

دستک | Dastak | दस्तक

Knocking the door of your conscience

FROM THE EDITORS' DESK...

Dear Reader,

The month of December for the students is often associated with examinations, but this year, the events have been very different. After mass protests the university was abruptly closed in the middle of December 2019 and the exams were postponed to January next year.

In this month's edition the magazine covers the anti-CAA protests that have been taking place in the university, and across the whole nation. We focused on the events that took place between 13th to 15th December 2019 around the campus that came as a shock to everyone. We also have a book review and field reflections coming from Human Resource Management and Social Work respectively. This month we have our faculty member, Prof. Neelam Sukhramani expressing her thoughts. Lastly, we also have updates about the CV building workshop which was organised late in November, followed by a placement update from PRADAN that has left the whole department gleaming with joy and pride.

The literary society would like to specifically thank Sreekanth Sivadasan and Prabhat Tiwari (students from AJK MCRC) for covering the protests in a detailed manner. Hope that you like the December issue of Dastak!

*Literary Society
Department of Social Work
Jamia Millia Islamia*

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A Movement Starting from JMI, Once Again

Syed Mohd. Hammad, MSW (F)

Jamia Millia Islamia is the progeny of the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920), led by the father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi, today Jamia is an institution famous for its multi-cultural environment, lush green campus, and excellent courses like Mass Communication, Architecture, and Engineering to name a few. In 2020, Jamia Millia Islamia steps into its centennial year and the beginning of the event has been marked forever with the memory of one of the biggest student protest that the country has witnessed in the 21st Century.

The recently created Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 has been infamously the talk of the whole country with the accusation that it violates the Article 14 of the Indian Constitution - 'The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India'. The argument is such that the amendment provides for an option to the immigrants and refugees coming from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh to seek citizenship in a fast-track manner within six years of their arrival. The catch to the situation is that the provision is only for the immigrants who follow Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, and Christianity.

The critics of the act claim that it openly discriminates against the Atheists, Jews, and Muslims who are living in India as refugees.

The issue escalated with some critics suggesting that with the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, all those identifying as Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs,



Parsis, or Christians, living in Assam, who have not found their names in the the National Register of Citizens after the recent conclusion of its updation process will be naturalised as citizens of India — leaving behind just those who identify as Muslims, Jews or Atheists. Primarily, this has led to an uproar against the act in Assam and other North-Eastern states of India where the indigenous population claims that the legislation will further motivate migration from Bangladesh and lead to the violation of the Assam Accord which was a prior agreement reached with the Central Government on migrants and refugees. The protestors in the North-Eastern states of India have claimed that they do not want Indian citizenship to be granted to any refugee or immigrant, regardless of their religion, as they fear it would alter the region's demographic balance, resulting in a loss of their political rights, culture and land.

Others have raised the issue that while it is undoubtedly a great decision to grant citizenship to the persecuted minorities, it still is a bit difficult to understand why has the government only

included three neighbouring countries and has listed only certain religious that come from these listed countries. This action has been labelled selective and exclusionary as it does not pay attention to the persecution of Rohingya community in Myanmar, Tamil Hindus in Sri Lanka, Buddhists from Tibet, and the Shiite as well as the Ahmadiyya muslim community in Pakistan. Questions are being continuously asked why instead of *'Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, Parsi, or Christian immigrants or refugees from three specific neighbouring countries - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan'*, could the act simply not mention *'any immigrants or regfrom the neighbouring countries of India who have faced persecution'*?

There are also some who oppose the act due to the opinion that with the talks of a nation-wide updation process for the NRC being underway, the critics have raised their suspicion over the fact that through the act, certain communities will be radically marginalized. This includes not just the religious communities, but also the poor and uneducated people living in India who do not have the sufficient documents to prove their citizenship. The same critics have thus called the CAA as a lifejacket for some, and a trap for others, when it is looked at along with the NRC.

Student-led protests had been taking place in the University and elsewhere too, ever since the Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on 10th December 2019, and slowly as word about the legislation spread around, the crowd grew in number. On 13th December, 2019, the Jamia Teachers Association (JTA) called for a peaceful protest against the act to express their concerns about it, several students from the university joined the objective was to march to the Parliament of India, however, when the group moved forward, the



roads were found to be barricaded. The showdown between Delhi Police and the protestors took a violent turn and tactics like lathi-charge, tear gas shells, and stone pelting were used by the Police to break the protest. The showdown lasted for hours with photos and videos going viral across social media platforms. Several students were injured and had to get medical assistance.

The efforts of the Delhi Police to quell the protest further strengthened the number of protestors who came back again the next day. The university examinations were cancelled and postponed, while the administration decided to abruptly announce the commencement of the winter vacations that would last till 5th January 2020.

The protestors grew in number as residents from the neighbourhood joined the protest. On 15th December 2019, the protestors took out a march, a tragedy occurred — several buses were set on fire, the police took to lathi charge, and the protestors retreated back. The student protestors straightaway condemned the act and dissociated themselves from the violence that erupted, and while everything happened to fast, Delhi Police to everyone's shock entered the University Campus, the *'lush green campus'* was bombarded with tear gas shells.

Videos came up across social media platforms that the Police had thrown tear-gas shells in the Zakir Hussain Library which created panic among students, a while later updates came that the police had physically entered the library and was brutally attacking the students who were present in the library. One can say it was an overload of updates, horrifying everyone who came across them messages, photos, and videos.





Delhi Police detained 50 students from the library. There were more updates that the Police Force entered not just the library but also the Boys Hostel and the Mosque — attacking the *Imam* and the residents of the Hostels.

Students shared their accounts claiming that, to them, it felt that it was the last day of their life. The harrowing accounts of police brutality sent chills down the spines of every person who came across the media related to the incident.

The terror was not just limited to the University Campus, the atmosphere in the neighbourhood changed too — Police rushed into areas like Batla House, Zakir Nagar, Shaheen Bagh, Johri Farm etc. and ordered for all the stores and eateries to be shut at the moment. It felt as if a blanket of fear had enveloped the whole community. On WhatsApp groups and at home, everyone was discussing whether a curfew will now be imposed.

In retaliation, to seek the release of the students who were detained by Delhi Police, students from various universities across Delhi - DU, JNU, AUD rushed to the Delhi Police Headquarter at ITO to protest till the detainees are released. It shocked the whole country to receive updates that to quell the reaction of the student fraternity from other universities, Delhi Metro was shutting the Metro Stations near the University Campuses and the Police Headquarters. Regardless, public managed to reach the Police Headquarters and staying till the wee hours, only having left when the students were released from detention.

There were solidarity marches organised in Universities across India, which started from the evening of 15th December when the news of the Police Brutality started to spread across.

The incidents of 15th December kickstarted pan-India protests and resistance against the CAA with protests coming up from one city to another like a

string of pearls falling apart. Protests were being organised by university students, and activists alike. On 19th December, mass protests were organised across India, with two parallel marches being organised in Delhi too. One starting from Red Fort and another from Mandi House both amalgamating at Shaheedi Park, followed by a cultural program to mark the martyrdom of freedom fighters Ram Prasad Bismil and Ashfaqullah Khan. However, Delhites woke up to section 144 being imposed at Red Fort and Mandi House, and while the protestors defied and showed up at the starting points, the Police force was prepared with Buses to detain the protestors. Famous personalities like Ramachandra Guha and



Yogendra Yadav too were detained by the Delhi Police, yet, the show kept going on. Rushing from one place to another, the protestors ended up at Jantar Mantar in huge numbers and regardless of the attempts to create fear, the aura at Jantar Mantar was nothing short of a celebration of Democracy, along with slogans, poems, and discussions related to the issue at hand.

The most appreciable characteristic of the protest is the emphasis which is being laid upon the ideals of peace, with every leader seeking a request to the participants to remain assertive, yet, non-violent. One must reflect whether the act could be framed in a more inclusive manner? Was the Police action in the University campus justified? Is it right to quell resistance with techniques like internet-shutdowns and imposition of section-144?

Movement sure has etched a mark in the history of Jamia Millia Islamia, an institution born out of the non-cooperation movement in 1920, triggering a country-wide movement yet again, in its centennial year — 2020

(Photos Courtesy - Sreekant Sivadasan and Prabhat Tiwari, AJK MCRC)

Why They Came Out...

Adarsh Trivedi, MSW (F)

An outcome of the Non-Cooperation Movement, Jamia Millia Islamia, today, is known for its multi-cultural and diverse learning environment, lush green campus, and acclaimed courses like Mass Communication, Social Work, Architecture, and Engineering to name a few. In the upcoming year of 2020, Jamia Millia Steps into its centennial year celebrating a century of struggle, resistance, dissent, nationalism, cultural assimilation, love and above all peace. The very existence of this institution in current age is the testimony of its determination and promise to impart excellence to the next generation. This institution has history of nurturing individuals who keeps their souls and their thriving careers at the altar of the nation, to sacrifice all they have in the service to the nation. On the countdown to its centenary, History repeated itself with Jamia students leading a nationwide protest once again. This time it was for a different cause and was led by different students, still once thing had not changed at all and that was to always keep the nation on the top.



Jamia Students like students in any other university are dedicated to build up their careers and fulfil their dreams.

They come from diverse background and all walks of life to toil for the better tomorrow. It is an institution that gives knowledge and a canopy to the most backward sections of the society in the national capital of the country and above all its one the best educational institutions available in the country. It produces India's brightest minds in multiple disciplines through its renowned academic rigour, discipline and *tehzeeb*. Like every fall, this year also students were busy in preparing for their career defining exams that were going to take place during month of December. So, the question arises what brought the students of such an Institution on streets in the first place?

There can be many interpretations but there is only one answer, it's the nation called India i.e. Bharat.

Students came out because they cared for the idea of their nation, they came out as that is what their education from taxpayer's money taught them, they came out as they were anxious since the foundations on which their institution was based were shaken, they came out as that what freedom fighters and designers of our constitution would have done, they came out as they were disturbed to see the fear residing deep into the hearts of the masses, they came out as they had compassion towards the fellow citizens protesting to preserve their abode in the north east, and above all they came out in the chilling winters of Delhi to lit the doused fire of dissent again.

Today, while Jamia is still recovering from wounds of barbaric atrocities that it experienced. There are thousands more on streets to preserve and protect the what Jamia stood for. It's nothing but the

piousness of the intent that brought not only students but civil society, activists, professionals, and world outside to back Jamia. These protests certainly have etched a mark in the history of Jamia and renews and rejuvenates its resilience and determination.

Jamia learned from its philosophical founder Mahatma Gandhi that violence is the instrument of the weak exactly a century back and thus the scars of this violence will only strengthen its resolve to stand up for the nation. It has kept its promise a century later and will stick to path of non-violence in millennials to come. Jamia doesn't stop, Jamia doesn't fear, Jamia doesn't bow down to injustice. Jamia will rise again in the proverbial tomorrow — where the mind is without fear and the head is held high!



My Lost Abode

Anonymous entry

My tryst with Zakir Hussain Library started four years back in 2015 when I entered this institution for the very first time. I used to love books but my encounter with the library took place when one of my professors insisted upon visiting it at least once in order to check for books suitable for us to supplement the the lectures and enhance our understanding.

I walked into this majestic building with three other friends of mine and with our fee slip in our hands and excitement in our minds. Absorbing all that was around, we reached the second floor where we were welcomed by a guard smiling at the door. Reaching the hall on the right hand side of the entrance gate of the Second Floor, I was in awe of the hall stacked with books covering an array of disciplines like sciences, economics, psychology, history, politics, law, sociology, anthropology... and what not! That whole day I spent going through the books and picking all those I liked. I even made a list of books in order to get them issued later.

It was from that very day that The Zakir Hussain library became my safe place, my abode far from home. I would spend hours reading books about things I haven't ever heard of and as nerdy it might sound even took notes from books that mattered to me. I would roam around for hours searching for my next book and dwelling upon what life meant to me. Walking through the hallways, I would glance at thousands of ambitious students studying to fulfill their dreams. Other times, I would land in the Digital Resource Center to find students surfing the Internet and, and reading study material online.

When I used to be sad, it was this library that helped me to forget my sadness. When I use to feel lonely, it was books that provided me

company. I would read, write, think, and sometimes even cry in between the bookshelves. I was completely mesmerized by the sheer aura of this place.

Four years down the line, the library became my go-to place in the whole University. I met seniors who came looking for books, took their suggestions about preparing for exams, and finding the right books. I would hang-out with friends, reading paragraphs while engaging in whispered discussions sometimes. How can I forget eyes staring at us when we would giggle at something funny that we came across.

A week before the siege of my safe haven, I visited the library to look for books that will be useful for my exams. It was a Friday, and the library was closing for the afternoon prayers, the librarian told me to leave the hall politely and suggested me to take the books to the Ph.D. section for reading. But I rather chose to sit in the hallway and read the books while basking in the sunshine. Later I went for lunch, keeping books with a guard who nervously agreed to my request. While leaving the library that day, I overheard old men chatting and catching up on their lives. I heard random students discussing their oncoming exams. Soon I realized that the Library was not just for reading books, it was much more than that. In fact, through those books, people read life.

On 15th December, I was at home when suddenly my phone was flooded with the messages crying for help, accompanied by pictures and videos testifying for the barbarity on my safe haven, I was shocked. I couldn't help but cry, seeing the destruction of my abode. Library that was once filled with the rustic smell of books was now covered with smoke everywhere, the halls which were known for pin-drop silence were now screaming.

a week ago, this time there was blood on that floor. I was completely shattered.

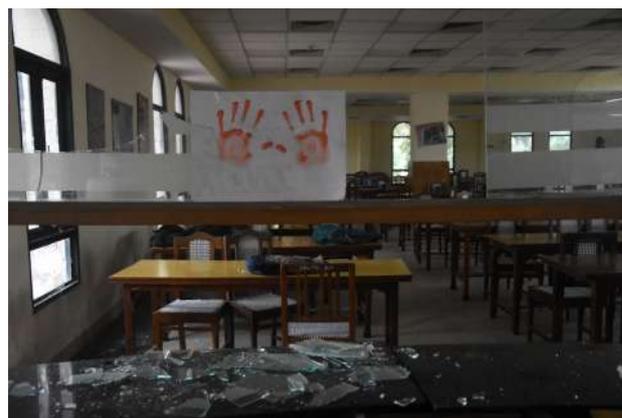
How could someone ransack my library? My library that has always been so walk and welcoming to

every visitor, how could someone be so cruel? Inconsolable and numb that I was, I kept asking these questions to myself.

A day later when the photos of the aftermath came in, my body froze and tears started trickling down my face. There was nothing but rubble in those eerie and hollow photos. It was as if each picture was still crying for help while narrating the tale of horrors that it experienced!

Violence is never the answer and violence in a temple of knowledge is unimaginable, there are no words that can ever explain my pain and grief to see my library bleeding. I don't know when will I be able to visit my library again, but I do know that it will never feel the same...

(The following are some visuals of the library from the aftermath of 15th December 2019)
(Photos courtesy - Sreekanth Sivadasan, AJK MCRC)



The Hard Thing About Hard Things by Ben Horowitz: A Book Review

Anusha Saleem, M.A. HRM (P)

I recently read “The Hard Thing About Hard Things” by Ben Horowitz and it totally blew my mind. When I read “Rich Dad, Poor Dad,” by Robert Kiyosaki, all I wanted was to become an entrepreneur.



Now having

read this book, I have a hundred reasons to NOT start a business! Don't get me wrong, I'd love to have a startup. But having read this book provided me with quite a different perspective that I had not thought of before. Let's explore that in my book review.

A Little About the Book

The *Hard Thing About Hard Things* was written by Ben Horowitz and published in 2014. Horowitz is a leading technology entrepreneur, venture capitalist and co-founder of Andreessen Horowitz. In this book, he shares his journey of **running multiple startups** and managing his company when everything seemed to go **wrong**. While most books related to entrepreneurship only talk about the **rosy details** of running a business, Horowitz openly discusses **how difficult things can actually get during a CEO's journey**. He emphasises the **complexities** of running a tech startup and talks about being **overwhelmed** by a range of problems. What makes this book extremely helpful and relatable is its **honest and sincere perspective**. There are several major themes and concepts that are spread throughout the book. It takes the reader inside the mind of a **struggling entrepreneur**, who despite his best efforts, still faces **adversity and failures**.

Taking responsibility for Making Hard Decisions

The book discovers a wide range of difficulties that Horowitz faced while making major decisions. From **recruitment to laying people off**, the ultimate pressure was always faced by the CEO of the company.

Horowitz

mentions how, for an entrepreneur, **handling a startup is a lot like taking care of a baby**. Business owners are the most attached to their company and at the end of the day, the losses and obstacles hit them the hardest. Horowitz paints a comprehensive picture of the **wonderful highs** and **disastrous lows** he faced while running multiple startups.

Ben Horowitz also discusses whether good leaders are born or made. He mentions three attributes that contribute into making a good leader. The first thing a leader needs to do is articulating a distinct vision. The vision of the company must be conveyed by the leader in such a way that the employees integrate it in their work culture. The second attribute is the alignment of interests of employees and their seniors. The last quality that makes a leader great is their ability to achieve their vision. Even after a leader achieves their goals, they need to constantly upgrade their skills and not become overconfident in their abilities.

Becoming a Good CEO

Horowitz goes into detail about how **CEOs are not born but made**. The book goes into detail about how **entrepreneurship has no rules**. It is a **never-ending process** and takes years for a leader to develop the skills of a great CEO. Every company requires a different type of management style, so it is not advisable to just

Authenticity in their intentions is the first thing a good CEO must have. Some executives tend to become manipulative while approaching their employees and coworkers. It does not work effectively as **feedback should come from the right place**. A leader should want their employees to succeed, and this intention must reflect through their feedback. Ben Horowitz mentions how feedback is a dialogue and not a monologue. It is also important to be direct but not rude while providing feedback. In the end, **all employees are different** and the CEO must be able to perceive in what way they must be dealt with.

Management Debt

He talks about the concept of ‘management debt,’ in which executives take appropriate, **short term management decisions** that lead to **catastrophic, long term consequences**. A distinguishable quality of very good CEOs is that they always choose the hardest solution when faced with management issues. This is because they have experienced the case of paying management debt and they know how damaging it could be to the organization. Horowitz talks about the importance of providing regular feedback to employees so that they can constantly improve so that everyone is on the same page.

The Significance of HR Managers

Ben Horowitz talks about how **HR managers play a consequential role** while managing people in the workplace. Qualities like process design **skills, diplomacy, industry knowledge** and a **trustworthy relationship** with the CEO are valued in HR managers. Horowitz also mentions that a good HR manager understands the **unspoken things** in the office environment, thus making them **highly perceptive**. A good HR manager also does not get involved in power plays or office politics. They are trusted in terms of their judgment and perceptions by the CEO.

Creating an Organisational Design

Horowitz writes about how all kinds of organisational designs lack in some way. The best way to create a decent organisational design is by **deciding what needs to be communicated**. The next thing one needs to do is

figuring out what kind of information needs to be communicated. CEOs need to **prioritise their communication and decision paths**.

Managing Office Politics

An organisation’s culture is an essential part of the workspace. It distinguishes one company from another in terms of their **values and missions**. The book addresses many difficult situations that may come up in working spaces. One of the things Horowitz had to handle was the **regulation of profanity** in his office. He used profanity in his everyday life himself, so he had to be extremely careful dealing with this concern. Some of his employees had a problem with high profanity usage in the workplace. It would be both wrong to encourage profanity or completely prohibit it. To tackle this problem, he carefully crafted his statement that using profanity is okay, but using it to intimidate or sexually harass someone will not be tolerated. Fortunately, the situation was then rectified.



Why does Office Politics Happen in the First Place?

Another lesson that the book teaches is that office politics are mainly a result of the CEO’s behavior. It may be unintentional, but the CEO needs to be careful about not encouraging political behavior. When employees approach a leader for compensations or favors, the situation needs to be evaluated before performing any actions. In order to deal with experienced and ambitious employees, only the right kinds of techniques will be able to work. Horowitz talks about two major

aspects where CEOs can try to minimize politics. The first one is to hire people with the right kind of ambition. People with the right type of ambition care more about their personal successes regardless of where the company is going. It is natural to have personal ambitions, but they should be a by-product of the company's success. The second aspect is to build certain processes for issues that might turn political. Such activities include performance evaluation, compensation, organisational design and promotions. Horowitz also adds that CEOs need to be careful with "he said, she said" situations. Gossip spreads extremely fast in the workplace and it's not easy to put a stop to it, especially if the matter is controversial.

Hiring Experienced Professionals

There always comes a point when CEOs need to hire older, experienced professionals. Ben Horowitz talks about how tech startups are short-lived and hiring senior professionals can speed up the process of achieving your company's goals. The major reason for hiring senior officials is acquiring necessary knowledge and expertise in a particular area that the company is lacking.

However, experienced people have got their own expectations while joining a new company. They come with their own work culture and understanding of the industry. Despite that, a CEO needs to make it clear that even senior professionals need to adhere to a certain code of conduct. They need to set a high standard for senior professionals to achieve and not be intimidated by their experience. This ensures high performance and efficient work culture.

Final Thoughts

The Hard Thing About Hard Things is incredibly insightful and provides a realistic view of the startup world. Most business books tend to be overly optimistic so reading this one was quite refreshing. I would recommend this book to all budding entrepreneurs, especially the ones who want to make it in the tech industry.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

SEX EDUCATION - A VICIOUS TABBOO?

Risha Nusrat MSW (F)

How many of you were informed/ educated about matters related to sexual anatomy, intercourse, reproduction and so on?

What is sex education?

It is a comprehensive term which is used to describe education about human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexual intercourse, and other aspects of human sexual behaviour that helps people gain the information, skills and motivation to make healthy decisions and choices about sex and sexuality.

Indians and Sex Education — HUSHH!!!

"There is no need for sex education in schools as it will have negative impact on children, an RSS-affiliated educational organisation said." (Source: India Today, 29August, 2019)

Indians, be it adolescents or adults, sometimes even the well-read urban kind, often attach a whole lot of sensitivity to the topic of sex, regarding it with the most vicious taboo. Therefore, sex education is met with a lot of resistance from different sources like parents, teachers, especially these nosy neighbours.

Sex education and Adolescents: Stigma and Shame

There are 243 millions of adolescents in India (UNICEF) which indicates the importance of specifically addressing the healthcare needs of this group, particularly for the developing countries such as India.. It is during adolescence that these young people experience developmental changes in their physiology and behaviour as they are about to enter adulthood.

The complex emotional state in which youth find themselves in, stigma and shame attached with this subject, **gender**

inequality faced, makes it increasingly challenging for adolescents to attain the knowledge they need.

Consequence of this stigma:

The existence of strong stigma, shame and controversy handicaps any existing adolescent health programs, making them turn their heads to unreliable sources like internet and peers to gain an understanding of matters related to their sexual well-being. This shallow knowledge gives rise to risky sexual behaviour with outcomes such as early and closely spaced pregnancy, sexually transmitted infection (STI), HIV/AIDS, and sexual violence, **the** rates of which are already increasing at a disturbing rate. There are cases of rape where the perpetrator is a minor, violence between sexes who are minors, teen and pre-teen pregnancy, incest, etc which are all manifestations of lack of social, sexual and moral education.

Therefore, there is a need to meet the needs of such a vulnerable group and overcoming existing shortcomings in the delivery of education that deals with sexual well-being.

Trainee's Observation and Analysis related to Sex Education among Adolescents:

While planning and designing the sessions on sex education, the team was conscious of the fact that the students might not talk openly about the theme i.e. Sex education. Therefore, the session was planned very carefully and responsibly. While executing the training

sessions, the trainee observed that the students were not comfortable while talking about topics like Reproduction, reproductive health, menstruation, masturbation, wet dreams, safe pregnancy etc. The engagement and the response rate were quite low compared to the other sessions conducted in the same school with the same students. The trainee analysed the situation and tried to overcome the barriers through different tactics like making the session easier by the usage of simple words, providing only preliminary information and creating a friendly environment but failed to evoke engagement and responses at a satisfactory level.

As learned individuals, we realise the importance of sex education for people, especially the adolescents, but due to various reasons, say, sensitivity of the topic and it's relationship with the Indian culture, norms, tradition, socialisation pattern etc.; makes sex education a HUSH TOPIC!!! As a social work trainee, it's our responsibility to sensitize the society for ensuring that every individual is provided with the necessary information, clarify myths and provide facts related to sex, sexuality and sexual behaviour.

PONDER before You ANSWER:

- Do you think there is a need to impart sex education to adolescents?
- As a social work trainee, what can we do to reduce the stigma and shame attached with sex education in our society?



Reflections
And Yet Another...
Prof. Neelam Sukhramani

Will this spree of making women and children the victims of our lust ever stop. What is it that runs through the minds of perpetrators. Is the overpowering desire to brutalise the body of a woman or is it the unsatiated lust. I have no answers but only questions. Should it not prick our conscience even for a fraction of a second while poking a wiper in the anus of an infant. How can anyone be so brutal. How can someone forgive themselves or even seek forgiveness after being so brutal. What is

it that comes upon an individual that such a thought may even cross their mind. Haven't we had enough. Is it not ironical that after this as well, the victims are blamed for inviting such acts. Notions of safety are so superfluous. If the victim is to be



blamed for going out into the night, then the question that deserves its space is that, 'Are homes safe'? I need not answer this question as it would put many to shame to think of no place being a safe place. I am pained to think of the hypocritical society that we are living in. People on whom the pain is inflicted are supposed to be the guardians of their own safety. It is high time we moved away and started acknowledging the responsibility of the perpetrator. How many messages do we come across where we talk about respecting human beings. Touching the feet of another person or greeting another person cannot be seen as respectful conduct. It goes much beyond that. It involves being non invasive, respecting the person's space. We need to strategise in a way where we are able to reach every single person. The society that has stopped listening to the call of conscience has to be redeemed.

Hell has broken loose. Before we are able to even deal with the shock of one incident, there is yet another...

EVENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT CV BUILDING WORKSHOP



Department of Social work, Jamia Millia Islamia is committed to impart excellence to its students. When few students raised a need for having a skill based session on resume building and handling different phases of recruitment process. The objective was to provide a common minimum skill set to students to ace through any general format of recruitment process. Here comes the role of department's definitive relationship with its students. Taking swift action department organized a half day workshop for students. This time students had the honour to attend a session convened by Ms. Vibha Malhotra- a Human Resource Consultant having experience over three decades. The session was insightful and engaging. Students had their doubts cleared through practical exercise of group discussion and interview. The interest of students is reflected from the fact that work that was designed for two hours was extended almost to two more hours. The major highlight of the session was the special focus of blossoming distinctiveness in individual students while stress was laid upon nuances during any recruitment process. Convener also enlightened students on making an informed and practical choice for their careers.

The session had great utility for students. They expressed satisfaction from the session upon completion of the session. The best part was that there was something for everyone to learn from the session. Lastly, as it is said that actions speaks louder than words. The quality of session was vindicated when record-breaking seven students were selected for PRADAN. Students selected expressed in one voice that they were greatly benefited from the session and specially thanking Ms. Vibha Malhotra for the wonderful session that she conducted in the department.

PLACEMENT UPDATE

PRADAN

Professional Assistance for Development Action

Based on the optimism of two young professionals, Deep Joshi and Vijay Mahajan, PRADAN (Professional Assistance for Development Action) was created in 1983, believing that through grassroots work, even the stubborn, endemic poverty that haunts rural India can be solved. The focus of the organisation was on bringing well-educated, young professionals within these communities to use both empathy and knowledge to help the poor in helping themselves, as the work towards improving their lives.

From 1987 onwards, the organisation has been working with the government in programs such as IRDP, NRLM, and SGSY to bring about sustainable change in the system to ensure that the vulnerable and the marginalized groups gain the confidence to take charge of their own lives.

Today, with more than four hundred young professionals working for issues like women empowerment, income generation, livelihood, food security, access to water, and management of natural resources in nearly nine thousand remote villages of India across the seven poorest states of India - West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Jharkhand and have reached nearly eight lakh forty eight thousand five hundred families that have been living at the margins.

Every year, PRADAN seeks for Development Apprentices who embark on a path to weigh the realities of life and the value of work. The Apprentices develop the competencies required to function effectively as a Development Executive at PRADAN after the end of the 12-month long apprenticeship. The primary work taken by the apprentices is developing an

understanding of the human conditions, and the underlying causes within it. The performance of the apprentice during this programme determines their offer for becoming a Development Executive.

PRADAN visited the Department of social work, Jamia Millia Islamia for Campus Placement on 6th December 2019. Twenty-seven students from M.A. Social Work showed interest in the organization after the a discussion and video screening by the officials representing the organization.

The placement process first included a psychometric test, followed by group discussions, and finally culminating with the personal interview. At each stage, the students were being shortlisted.

From the initial cohort of twenty-seven students, only seventeen students made it through for the group discussion and were divided in two groups consisting of eight and nine members each. The situation-based group discussion lasted for forty-five minutes to one hour for each group, after which, seven students were shortlisted for the personal interview.

It is a matter of pride for the Department to announce that the organization communicated the selection of all seven of the students who were shortlisted for the interview as Development Apprentices, their names being -

- Madiha Shariq
- Nadeem Sultan
- Rachel Tanvi Chattopadhyay
- Risha Nusrat
- Sabira Yaqoob
- Zahra Amin
- Zaid Ahsan Siddiqui



Campus placements are undoubtedly a boon for students however, they also bring along a certain aura of tension and anxiety among students. Luckily my campus placement experience has been remarkable, due to the immense efforts of the professors and

students who managed the recruitment process exceptionally well and kept all the prospective candidates highly motivated throughout the process.

My advice for my juniors will be, try and prepare well for all the rounds of the recruitment process beforehand. During the group discussions, the idea is not only to make your presence felt but the way you come across also matters, so one must keep that in mind and try being assertive rather than being aggressive.

— Madiha Shariq

I'm very happy and grateful that I've got selected as a Development Apprentice of PRADAN. I am quite satisfied with the way everything was planned and organized by the placement committee and I am thankful to them as well. The anxiety and nervousness was immense but the way whole process was designed by the recruiters helped me to give my best. To my juniors in the department, I would like to say that your genuineness and honesty reflects from you and recruiters know a great deal about how to spot that. Just be empathetic, well aware of the field that you're interested in, and learn to articulate well.

— Nadeem Sultan



The selection process for PRADAN for me was a little bit anxiety provoking, as I did not know what to expect. I was extremely nervous. I had never sat for a placement before and this was my first. I was confident within myself but I wasn't sure if I had what they were looking for or if I would meet

their criteria. The psychometric test was a little difficult and took time to complete. The second round of group discussion was unlike any other group discussion. Each one was able to put forth their point and did not hesitate to voice their opinions. The interviewers were not intimidating at all and ensured it was a comfortable space to communicate and express us. Being one of the leading NGOs in rural development, getting selected for the apprenticeship program for PRADAN feels nothing short of a big achievement for me.

It's better to be mentally prepared for psychometric tests as it is used as selection criteria by many organizations now, and not just PRADAN. Be sure to at least make one point during the group discussion rather than none at all. During the interview it is best to be yourself and be honest.

— Rachel Tanvi Chattopadhyay

The placement drive of Department of social work, JMI has been amazing, filled with a lot of insights and learning. As a student, I had an opportunity to participate in the placement drive of this session (2018-20), which has been an enriching experience. After getting selected in PRADAN's Apprenticeship



Program, I feel more confident, relaxed and happy. The credit goes to my mentors, professors, friends, family and placement committee who have transformed me into a person who is worthy, responsible and of course employable.

I think it is very important for a development professional like us to be very clear about their goals and prepare for it. The students must try to link their fieldwork with their interest zone as it helped me to explore my vision. Also, the rural camp aided as a source for bringing out my passion towards rural development and sustaining my interest.

— Risha Nusrat



The placement committee of our batch informed us about the organization that was coming for the recruitment. I searched and read about their work and interventions in various communities across several states

of central India. Their work is challenging yet inspiring in many ways. Their community-based model is exemplary! I have had always a desire to work with women, for their emancipation and empowerment this desire of mine matched with the kind of work PRADAN is into. This boosted me to go for it. The entire recruitment process of the organization was well designed and perfectly executed. Everything finished on time. I felt a little exhausted by the end of the day but happiness of reaching up to the last round was something, which kept my zeal and excitement alive. It's a moment of immense happiness to get accepted for the apprenticeship program of PRADAN, looking forward for a journey that would give me plethora of opportunities to learn and explore. I'm happier because of the fact that all the candidates who sat for the interview have been selected.

I would like to extend my gratitude further to Prof Archana Dassi HOD Dept of social work, Prof Vani Narula, Dr. LHM Gangte and all the members of placement committee, Department of social work for organising, conducting and coordinating this placement drive for the

students who earnestly wanted to work in the rural development sector.

One piece of advice for the juniors, explore what you're extremely passionate about, have a clarity regarding your goals. This gives you a sense of direction.

At last, a special thanks to PRADAN for recruiting all the 7 candidates from Jamia this time! Time to celebrate.

— Sabira Yaqoob

The opportunity to work with my ideal organization had arrived, and preparation for the same had been in process for a long time. The recruitment process conducted by PRADAN was not only well rounded,



but also designed to vastly explore my capabilities and my fit with the organization, both in terms of capability and culture. And I am glad it did.

Reflecting back at it, I think being genuine throughout the recruitment process, and in preparation stages is what has enabled me to avail this opportunity.

I cannot thank enough my family, friends, and Allah, for their constant support and belief in me. Thank you still.

— Zaid Ahsan Siddiqui



As a freshman it was my first experience of a recruitment process, which made me slightly anxious since I was aiming for a job as well as representing my esteemed department in front of the recruiters.

From the very first round till my interview everything went smoothly.

PRADAN's recruitment process was

Very well organised and tested the applicants overall analytical, decision making and problem solving skills. The recruiters were humble and encouraging, which made me even more motivated to perform well in all the rounds. I personally enjoyed their situation based GD a lot; it was a new experience for all of us. Each group member was able to put forth his or her point very well without any hesitation. Getting selected for PRADAN's apprenticeship program is like getting my dream job and I will work hard to contribute to their cause.

It is very important for the applicants to have a clear idea about their decision of sitting for a particular organization's recruitment process. One needs to read about the organization beforehand and go through their programs. Applicants will have an upper hand if they practice aptitude tests. Most importantly, try to make a point while GD is going on, try acting as a moderator, recruiters like to see leadership skills in a person. And for the interview, just be you.

— Zahra Amin

The literary society would like to bring it to everyone's notice that the by-line for one of the essays in the November issue titled - 'Corruption is Deteriorating the Democracy', belonged to an anonymous writer. The literary society sincerely apologises for any inconvenience or disturbance caused due to error.

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