped the woman and beat her friend. Eleven days after the assault, she was transferred to a hospital in Singapore for emergency treatment but died two days later. The incident generated widespread national and international coverage and was widely condemned, both in India and abroad. Subsequently, public protests against the state and central governments for failing to provide adequate security for women took place in New Delhi, where thousands of protesters clashed with security forces. Similar protests took place in major cities throughout the country. Since Indian law does not allow the press to publish a rape victim's name, the victim was widely known as Nirbhaya, meaning "fearless", and her struggle and death became a symbol of women's resistance to rape around the world.

All the accused were arrested and charged with sexual assault and murder. One of the accused, Ram Singh, died in police custody from possible suicide on 11 March 2013. According to some published reports, the police say Ram Singh hanged himself, but the defence lawyers and his family allege he was murdered. The rest of the accused went on trial in a fast-track court; the prosecution finished presenting its evidence on 8 July 2013. On 10 September 2013, the four adult defendants – Pawan Gupta, Vinay Sharma, Akshay Thakur and Mukesh Singh (Ram Singh's brother) – were found guilty of rape and murder and three days later were sentenced to death. In the death reference case and hearing appeals on 13 March 2014, Delhi High Court upheld the guilty verdict and the death sentences. On 18 December 2019, the Supreme Court of India rejected the final appeals of the condemned perpetrators of the attack. The four adult convicts were executed by hanging on 20 March 2020. The juvenile Mohammed Afroz was convicted of rape and murder and given the maximum sentence of three years' imprisonment in a reform facility, as per the Juvenile Justice Act.

As a result of the protests, in December 2012, a judicial committee was set up to study and take public suggestions for the best ways to amend laws to provide quicker investigation and prosecution of sex offenders. After considering about 80,000 suggestions, the committee submitted a report which indicated that failures on the part of the government and police were the root cause behind crimes against women. In 2013, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013 was promulgated by President Pranab Mukherjee, several new laws were passed, and six new fast-track courts were created to hear rape cases. Critics argue that the legal system remains slow to hear and prosecute rape cases, but most agree that the case has resulted in a tremendous increase in the public discussion of crimes against women and statistics show that there has been an increase in the number of women willing to file a crime report. However, in December 2014, two years after the attack, the victim's father called the promises of reform unmet and said that he felt regret in that he had not been able to bring justice for his daughter and other women like her. A BBC documentary titled India's Daughter based on the attack was broadcast in the UK on 4 March 2015. Indian-Canadian filmmaker Deepa Mehta's 2016 film Anatomy of Violence was also based on the incident, exploring the social conditions and lack of mental and sexual education in Indian society that made it possible. The Netflix original 2019 TV series Delhi Crime is based on the Delhi Police's search for the culprits of this case.[4]Wikipedia.

Candlelight march for Nirbhaya

Nirbhaya's parents took to social media to issue an open invitation for a candlelight march to commemorate the day on which their 23-year-old daughter succumbed to her injuries two years ago. They also renewed their demand for capital punishment for those convicted of gang-raping and killing her. Her father Badrinath Singh Pandey said he and his wife Asha Devi had posted a video appeal on YouTube and approached online activists for help in spreading the word. They will gather at Jantar Mantar here on December 29 – the day Nirbhaya was declared dead post the horrific December 16 gang-rape in 2012. “It is not an agitation but a peaceful candlelight march on the day our daughter decided to allow death to take her. Through it we will appeal to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to intervene and ensure that her killers are handed down the death sentence,” Mr. Pandey told The Hindu. “Where is the fast-track

justice that they (the government) had promised us? The men responsible for her brutalisation are still alive and nestled in comfort in prison. Things are the same as they were when my daughter was victimised despite the public outrage, the new laws and the assurances Mr Pandey added Published by a user named ‘Kranti Wala Videos’ and titled ‘Nirbhaya Mom’s Invite on Christmas Day (sic.)’, the post lasts a little over two minutes and was made on December 25 which, according to Asha Devi, was the day in 2012 when she spoke to her daughter “for the last time”. “I am Nirbhaya’s mother,” Asha Devi begins by saying. “... have just one request to make to all of you...Today (December 25) is the day Nirbhaya’s health deteriorated and she lost her voice...Please come to Jantar Mantar on December 29...Please come,” a tearful Asha Devi continues. The physiotherapy intern, who had been initially treated at Delhi’s Safdarjung Hospital for 10 days was airlifted to a super-speciality hospital in Singapore on December 27. The next morning, however, doctors declared her dead and attributed her death to irreparable intestinal injuries. While seeking justice for his daughter will be his primary demand, Mr. Pandey said he and his wife will also appeal to the government and the Prime Minister to ensure better safety for women across the country. “Rapes are continuing, women and girls are suffering despite Nirbhaya’s sacrifice. The government needs to go the extra mile on the issue of crimes against women and make the country safer for them. We want to tell this to the Prime Minister personally and would like to meet him as and when his schedule permits,” Mr. Pandey said [5].

Social media and the press media highlight the social issues vigorously as it is a part of their social responsibility. They should work as the mouth piece of the society and raise their voice against the social ills. The press and other media should never be the puppet of the ruling party, but my recent observation is that certain media are working for the ruling party some times. Even the apex court also has criticized and given their verdict in this regard. But the press media like ‘The Hindu’ works sincerely in the right way of safeguarding the interest of the society and highlight the common mass problems in the light.

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ChatGPT, Cheating, and Chai: Classroom in the Digital Age

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Introduction: Arre yaar, picture this: you're sipping kadak chai in the college canteen, stressing over a last-minute assignment, and your friend whispers, "Bhai, ChatGPT se karwa le!" Welcome to the digital classroom, where AI tools like ChatGPT are as common as chai stalls outside every Indian campus. But with great power comes great drama—especially when it comes to cheating. Is ChatGPT your study buddy or a shortcut to trouble? Let's dive into how this AI revolution is shaking up Indian colleges, with a side of masti and some desi tadka. ChatGPT: The New Classroom Hero ChatGPT, made by OpenAI, is like that one dost who knows everything—history, coding, even how to write a love letter (not that we're suggesting you try that). It's a chatbot that can churn out essays, solve math problems, or explain quantum physics faster than you can say "ek cutting chai." Indian students, from DU to IITs, are hooked. A 2023 survey by an Indian ed-tech platform found that 65% of college students in metro cities have used AI tools for assignments. Bhai, it's like having a genie, minus the lamp but with Wi-Fi. Whether you're in a Mumbai hostel or a Bengaluru PG, ChatGPT helps with everything from drafting project reports to cracking coding assignments. But here's the catch: jab yeh AI itna smart hai, toh cheating ka temptation bhi bada hai. It's like leaving a plate of samosas unattended at a college fest—someone's gonna grab it! Funny Aside: Imagine ChatGPT as your over-enthusiastic tuition teacher: "Beta, main sab kuch solve kar dunga, bas ek prompt de do!" But when the professor asks you to explain your code, you're left scratching your head like, "Yeh toh AI ne likha, maine toh sirf copy-paste kiya!" The Cheating Ka Khel Let's be real—cheating isn't new. Back in the day, it was chits hidden in pencil boxes or "bhai, side se dikha de" during exams. Now, ChatGPT has taken it to the next level. You can ask it to write a 500-word essay on the Mughal Empire, and it'll deliver faster than Swiggy. . But when students submit AI-generated work as their own, it's like passing off your mom's biryani as your own cooking. . Not cool, na? A 2024 report from an Indian academic integrity platform flagged that 40% of assignments in top colleges showed AI-generated content.

Professors are getting sus, and tools like Turnitin are the new "class monitor," catching AI ka chhupa rustam. In a Delhi college, a student got caught when his "original" essay on Rabindranath Tagore sounded like it was written by a robot with a PhD. Spoiler: it was ChatGPT. But here's the twist—not every use of ChatGPT is cheating. Using it to brainstorm ideas or understand a concept is like asking your senior for notes. It's only when you copy-paste without thinking that you're in "phata poster, nikla zero" territory. Hinglish Humor: Arre, ChatGPT se pooch ke assignment kiya, par viva mein prof ne poocha, "Yeh kya hai?" Aur tu bola, "Sir, yeh toh AI ka jadoo hai!" Result? Backlog ka dhamaka! Redefining the Desi Classroom So, how do we keep ChatGPT from becoming the villain in our college story? Indian professors are getting creative, and students need to keep up. Here's how to make AI your chai-time buddy, not your exam ka bandhan: 1. Use AI Like a Study Partner Instead of letting ChatGPT do all the kaam, use it to get a head start. For example, ask it to outline your economics paper, then add your own masala. A college in Pune tried this, making students rewrite AI drafts in their own words. Result? Assignments with desi swag and no copy-paste drama. 2. Exams That AI Can't Crack Professors are switching to in-class tests, group discussions, or viva-voce sessions. In a Chennai college, students now present their projects in front of the class, explaining their process. Try getting ChatGPT to do that while you're nervously sipping chai! These formats force you to actually learn, not just Ctrl+C, Ctrl+V. 3. Sikhao Digital Imaandari Colleges need to teach students how to use AI ethically. In a Bangalore institute, they started workshops on "Digital Imaandari," explaining when AI use is okay and when it's a no-no. It's like learning not to steal your roommate's chai stash—basic ethics, bhai! 4. Tech vs. Tech Some colleges are using AI-detection tools to catch ChatGPT's handiwork. It's like a digital "chai chhanni" filtering out the fake stuff. But overusing these tools can make students feel like they're in Bigg Boss, with cameras watching every move. Balance is key. Hindi Punchline: "ChatGPT se cheating kiya? Arre, prof ne AI detector laga diya—ab toh bas 'game over, yaar!'" Chai, Chitchat, and Collaboration In India, chai is life. Whether it's late-night canteen sessions or hostel debates, chai brings people together.

ChatGPT can be part of that vibe—use it to spark group discussions or explain tough concepts. A student from an Ahmedabad college said, “Maine ChatGPT se thermodynamics samjha, but apne dosto ke saath chai pe discussion ne asli clarity di.” That’s the magic of combining AI with desi collaboration. Think of ChatGPT as the chaiwala who serves you a quick cup, but the real flavor comes from your own effort. Form study groups, argue over concepts, and let AI be the sidekick, not the hero. After all, no one ever aced an exam by just drinking chai—they had to study too!

The Road Ahead The digital classroom is like a Bollywood movie—full of twists, drama, and potential for a happy ending. ChatGPT can be a game-changer if used right. Colleges in India, from Kolkata to Coimbatore, are experimenting with AI-friendly policies. For example, an IIT introduced “AI-assisted coding challenges,” where students use ChatGPT to debug code but explain their logic in person. It’s like making chai with a recipe but adding your own elaichi for that personal touch. Students, too, need to step up. Next time you’re tempted to let ChatGPT write your essay, ask yourself: “Kya main yeh submit karke apne future ko impress kar paunga?” Probably not. Use AI to learn, not to cut corners.

Funny Closer: Picture this: you submit an AI-written essay, and your prof says, “Yeh toh ChatGPT ka masterpiece hai!” You smile nervously, thinking, “Ab toh bas chai pi ke rona baki hai.” Don’t be that student—be the one who aces the viva and treats their friends to chai later!

Conclusion ChatGPT, like a perfect cup of adrak wali chai, can warm up your study sessions if used wisely. The digital age classroom is a mix of tech and tradition, where AI can boost learning without stealing your thunder. So, Indian students, let’s embrace this tool, keep it imaandaar, and make our colleges proud. After all, life’s too short for bad chai or bad grades—let’s make both kadak!



Mobile Obsession Among Children: Where Does Responsibility Lie?

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In today's screen-driven society, we are constantly online — sending messages, watching videos, or scrolling endlessly. While this digital immersion might seem manageable for adults, the story is quite different for children. Are they simply following us into the virtual world, or are they being pushed in too early, too fast? Unfortunately, the answer is yes. Children — naturally curious and impressionable— are falling deep into the digital trap, and often, not by choice. So who's to blame for this increasing attachment to screens? In most cases, the answer is simple — parents. Without realizing the long-term consequences, many parents proudly watch their toddlers navigate mobile phones, swipe screens, or laugh at cartoons on YouTube. What appears to be smart behavior is actually the beginning of an unhealthy dependence. Ironically, the very people who later complain about their children's mobile obsession are the ones who introduced them to it in the first place.

Of course, the situation isn't one-sided. Mobile phones today are designed to attract and hold attention. Bright visuals, engaging music, interactive apps, and games that reward players frequently are all crafted to keep users — especially young ones — coming back. For children, who lack the maturity to set boundaries, everything on the screen is appealing and accessible. They cannot differentiate between what is suitable and what's harmful. Add to this the pressure of fitting in with peers who also have access to devices, and it becomes a spiral that's hard to break. The effects of this screen obsession are visible everywhere. Children today are sleeping less, interacting face-to-face far less than previous generations, and struggling with concentration. Constant notifications from apps and games break their attention. Exposure to inappropriate content, online threats, and cyberbullying are serious concerns. Physically, they suffer from strained eyes, poor posture, and weight issues due to a lack of physical activity.

Emotionally, family connections weaken as screens replace meaningful time with loved ones. This problem didn't arise overnight. It usually begins when parents — pressed for time — hand over a phone to a crying or restless child. What feels like a quick fix soon becomes a habit. Children get used to the entertainment and the easy attention a device provides, while parents grow dependent on it as a distraction tool. To change this, parents must lead the way. Instead of relying on gadgets, they must create healthy boundaries around screen use. Introduce “no-phone” zones at home. Replace screen time with family games, outdoor play, storytelling, or reading. Give children real-world experiences that are engaging and joyful. But most importantly, parents must examine their own behavior. If they're always glued to their own devices, children will naturally mimic them. Setting an example is more effective than setting rules. In conclusion, the issue of mobile addiction in children is real — but not unfixable. The change begins at home. With awareness, involvement, and consistent action, we can guide children back to a balanced life where technology supports their growth rather than hinders it.

Universal Human Values: The Moral Compass for a Harmonious World

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Human history is a tale of aspirations, achievements, conflicts, and transformations. Amidst technological revolutions and socio-political upheavals, humanity's inner yearning for meaning and peace has remained constant. At the heart of this pursuit lies a set of timeless principles that have guided civilizations and thinkers across millennia—what we refer to as universal human values. These values form the foundation of a just, compassionate, and sustainable world. The primary objective of this paper is to explore these universal human values not as abstract ideals, but as actionable principles that can foster individual fulfillment and societal harmony. In a world fraught with inequality, environmental degradation, and moral dilemmas, the call for re-centering our lives around these values has never been more critical.

Universal human values are ethical standards or principles that are considered to be inherently good and essential for the well-being of all human beings. They are “universal” because they are recognized and respected across different cultures, religions, and societies. Unlike subjective preferences or culturally specific norms, these values resonate deeply with the core of human conscience.

The core universal values include:

1. Truth (Satya) – Honesty, integrity, and the pursuit of knowledge

Truth is the foundation of all other values. It encompasses not just the act of speaking the truth but also living with authenticity, transparency, and intellectual sincerity. In personal life, truth reflects as honesty in speech and behavior—avoiding lies, deceit, and hypocrisy. In a broader sense, it means aligning one's thoughts, words, and actions with reality and moral conscience. Integrity is the natural companion of truth, implying consistency in values even when no one is watching. In the pursuit of knowledge, truth guides scientific inquiry, academic honesty, and openness to learning and unlearning.

A society rooted in truth fosters trust, justice, and progress, whereas falsehood corrodes relationships, institutions, and nations from within. Spiritual traditions across the world—from the Upanishads to the teachings of Socrates—emphasize truth as the highest virtue. It liberates the mind from delusion and helps individuals realize their highest potential.

2. Love (Prema) – Compassion, empathy, and kindness

Love, or Prema, is the binding force of human relationships and the soul of ethical living. Unlike romantic or possessive notions of love, universal love is unconditional and inclusive. It manifests as compassion toward those who suffer, empathy for others' perspectives and feelings, and kindness in thought, speech, and action. Love nurtures a sense of belonging, safety, and warmth, making it essential for human development. A loving society is one where mutual care replaces competition, and understanding replaces judgment. In family life, love fosters bonding and support; in education, it creates a safe and encouraging environment for growth; in social settings, it builds harmony across diversity. Love is also the antidote to hatred and indifference—it softens conflict, heals wounds, and restores broken trust. In spiritual terms, love is seen as the divine energy that connects all beings, transcending barriers of caste, creed, race, or nationality.

3. Peace (Shanti) – Inner calm, tolerance, and conflict resolution

Peace is not just the absence of war or violence, but a positive state of inner harmony and outward goodwill. It begins within the individual as mental clarity, emotional balance, and spiritual calmness. Inner peace allows individuals to navigate life's difficulties with grace and composure. It leads to tolerance—accepting and respecting differences without hostility. At the interpersonal and community level, peace is expressed through dialogue, patience, and non-reactivity in the face of provocation. Peace-building efforts, whether in families, schools, or nations, require a commitment to listening, understanding, and cooperation. Education for peace encourages emotional regulation, intercultural understanding, and nonviolent communication. Globally, peace is essential for sustainable development, humanitarian cooperation, and global citizenship.

Without peace, even the most well-meaning efforts falter under stress and conflict. Thus, peace is both the fruit of values and the condition for their flourishing.

4. Righteousness (Dharma) – Ethical conduct and justice

Dharma, or righteousness, is the principle of right action based on moral duty, fairness, and ethical judgment. It is about doing what is right—not because it is easy or beneficial, but because it is just. Dharma varies according to context (role, age, situation) but always reflects moral clarity and responsibility. A teacher's dharma is to educate with sincerity; a judge's is to deliver impartial justice; a citizen's is to act with integrity and civic sense. Righteousness guides both personal ethics and social justice. It ensures that power is used responsibly, laws are applied fairly, and the vulnerable are protected. In a world of competing interests and moral ambiguities, dharma provides a steady compass. It encourages self-discipline, accountability, and the courage to stand up against wrongdoing. Ancient Indian philosophy reveres dharma as the cosmic law that sustains order and harmony in the universe.

5. Non-violence (Ahimsa) – Respect for life, harmony with nature, and avoidance of harm

Ahimsa, or non-violence, is perhaps the most profound and far-reaching of all human values. It signifies a deep respect for all forms of life—human, animal, plant, and ecological. Non-violence is not limited to refraining from physical harm but includes refraining from harmful speech, thoughts, and intentions. It means choosing love over hatred, forgiveness over revenge, and dialogue over domination. Mahatma Gandhi elevated Ahimsa as a principle of political action, proving that great societal change can be achieved without violence. In personal life, non-violence nurtures patience, gentleness, and emotional maturity. It also extends to how we treat the environment: sustainable living, mindful consumption, and ecological conservation are all modern expressions of Ahimsa. In a world threatened by war, exploitation, and environmental destruction, the practice of non-violence is not a passive ideal but an urgent necessity for survival and coexistence. It fosters a culture of peace, compassion, and ecological wisdom.

These values have been articulated by spiritual leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda, and modern philosophers, and are echoed in the teachings of world religions and moral philosophies.

Historical and Philosophical Foundations:

From the **Upanishads** and **Buddhist teachings** in India, to **Confucianism** in China, to Stoic philosophy in the West, universal values have been central to philosophical inquiry. The **Declaration of Human Rights (1948)** by the United Nations enshrines many of these values as fundamental rights and obligations, reflecting a global consensus on their importance. Ancient Indian philosophy sees human life as a journey of self-realization, wherein universal values are not merely societal rules but essential tools for inner growth. Similarly, Western thinkers like **Kant** spoke of the "categorical imperative"—a principle that one should act only according to that maxim whereby one can, at the same time, will that it should become a universal law. The common thread in all traditions is the recognition that values are not optional luxuries, but necessities for civilization.

Relevance in Contemporary Society: Today, the world stands at a moral crossroads. Despite scientific progress and economic growth, society is plagued by rising violence, environmental degradation, anxiety, and erosion of trust. The relevance of universal human values in addressing these issues is profound:

- **In Politics:** Trustworthy governance rooted in integrity and justice
- **In Economy:** Ethical business practices, fair trade, and corporate social responsibility
- **In Education:** Value-based education that fosters empathy and critical thinking
- **In Environment:** Sustainable living and ecological mindfulness
- **In Technology:** Development guided by ethics and human welfare

Universal values help build a shared moral language amidst diversity. They enable dialogue over division, and cooperation over conflict.

Human Values in Education

Education is the most powerful medium for cultivating universal values. Unfortunately, the modern education system often emphasizes technical skills and competitive success at the expense of ethical development.

Value Education - integrating character development with academic learning—is a growing movement in many parts of the world. Programs that promote emotional intelligence, community service, mindfulness, and intercultural understanding are transforming classrooms into laboratories of peace.

For example, UNESCO's initiative on *Education for Sustainable Development* encourages critical thinking, global citizenship, and respect for all life forms. Similarly, India's National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes holistic development and moral reasoning.

A value-based education ensures that students do not just learn how to do things, but also why and whether they should.

Role in Personal Development

At the individual level, universal human values serve as a powerful internal compass, guiding our decisions, shaping our relationships, and influencing the trajectory of our personal growth. In a world filled with distractions, uncertainties, and moral complexities, these values offer clarity, stability, and purpose. When a person consciously aligns their life with principles such as truth, love, peace, righteousness, and non-violence, they cultivate not only ethical integrity but also emotional and spiritual well-being.

One of the most significant personal benefits of living by universal values is the development of emotional resilience. In daily life, people often face stress, disappointment, anxiety, and conflicts—be it in professional settings, family life, or social environments. Values such as peace and love equip individuals with the emotional tools needed to respond to such challenges calmly and constructively. Peace fosters inner stability, allowing a person to remain centered and composed even in times of chaos. Love, in the form of empathy and compassion, helps build deeper, more meaningful relationships and enables forgiveness and understanding when tensions arise. Together, these values act as buffers against the psychological toll of modern life, fostering mental health and emotional intelligence.

Additionally, universal values provide moral clarity—the ability to distinguish right from wrong, and the courage to act accordingly. In a world where individuals are often exposed to conflicting interests, moral dilemmas, and ethical gray areas, values serve as a reliable framework for decision-making. When confronted with difficult choices—such as whether to speak up against injustice, how to treat others, or how to balance ambition with honesty—values like righteousness (dharma) and truth (satya) act as guiding principles. They encourage introspection, fairness, and accountability, preventing one from being swayed by peer pressure, personal gain, or societal trends that may lack ethical grounding.

Furthermore, universal values contribute significantly to a deeper sense of inner fulfillment. Unlike transient pleasures or material achievements, fulfillment rooted in values is lasting and deeply satisfying. True happiness, as many spiritual traditions and psychological studies suggest, does not stem from external possessions or

status but from living a life of purpose, integrity, and meaning. A person who upholds values like honesty, kindness, and non-violence tends to experience greater self-respect, inner peace, and a sense of connectedness to others. This leads to a more harmonious life that resonates with one's conscience and contributes positively to the world.

To internalize these values and make them a living part of one's personality, regular reflective practices are essential. Self-reflection—the act of looking inward and evaluating one's thoughts, actions, and motivations—helps individuals become aware of their value systems and align their behavior with their ideals. Journaling is another powerful tool that allows people to process emotions, record insights, and set intentions grounded in values. Over time, it can reveal patterns, clarify goals, and strengthen commitment to personal growth. Meditation, particularly practices that cultivate mindfulness, compassion, or gratitude, fosters a deep connection with the self and promotes a calm, balanced, and value-centered mind.

Moreover, the deliberate cultivation of virtues such as patience, gratitude, and humility further reinforces the practice of universal values. Patience helps in enduring difficulties without frustration, making individuals more tolerant and understanding. Gratitude shifts focus from what is lacking to what is abundant, nurturing contentment and generosity. Humility dissolves the ego, allowing for open-mindedness, learning, and genuine respect for others. These virtues not only enhance individual well-being but also enrich families, friendships, workplaces, and communities, creating a ripple effect of harmony and mutual respect.

In essence, universal values are not abstract moral codes—they are the foundation for a meaningful, balanced, and compassionate life. When individuals embody these values in their daily actions, they not only transform themselves but also become catalysts for positive change in society.

Challenges to Upholding Values Today

While the significance and necessity of universal human values are widely recognized across cultures and communities, the practical task of living by these values is increasingly difficult in today's complex and rapidly changing world. One of the most pressing challenges is the pervasive culture of materialism and consumerism, where the pursuit of wealth, status, and possessions often takes precedence over empathy, generosity, and ethical reflection. This obsession with material success not only distorts personal priorities but also fosters inequality and weakens social bonds.

Closely related to this is the rise of moral relativism—the belief that there are no absolute truths or ethical standards, and that values are purely subjective or situational. While a degree of cultural diversity in moral outlook is natural and even enriching, unchecked relativism can erode the collective moral compass, leading to confusion, apathy, and ethical complacency. Another major obstacle is the deepening political and cultural polarization that fuels intolerance, social fragmentation, and hatred. In such environments, people often retreat into ideological bubbles, losing the capacity for dialogue, compromise, and mutual respect. This divisiveness undermines the very values of unity, peace, and shared humanity. Compounding these issues is the phenomenon of technological alienation. While the digital age has brought unparalleled connectivity, it has also distanced people from meaningful face-to-face interactions, fostering superficial relationships and reducing the depth of emotional empathy. The constant bombardment of information, the pursuit of virtual validation, and the distraction of screens often leave little room for self-reflection, ethical deliberation, or mindful living. Addressing these challenges demands more than individual goodwill—it calls for a collective awakening supported by families, communities, educational institutions, and policy frameworks. Promoting conscious living, encouraging inter-personal dialogue, nurturing ethical leadership, and creating spaces for moral discourse are all essential to restoring and upholding universal human values in the face of these modern pressures.

Pathways to Promote Universal Values:

Promoting universal human values is a multifaceted endeavor that requires the combined force of both top-down policy frameworks and bottom-up cultural transformation. At the heart of this process lies educational reform, which plays a pivotal role in shaping young minds. It is essential to integrate ethics, philosophy, and social-emotional learning into formal school curricula so that students not only gain academic knowledge but also develop a deep sense of empathy, critical thinking, and moral responsibility. Educators themselves must be trained to model and teach values-based thinking, becoming role models of integrity, respect, and compassion in the classroom. Beyond the realm of education, leadership across all sectors—political, corporate, and cultural—must exemplify the values they advocate. Leaders should lead by example, upholding honesty, fairness, and accountability in

their actions, while also ensuring that institutions operate transparently and with a commitment to the common good. The media and arts also serve as powerful platforms for cultural influence. Through compelling storytelling, socially conscious cinema, music, literature, and digital content, they can nurture empathy, justice, and awareness. It is equally important to challenge and counteract toxic narratives, stereotypes, and misinformation that often deepen societal divides and distort public discourse. On the grassroots level, families and communities are the first arenas where values are learned and practiced. Encouraging open dialogue, shared responsibilities, and intergenerational role modeling within households and neighborhoods can create nurturing environments where respect, cooperation, and compassion thrive. Community-based initiatives such as local volunteerism, inclusive festivals, and participatory governance can rebuild trust and foster unity in diversity. Altogether, these interconnected pathways underscore that the promotion of universal values is not the responsibility of any one group, but a collective moral enterprise—one that involves individuals, institutions, and society working in harmony toward a more ethical and empathetic world.

Universal Human Values and Sustainable Development

Universal human values are not merely lofty moral ideals reserved for philosophical contemplation; they are fundamental building blocks for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ensuring the long-term well-being of humanity and the planet. The SDGs, adopted by the United Nations, aim to address some of the most pressing global challenges such as poverty, gender inequality, climate change, injustice, and conflict. These goals are deeply rooted in values like justice, compassion, inclusivity, empathy, and respect for all forms of life. For instance, the goal of gender equality cannot be realized without a cultural and ethical commitment to fairness and human dignity; climate action demands a shift from exploitative consumption to reverence for nature and intergenerational responsibility. Likewise, the pursuit of peace, reduced inequalities, and strong institutions calls for universal respect for human rights, transparency, and social solidarity. However, it is crucial to recognize that without a strong moral foundation, economic strategies or technological innovations alone will not yield sustainable or meaningful progress. Technological growth, when divorced from ethical considerations, can exacerbate

inequality, alienation, and environmental harm. True sustainability, therefore, must stem from within—it requires an inner transformation where individuals, communities, and nations align their actions with deeply held values. Ethical living, driven by mindfulness, empathy, and a sense of shared humanity, cultivates the collective consciousness needed to support sustainable systems, policies, and relationships. Only by embedding universal human values at the core of our personal lives, educational systems, governance structures, and international frameworks can we move beyond surface-level solutions and create a just, peaceful, and flourishing world for future generations.

Conclusion: Toward a Value-Centric Future

The path to a better world does not lie solely in policies, infrastructure, or wealth—it lies in the hearts and minds of individuals. Universal human values are the seeds of peace, justice, and joy. Their practice must begin with the self, spread through families and communities, and be supported by institutions.

In times of crisis, it is not technology or money that saves civilization—it is character. As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, the integration of universal values is not just desirable but indispensable.

Let us, therefore, renew our commitment to live by these values—not out of obligation, but from an inner conviction that only through love, truth, and peace can we build the kind of world we all deserve.

The Importance of Critical Thinking in Education

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In an era where information is abundant and readily accessible, the ability to think critically is more essential than ever. Critical thinking is a mental process that involves analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information to form reasoned judgments. It is not merely a skill but a foundational component of effective education, influencing how learners engage with content, solve problems, and interact with the world around them. This essay explores the significance of critical thinking in education, its benefits for students, and how educators can foster these skills in the classroom.

Defining Critical Thinking

Critical thinking encompasses various cognitive skills, including analysis, evaluation, inference, and reasoning. It enables individuals to assess the validity of arguments, discern biases, and make informed decisions. In a classroom setting, critical thinking encourages students to move beyond rote memorization to deeper understanding and application of knowledge. For example, instead of simply recalling facts about historical events, a critical thinker might analyze the motivations behind those events and their consequences on modern society.

The Relevance of Critical Thinking in Today's World

The contemporary landscape is marked by rapid technological advancements and an overwhelming influx of information. Social media, online news, and digital platforms can disseminate both useful and misleading content. As a result, individuals must possess the ability to navigate this complex information environment. Critical thinking equips students with the tools needed to sift through information, identify reliable sources, and evaluate arguments critically. This skill is vital for responsible citizenship, as it enables individuals to engage thoughtfully in discussions about pressing societal issues, such as climate change, public health, and political discourse.

Benefits of Critical Thinking for Students

1. Enhanced Problem-Solving Skills: Critical thinking promotes effective problem-solving abilities.

Students learn to approach challenges methodically, breaking them down into manageable parts and considering multiple solutions. This skill is invaluable not only in academia but also in everyday life and future careers.

2. Improved Communication: Engaging in critical thinking fosters better communication skills. As students articulate their reasoning and defend their viewpoints, they learn to present their ideas clearly and logically, making them more persuasive in discussions.

3. Greater Academic Success: Research shows that students who engage in critical thinking achieve higher academic performance. By actively analyzing and synthesizing information, they develop a deeper understanding of the material, leading to better retention and application of knowledge.

4. Preparation for the Workforce: Employers increasingly value critical thinking skills, seeking candidates who can navigate complex situations and make informed decisions. By honing these skills during their education, students are better prepared to meet the demands of the modern job market.

5. Fostering Lifelong Learning: Critical thinking instills a sense of curiosity and a desire for continuous learning. Students become more adept at asking questions and seeking answers, equipping them for a future where adaptability and resilience are crucial.

Strategies for Educators to Foster Critical Thinking

Educators play a pivotal role in nurturing critical thinking skills in students. Here are several effective strategies:

1. Encourage Inquiry-Based Learning: Promote a classroom environment where questions are welcomed, and curiosity is nurtured. Encourage students to formulate their questions, engage in discussions, and explore topics through research and collaboration.

2. Use Real-World Scenarios: Incorporate case studies and real-world problems into the curriculum. By applying theoretical concepts to practical situations, students develop their ability to analyze and evaluate information critically.

3. Implement Socratic Method: Use the Socratic method of teaching, which involves asking open-ended questions that stimulate discussion and critical analysis. This helps students to examine their assumptions and think more deeply about the subject matter.

4. Foster a Growth Mindset: Encourage students to embrace challenges and view mistakes as opportunities for growth. A growth mindset promotes resilience and the understanding that critical thinking skills can be developed over time.

5. Integrate Technology Thoughtfully: Utilize technology as a tool for collaboration and research. Platforms for discussion forums, collaborative projects, and digital resources can enhance critical thinking when used purposefully.

6. Assess Critical Thinking Skills: Implement assessment methods that evaluate critical thinking, such as reflective essays, debates, and problem-solving exercises. Providing constructive feedback helps students recognize their strengths and areas for improvement.

Conclusion

In summary, critical thinking is an indispensable skill in education that prepares students to navigate an increasingly complex world. By enhancing problem-solving abilities, improving communication, and fostering a lifelong love of learning, critical thinking equips students for academic and professional success. As educators, it is essential to create an environment that encourages inquiry, supports risk-taking in learning, and integrates real-world experiences. By prioritizing critical thinking in the curriculum, we not only enhance educational outcomes but also cultivate informed, engaged citizens who can contribute thoughtfully to society.



