

# CONTRIBUTORS' BIONOTES

# Contributors

**Omkar Bhatkar** has been teaching and involved in theatre making, poetry, and cinema for a decade now and hopes to die painting. He writes and directs plays and makes independent feature films and documentaries. His works largely focus on Poetry in Motion, Existentialist Themes, and Contemporary French Plays in Translation. He has written and directed more than twenty plays, several of which have been performed at Art and Theatre Festivals. In collaboration with *Alliance Française de Bombay*, he has directed several Contemporary French Plays in English. Dr. Bhatkar's play '*Blue Storm*' and '*Raindrops on my Window*' was selected at the World Asia Playwrights Theatre Festival held in South Korea in 2021 and 2024 respectively. He is the artistic director of Metamorphosis Theatre and Films and was curator at St. Andrew's Centre for Philosophy and Performing Arts for six long years.

**Moitrayee Das** is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at FLAME University, Pune. She received her Ph.D & M.Phil in Management and Labour Studies from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai. She has also completed an Executive Post Graduate Diploma in Analytics from TISS Mumbai. She holds an M.A. Degree in Applied Psychology with a specialization in Industrial Psychology and a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Mumbai. She currently teaches Industrial Psychology and Cross-Cultural Psychology. Her work has been featured in *The Hindu*, *Outlook India*, *Deccan Herald*, *Livewire*, *Feminsim in India*, *Telangana Today*, *HR Katha*, *Business Manager*, *The Sentinel* and *The Northeast Now*, among many others.

**Arpita De** is a practicing narrative therapist, consultant psychologist and a researcher in the field of mental health. She completed her MSc in economics from the University of Calcutta in the year 1988. In the first 20 years of her working life, she gathered experiences on a variety of jobs. She has submitted a PhD thesis on Marginalization and stigma relating mental illness from the Psychology Department of the University of Calcutta. She is the co-founder of Bandhu Narrative Allies which is a platform for exploring and training

in Narrative Practices with groups and communities. Inspired by the line 'personal is professional'; She has published books in Bengali and written articles on feminism & other issues relating mental health from her lived experience.

**Aishe Debnath** is an educator and Ph.D. scholar, currently serving as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Applied Psychology, University of Mumbai. With a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Anthropology from St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, and a Master's degree specializing in Industrial-Organizational Psychology, she brings a wealth of academic and practical expertise to her role. Aishe is deeply committed to advancing psychological well-being and fostering a culture of growth and learning. Her academic journey is enriched by prestigious certifications, including the Science of Well-Being from Yale University, Appreciative Inquiry, and Psychological First Aid from Johns Hopkins University. Additionally, she has completed an Introductory course on Positive Psychology with Martin Seligman at the University of Pennsylvania and Foundations of Mindfulness at Rice University.

**Ishita Deshmukh** is an undergraduate student majoring in Psychology and minoring in Human Resource Management at FLAME University.. Ishita is deeply passionate about exploring workplace culture, productivity, and employee well-being, with a keen interest in understanding the motivations and aspirations that drive human behaviour in a societal context.

**Nivedita Gogia** is a health psychologist and an alumna of Mumbai University and University of Central Lancashire, Preston, United Kingdom. She specializes in promoting emotional well-being through nervous system regulation practices, somatic work, and Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). Her primary focus is working with people who grew up with relationship trauma and its effect on their health, adult relationships, and career. She is committed to empowering individuals to navigate their healing journeys through calm, sustainable, and intentional approaches.

**Prisha Khanna** is currently a undergraduate student at FLAME University, Pune. She is pursuing a major in Psychology with a minor in Digital Marketing and Communications. She is interested very much in research and works with her professors on research projects.

**Xavier Menezes** is a Junior Research Fellow at the Department of English, University of Mumbai, Santa Cruz (East), Mumbai- 400098. He is an alumnus of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Mumbai, and has completed his Masters from the Department of English, University of Mumbai. His fields of interest include the art produced by authors in marginal spaces and identities, the intersections of revolutionary ideas and literary genres, and the ways in which artists texture contemporaneity and experience into their chosen media. In addition to research, he has written articles in newspapers. His creative pursuits include writing short stories and composing poetry.

**K. Nagalakshmi**, is an Associate Professor at Annamalai University in the Department of Psychology, has extensive experience in teaching and research. She acted as a Principal Investigator in the TANSCHÉ-funded project. With wider teaching and research experience, she has guided numerous students in their academic pursuits and also published articles in reputed journals. She has also been awarded the best teacher award by the vice chancellor of Annamalai University. Further, she achieved a best research paper award.

**Arpita Naik** is a UGC Senior Research Fellow and PhD scholar in the Department of Applied Psychology and Counselling Centre at the University of Mumbai. She is also working as an Assistant Editor for the journal Sambhashan. She holds a master's degree in Applied Psychology.

**Shobha Nayar** is an Aotearoa New Zealand trained and registered occupational therapist who has worked in various roles in the field of mental health. She holds a PhD in occupational science, and she has held various roles in academic institutions in New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and India. Shobha is currently based in Chennai, India. She has a private practice as a therapist; and works as an independent academic, offering consultation services to academic institutions and postgraduate students in the area of qualitative research. She is currently senior associate editor for the international Journal of Occupational Science.

**Aazka K. P.** is an Assistant Professor of English at B. K. Birla College of Arts, Science and Commerce in Mumbai. She is a writer and editor as well, who has some published works to her name. She has presented papers in National and International conferences. She is interested in Queer Literature, Marginalised Literature, Tribal Literature and Film Studies.

**Alokananda Rudra** is a neurodevelopmental researcher with a special interest in autism. She has over ten years of working experience in the field of Developmental Psychology alongside reputed autism researchers, the autism community, autism advocates and charities, in India, the United Kingdom (UK) and Israel. Rudra was awarded the felix fellowship to do a Ph.D at the university of reading, (5 students chosen from India in a year), the Daphne Jackson fellowship for Postdoctoral research at Durham University, UK (awarded to only 2 applicants in a year from Durham University) and an Autistica early career leadership training award in 2021 in the UK (16 participants chosen from 100 applicants). Presently she is a Senior Research Analyst at Ummeed Child development Centre in Mumbai, India.

**Muskan Shah** is an aspiring clinical psychologist. She is currently pursuing her Master of Science in Clinical Psychology from Christ University, Bangalore. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from FLAME University, Pune. She is very inquisitive in nature and has written articles for papers such as Telangana Today and The Sentinel. She has published a chapter on the impact of online shopping on cognitive processes in the book titled Human Cognition: In the Digital Era. She has presented a paper on Eco-Anxiety in students. She has also delivered a Student TedEd Talk on introducing art and music therapy in schools, available on the official YouTube page.

**Arushi Sharma** is an Assistant Professor of English at Gujarat National Law University, Silvassa Campus, DNHDD. She is a trainer for functional proficiency and professional proficiency courses. She has presented papers at National and International Conferences and has many publications in University Grant Commission (UGC) approved and UGC care listed journals and chapters in edited books. She has three co-edited books of poetry to her credit. She is a content writer for Institute of Distance and Open Learning, University of Mumbai (IDOL) for various courses in Business Communication and American Literature and for Jagat Guru Nanak Dev Punjab State Open University, Patiala.

**Vatika Sibal** is an associate Professor and Head, Department of Sociology, St. Andrew's College Graduate and Post graduate in Sociology from Pune University, Graduate in Law from Pune University, NET in Sociology and Doctorate from University of Mumbai. Her areas of interest lies in Gerontology- Sociology of Aging, Geriatric Care, Women, Cinema and Food culture and identity. She has thirty plus articles to her credit published in national and international journals and book chapters.

**S. Srikumaran** is a passionate research scholar at Annamalai University in the Department of Psychology. His work in the field of psychological research primarily focuses on exploring gratitude interventions among married couples in order to contribute valuable insights to the academic community. He also worked as a project fellow in the TANSCHÉ-funded project and completed the Research Methodology Course for M. Phil/PhD/PDF research scholars in social sciences sponsored by ICSSR.

**Branca Teixeira** is a passionate educator serving as a Learning Coach and Learning Support Coordinator for K-5 at the American School of Bombay. With a Bachelor's degree in Special Education, specializing in Intellectual Disabilities and Autism, she brings deep expertise to her role. Branca is dedicated to creating inclusive learning environments that support and empower diverse learners to reach their full potential. Her work focuses on fostering a culture of inclusion, collaboration, and accessibility, ensuring every student feels valued and supported. She works closely with teachers, students, and families to implement strategies and practices that promote engagement and growth. Through her commitment and expertise, Branca plays a vital role in shaping a learning community where every student thrives.

**Yashna Vishwanathan** is a disability support professional, trainer and supervisor presently working with Ummeed Child Development Center, Mumbai. In her over eight years of practice as a therapist, she works with disabled, neurodivergent children and young people at the intersections of various identity locations such as gender, sexuality and caste. Her therapy practices are disability, neurodivergence and queer affirmative and are informed by anti-caste principles. Yashna has been involved in several projects like 'Jugaad' – a little book of know-hows about mental health by young people, Fun Club – a leisure space for disabled young children, Pyaar Plus – Point of View and the Alternative Identity Project in collaboration with The Mind Clan.