



NATIONAL SERVICE  
SCHEME



VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE  
DELHI UNIVERSITY



# एकाग्र

*Questionnaire on Managing stress  
during tough times: dealing everything  
online*

Research  
Report

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# VIVEKANAND COLLEGE

University Of Delhi

Vivekananda College is a dynamic and empowering educational institution that encourages young women to aim for higher goals and empower them to achieve these targets. It provides an exceptionally enthusiastic environment for aspiring young women seeking an undergraduate degree in the Humanities, Commerce, Social Science and Science subjects.



**“Arise, Awake and Stop not till the Goal is reached”**. This thought of Swami Vivekananda is the main philosophy of this college. Students from all over the country get attracted towards this pioneering and ambitious knowledge hub of East Delhi, stimulating and infusing the exchange of great knowledge and ideas among the students so that they can build up a life in right direction along with their overall development.



# National Service Scheme

## Vivekananda College

Our aim at NSS is to allow students to develop their personality through community service by actively contributing to society and the nation. Their capabilities are enhanced to help society without any bias of caste and creed and to become a pillar of support for society in natural and man-made disasters or any other calamity.

The main objective of the NSS unit of Vivekananda College is to understand the community, establish relation with society, identify the need and problems of society and find the best ways to solve their problems. NSS makes people more capable and competent in group living, helps them to realize the importance of sharing of responsibility and acquire leadership skills and the quality of self-motivation. The overall objective is to ensure the development of both the volunteers and society at the same time.

Amongst other activities, our NSS unit focused on the experience of 'SCREEN FATIGUE' of the people because of excessive exposure to online work. As we all know, due to the current situation of COVID-19 pandemic, everything has become online – whether it is education, work, leisure, or shopping. People are not allowed to, or are afraid to, move out of their houses for safety purpose. So we at NSS took the initiative to conduct a survey. "Questionnaire on managing stress during tough times: dealing everything online" to know how online exposure is affecting people physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially.





# Introduction

The novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) first appeared in Wuhan city of China at the end of last year. Rapid worldwide spread of COVID-19 prompted the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare it as 'pandemic' on 11 March 2020. Most of the governments around the world have initiated a common goal to curb the spread of this highly contagious disease by imposing lockdowns, social-physical distancing, avoiding face to face interaction, including teaching-learning and restrictions on travel and immigration. Around 600 million school-going learners have been affected across the world due to the closing down of educational institutions. WHO has reported that around 320 million learners are affected in India; of which about 34 million belonged to the tertiary level of education.

The first COVID-19 case was reported in India (Kerala) on 30 January 2020. Currently, India has been experiencing a heightened growth in COVID-19 cases. The government of India, along with various state governments, has initiated several strategies to control the spread of the disease. Since 25 March 2020 India imposed various phases of nation-wide lockdown. One of the major shifts that occurred in the weeks and months that we were all caught in the grip of COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown is the move of educational institutes to go online for their interactions, classes and mentoring of students in all areas and disciplines.

With students scattered across cities and the country, the online experience has been key to ensure that students continue their learning and engagement with the subjects they have chosen; and side by side ensured that schools can complete syllabi and teaching in some sort of methodical way. Education that requires equipment, materials cannot be done effectively at home, especially in a lockdown environment, thus the challenges continue.

Nor is it a good idea for students to remain engaged with a screen for more than a few hours a day. There is not a single teacher or student who would say that it is – even though they might not say that the online experience is bad or poor.

# DATA & METHODS

## SUBJECTS

This is an online survey of 3,147 participants including students as well as working employees using online platforms or the exposure to screen fatigue

## DATA COLLECTION AND PROCEDURE

An online survey was conducted from 03 November 2020 to 04 December 2020 to collect the information. A structural questionnaire link using Google forms was sent to individuals through Whatsapp and e-mail. Participants were asked to provide full consent before participation in the online survey. A total of 3,147 participants provided complete information regarding the survey.



## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

### Participants Characteristics

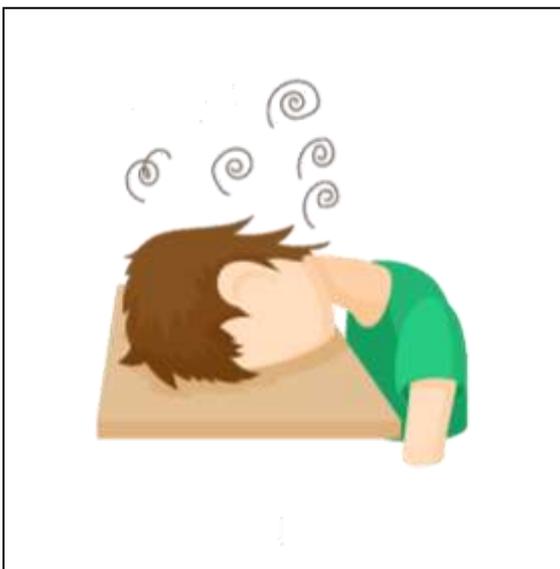
Graph 1 displays the profile (GENDER) of participants. Of 3,147 responses 65.8% responses were of females and 34% of males. AGE- 80.6% participants belong to 15-25 years of age, 13.3% below 15 years and 6.2% more than 25 years. We can see that the majority of our participants were females and mostly the ones belonging to the age group of 15-25 years i.e., 80.6% as participants of this age group are students who attended online classes of high school and undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as the working youth.

### Attitude Regarding Online Sessions

Upon asking how stressed they felt on a daily basis during online sessions or due to the constant exposure to the screen, 23.3% felt that they were completely exhausted, drained out, and felt very stressed. 54.5% of them responded that sometimes they felt completely exhausted but sometimes they enjoyed the sessions. That completely depended upon various factors that including mood swings of individuals, atmosphere, internet connectivity, surrounding, etc. 22.2% of them felt that they were not at all stressed from these online sessions.

17.5% of the respondents responded that they were not at all able to handle the stress when experiencing it, 25% of them felt that they were very well able to handle the stress and 57.5% of them felt that sometimes they were able to handle the stress, whereas at other times they were unable to handle the stress.

19.3% of the respondents had exposure to a screen for less than two hours, 32.1% had exposure to a screen for more than 5 hours where the average was between 2-5 hours and 52.2% of respondents faced this exposure. Several questions were asked to trace the causes of stress in their day-to-day life, hassles and challenges pressed upon them due to screen exposure. What caused them as well as the ways stress, they used to deal with the stress and the changes they had all faced in the process.



All the challenges, problems, and difficult circumstances definitely created stress. But it could be handled properly if carefully planned. Too much time on screens is harmful. It leads to eye strain, headache and backache, stress, disease, exhaustion, emptiness of soul, loss of humanity, craving human touch, and feeling distant from God.

Feelings of stress are normally triggered by things happening in one's life which involve: being under lots of pressure, facing major changes, worrying about something, not having much any control over the outcome of a situation.



## Stress could be caused by a variety of different common events:

Studies issue  
(68%)

Family issue  
(24.5%)

Financial  
issue  
(33.6%)

Friends  
issue  
(18.9%)

Although there could be other factors as well, which include stress due to failed relationships, poor health, unsuccessful career, excessive workload, over-exertion, low self-esteem, etc. One could face stress due to real or imagined causes.

Physical stress demands a change in the state of one's body. Due to excessive exposure to a screen, there were many changes in one's lifestyle as well as in one's habits and patterns. One feels strained when one over-exerts oneself physically, lacks a nutritious diet, or fails to get enough sleep. Eating habits also change. Participants responded about several changes.

According to the survey, 54.3% responded by reporting skipping of their meals due to continued online exposure, 29.7% reported overeating, 23.7% about bingeing on snacks, 18.6% flagged increased consumption of caffeine, many others reported several issues like decreased portion size of their meals, eating only junk and unhealthy foods, always having cravings and wanting to munch upon snacks, not eating on time and having untimely meals, eating less than normal or usual; also some responded that they didn't feel

hungry at all because of sitting at the desks for long hours without much physical movement. Whereas there were a few participants who responded that there were no changes at all in their eating pattern.

One can conclude that intake of a balanced diet can lift one's mood, give more energy and make one feel better. And when one is stressed, one seeks out 'Comfort Foods' which are high in fats, salt, sugar.

Sleep also plays an important role in our physical health. A study shows that the bright light of a screen may alter the body's biological clock and suppress the natural production of melatonin that is critical to the normal sleep-wake cycle. Melatonin is a hormone in the body that helps regulate a person's sleeping and waking hours. Due to exposure to a screen, sleeping cycle of individuals was also disturbed and altered.

It was found that frequent changes in sleep-wake schedule adversely affected one sleep and general health, including decreased sleep quality, altered sympathetic activity, increased risk of cardiovascular events and reduced cognitive performance.

When the human body is placed under stress there are certain physical changes that an individual experience. There could be marked changes in one's heart rate, blood pressure levels, metabolism physical activity. According to the survey, there were usual physical effects of stress that individuals noticed in themselves. A few of them marked sweating or chills (14.5%), upset stomach or diarrhea (16.7%), headaches or spondylitis (55.3%), fatigue (24.7%)

improve with sleep (6.9%), lower back pain (33.3%), while some others reported backaches, palpitations, changes in eye sight, laziness, shivering, or a high heart rate. Although a few responded that they experienced no physical effects. According to the survey, usual behavioral effects were also noticed as there were change in activity level (37.2%), decreased efficiency and

effectiveness (34.7%), irritability, outbursts of anger, frequent arguments (51.5%), inability to relax, rest and calm down (33.5%), difficulty in communication (19.3%), periods of crying (18.4%), avoidance of activities (30.5%).

According to the survey, there were participants who reported that there was disturbed sleep pattern and interference with natural sleep pattern and they could not sleep at night (34.2%), some reported that they felt sleepy all day long (13.9%), those who felt sleepy all the time (25.3%), whereas there were individuals who said that they experienced no changes at all in their sleeping patterns (37.6%). A good sleep is incredibly important for our health just like eating and drinking. Good sleep is one of the pillars of health.

Usual psychological or emotional effects were also there as some of them felt euphoric or invulnerable (11.1%), anxiety or fear (33.9%), worry about safety or self and others (23.1%), irritability or anger (47.4%), sadness or moodiness (51.5%), feeling helpless or hopeless (31.2%), feeling misunderstood or unappreciated (29.3%). Usual cognitive effects of stress that

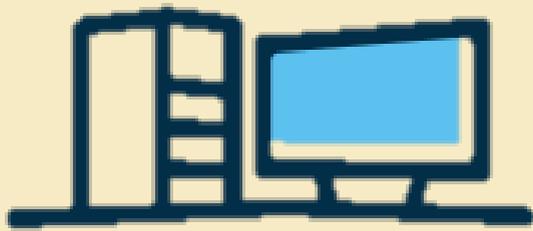
participants experienced or noticed are memory problems or forgetfulness (29%), disorientation or confusion (23.7%), slowness in thinking, analyzing or comprehending (28.5%), difficulty in concentration (60.7%), difficulty in calculating, setting priorities or making decisions (23.7%), loss of objectivity (14.1%), limited attention span (23.3%) and others faced confusion.

Usual social effects were withdrawing or isolating from people (40.5%), difficulty in listening (20.6%), difficulty in sharing ideas (33.3%), blaming or criticizing (23.4%), intolerance of group process (18.2%), difficulty in giving or accepting support or help (17.7%), impatient with or disrespectful to others (21.1%) and some responded that they felt no changes at all in their social behavior.

According to the survey, respondents have various personal methods to relieve stress which included eating (50.7%), sleeping (46.1%), sports or exercise (32.5%), talking to someone (30.3%), shopping (24.6%), social media (20.3%), gaming (14%) where as others listed listening music and songs, singing, reading books, articles and journals, watching K-dramas, self- time, listening to FM radio, cooking, watching web series, cycling, dancing, playing PubG, watching YouTube, doing yoga and meditation and painting as the ways to manage stress.

Relaxation techniques could also be used as it is an active skill that reduces the symptoms of stress and decreases the incidence of illness. Deep breathing used along with muscle relaxation to calm the mind and body is helpful.

Therefore, Online teaching has played a vital role during the pandemic but its consequences cannot be ignored. Online classes cannot be accessed by each student due to unavailability of smart phones, laptops, and mobiles network for especially poor families and remote areas. This leads to discrimination among the students who are poor and rich or live in urban and rural areas. The students below 14 years are not aware about screen effect and get addicted to mobile phones which causes mental and eye-related problems. Thus, online teaching cannot take the position of traditional class room teaching for a prolonged period of time and the need to return to the traditional mode of teaching after the pandemic.

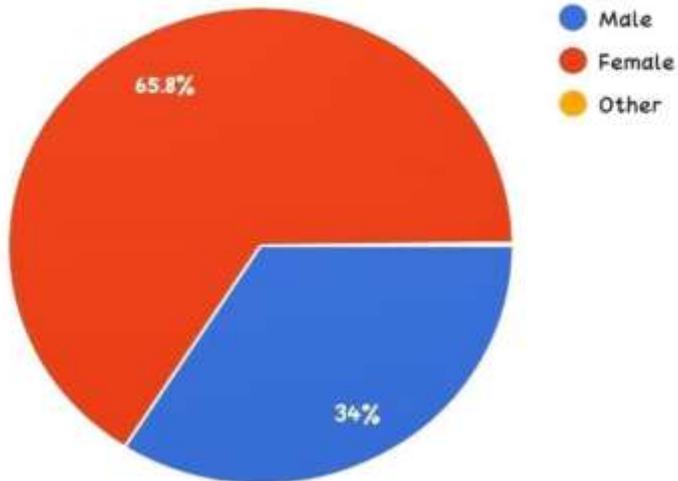


# **INFOGRAPHICS**

**Questionnaire on Managing  
Stress during tough times:  
dealing everything online**

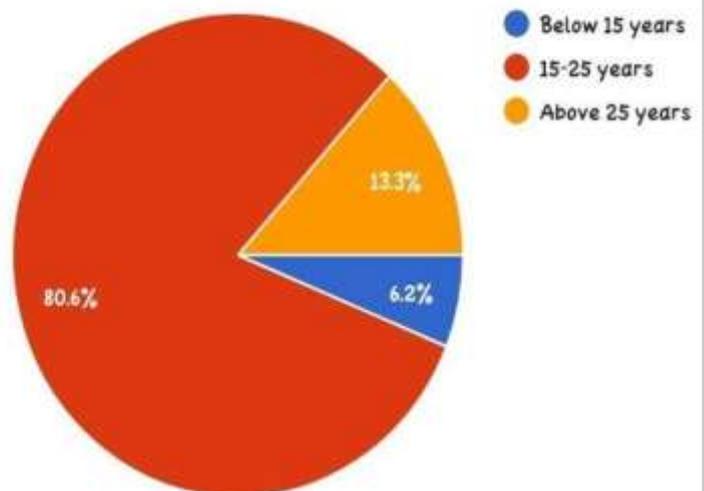
## Gender

3,147 responses



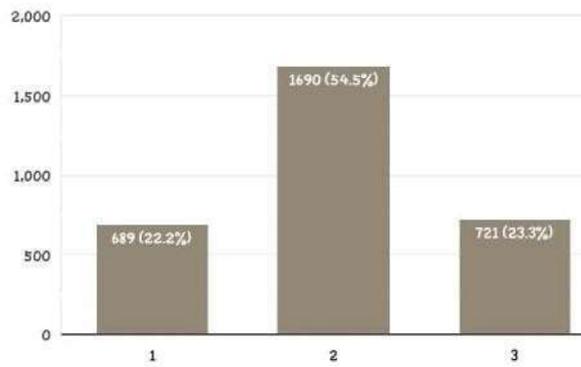
## Age group

3,147 responses



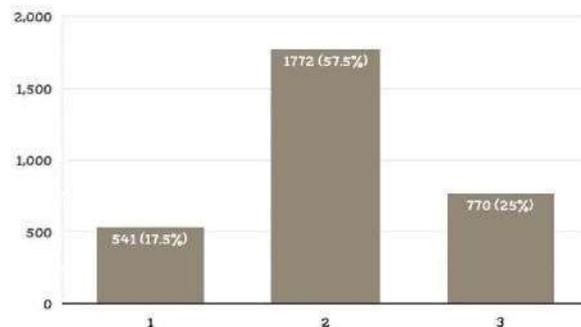
How stressed do you feel on a daily basis during your online sessions?

3,100 responses



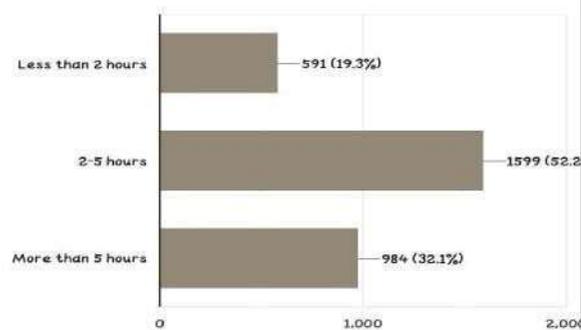
How able do you feel to handle stress when you are experiencing it ?

3,083 responses



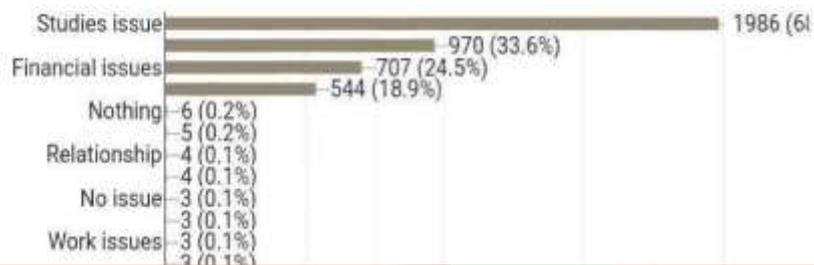
What is the Duration of your online classes or exposure to the screen ?

3,062 responses



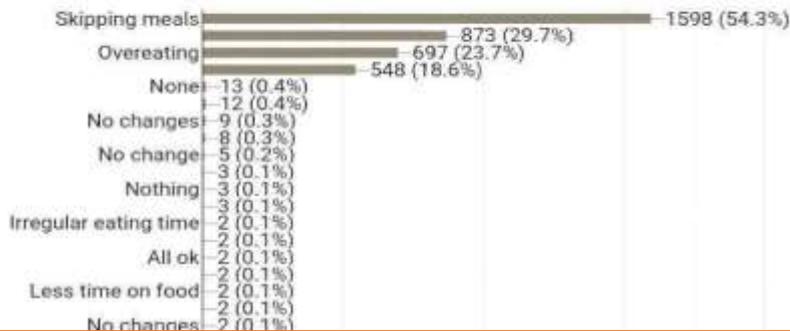
What are the usual causes of stress in your life ? (Select all that apply)

2,885 responses



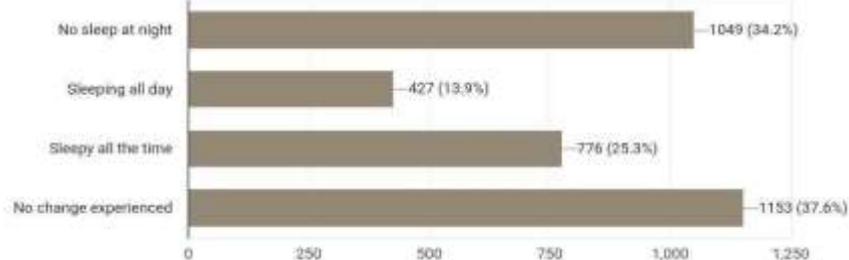
What are the usual changes in eating habits?

2,941 responses



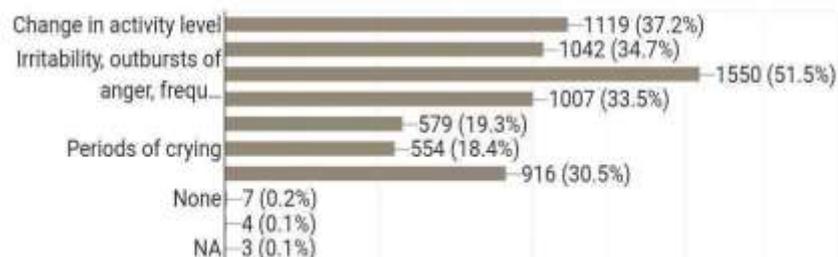
Changes you're experiencing in your sleep patterns

3,069 responses



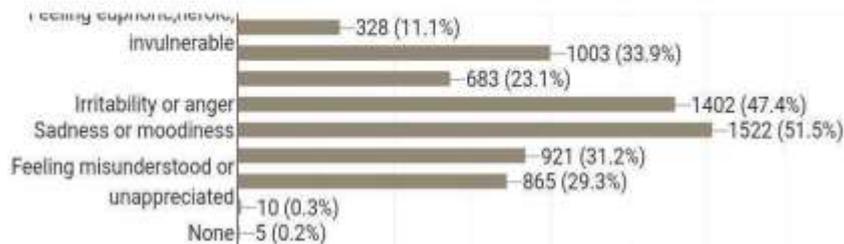
What are the usual behavioural effects of stress you have noticed yourself ? (Select all that apply)

3,007 responses



What are the usual psychological or emotional effects of stress you have noticed at yourself ? (Select all that apply)

2,955 responses



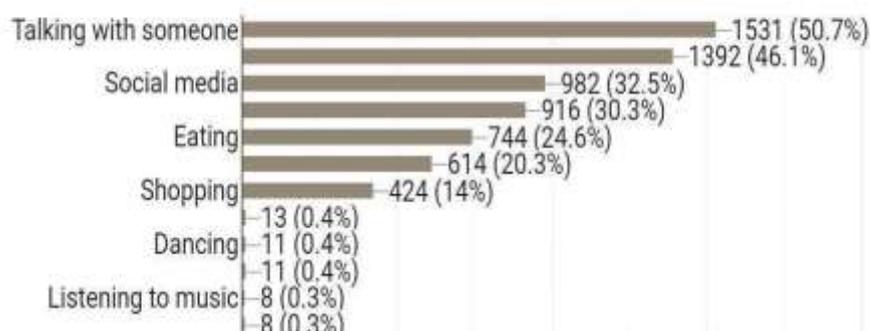
What are the usual social effects of stress you have noticed at yourself ? (Select all that apply)

2,810 responses



What are your personal methods to relieve stress ? (Select all that apply)

3,021 responses



# CONCLUSION

- There were around **3147 participants** which included both students and working employees using online platform. Out of them **65.3% were female and 34% male**.
- Most of the participants of the survey belonged to the age group of **15 years to 25 years**.
- **ATTITUDE REGARDING ONLINE EXPOSURE:** Most of the people **sometimes felt completely exhausted and at other times enjoyed it**. This depended entirely upon the mood swings an individual experienced, internet connectivity, atmosphere, and surroundings.
- **CAUSE OF STRESS:** The main cause of stress among the surveyed people was **study-related issues**.
- **CHANGES IN EATING HABITS:** There were some changes in eating habits due to online exposure like overeating, increased consumption of caffeine, etc. But the most common change reported was **skipping of meals**.
- **CHANGES IN SLEEPING PATTERN:** There can be changes in sleeping pattern also. But most of the people experienced **no change in their sleeping pattern**.
- **PHYSICAL EFFECTS:** When you get an online exposure for so many hours, you will definitely have some physical effects on your body. And the most common of them is **headache or cervical**.
- **BEHAVIOURAL EFFECTS:** Mostly people **experienced irritability, outbursts of anger, frequent arguments, etc.**
- **EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT:** The most common psychological effect was **sadness/ mood swings experienced by the people**.
- **CONGNITIVE EFFECT OF STRESS:** **Difficulty in concentration** was the most usual effect observed among the people.
- **SOCIAL EFFECT:** The most general social effect was **isolation from people**. The online exposure makes the people socially isolated.
- **PERSONAL METHOD OF RELIVEING STRESS:** Mostly people choose **eating** as their stress reliving method.

The conclusion of this questionnaire points to the fact that there are some bad effects of online exposure for the people which affects their physical and mental health. This online way of teaching and working is good only for some time; it will not work on a long-term basis. Our traditional ways of teaching and working are far better than this as they don't have any bad effect on human live but it makes the human life more worthy.

**57 NSS Volunteers of Vivekananda College actively participated in this exercise and got as many questionnaires filled as they could.**

## **List of Volunteers:**

- |     |                |     |                  |     |              |
|-----|----------------|-----|------------------|-----|--------------|
| 1)  | Aarti Chharvi  | 28) | Muskaan          | 56) | Vidhi Shukla |
| 2)  | Aditi Pandey   |     | Choudhary        | 57) | Yamini       |
| 3)  | Aditi Tomar    | 29) | Nancy Sharma     |     |              |
| 4)  | Aksheta        | 30) | Nandini          |     |              |
| 5)  | Anushka Singh  | 31) | Neha             |     |              |
| 6)  | Aswathy        | 32) | Parul Sharma     |     |              |
| 7)  | Atlanta        | 33) | Pooja            |     |              |
| 8)  | Ayushi Jain    | 34) | Pooja Kumari     |     |              |
| 9)  | Ayushi Rajwar  | 35) | Prithika Rastogi |     |              |
| 10) | Bhargavi Pal   | 36) | Raghvee          |     |              |
| 11) | Cauveri Joshi  | 37) | Ramsha Ahmed     |     |              |
| 12) | Chalise        | 38) | Ragini Batla     |     |              |
| 13) | Divyanshi      | 39) | Rashi Jain       |     |              |
| 14) | Ekta Sharma    | 40) | Rashi Patel      |     |              |
| 15) | Eshita Pandey  | 41) | Riddhima Chopra  |     |              |
| 16) | Geetika        | 42) | Riya Choudhary   |     |              |
| 17) | Jasleen Gawri  | 43) | Rashi Patel      |     |              |
| 18) | Jhankar        | 44) | Sakshi           |     |              |
| 19) | Kaashvi        | 45) | Sana             |     |              |
| 20) | Kanika         | 46) | Shalini Gautam   |     |              |
| 21) | Kaysha Trivedi | 47) | Shivani          |     |              |
| 22) | Khushi Rastogi | 48) | Shubra           |     |              |
| 23) | Khushi Sinha   | 49) | Shreya           |     |              |
| 24) | Kinjal         | 50) | Shruti Sinha     |     |              |
| 25) | Madhu          | 51) | Smridhi          |     |              |
| 26) | Manya          | 52) | Tannu            |     |              |
| 27) | Muskaan        | 53) | Vashubhi         |     |              |
|     |                | 54) | Vibha            |     |              |
|     |                | 55) | Vidhi Bhardwaj   |     |              |

**Report written by:  
Smridhi  
Designed by:  
Ramsha Ahmed**