



SMART INDIA FOUNDATION



SMART VOICE - OCTOBER 2024

CONTENT

<i>1. Editorial</i>	<i>1-3</i>
<i>2. Research Methodology Workshop</i>	<i>4-9</i>
<i>3. Sewage Treatment Survey</i>	<i>10-11</i>
<i>4. Mental Health Day Celebration</i>	<i>12-13</i>
<i>5. Organizational Visits</i>	<i>14-18</i>
<i>6. Activities from the Field</i>	<i>19-22</i>
<i>7. Mental Health Campaign</i>	<i>23-28</i>

EDITORIAL

Revisiting Gandhian Ideals: Social Work and Gramaswaraj

Dear Readers,

As we step into October, a month that marks the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, it is fitting that we take a moment to reflect on his timeless ideals. Gandhiji's philosophy was not just about attaining political freedom but also about empowering every individual and community through Gramaswaraj—the vision of self-reliant and sustainable villages.

Gandhian thought lays the foundation for a form of social work that is rooted in service, empathy, and empowerment. For Gandhiji, social work was not an act of charity but a duty of every individual towards their fellow beings. He believed that true change begins at the grassroots, where people, through self-reliance, collective action, and moral leadership, can transform their lives and communities.

In today's fast-paced, urban-centric world, Gandhiji's principles hold more relevance than ever. Social work, when inspired by his ideals, goes beyond welfare programs—it becomes a movement for dignity, equity, and empowerment.

Gramaswaraj, as envisioned by Gandhi, emphasizes decentralized governance, self-sufficient economies, and sustainable livelihoods. Villages, he believed, should not be dependent on external forces but should thrive on local resources, wisdom, and collective effort.

At Smart India Foundation, we are committed to promoting initiatives that align with this vision of empowerment and inclusivity. As social workers, thinkers, and changemakers, it is our responsibility to keep these ideals alive—bridging tradition with modern practices to create self-sustaining communities. From initiatives in rural development to transformative approaches in social work, we hope to inspire you to join this journey toward a just, equitable, and self-reliant India.

Let us honor the Mahatma not just with words but with action. The path to Gramaswaraj may be challenging, but as Gandhiji taught us, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

Wishing you a month of reflection, service, and inspiration.

In service and solidarity,

*Dr. Semichan Joseph
Team SMART*



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY WORKSHOP



The Smart India Foundation organized a comprehensive 5-day online workshop on Research Methodology, specifically tailored for Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) and Master of Social Work (MSW) students. This workshop was designed to enhance students' understanding of research methods and to equip them with practical skills essential for conducting research within the field of social work. The workshop was conducted from October 21 to October 25 at 8 PM via, Google meet.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY WORKSHOP

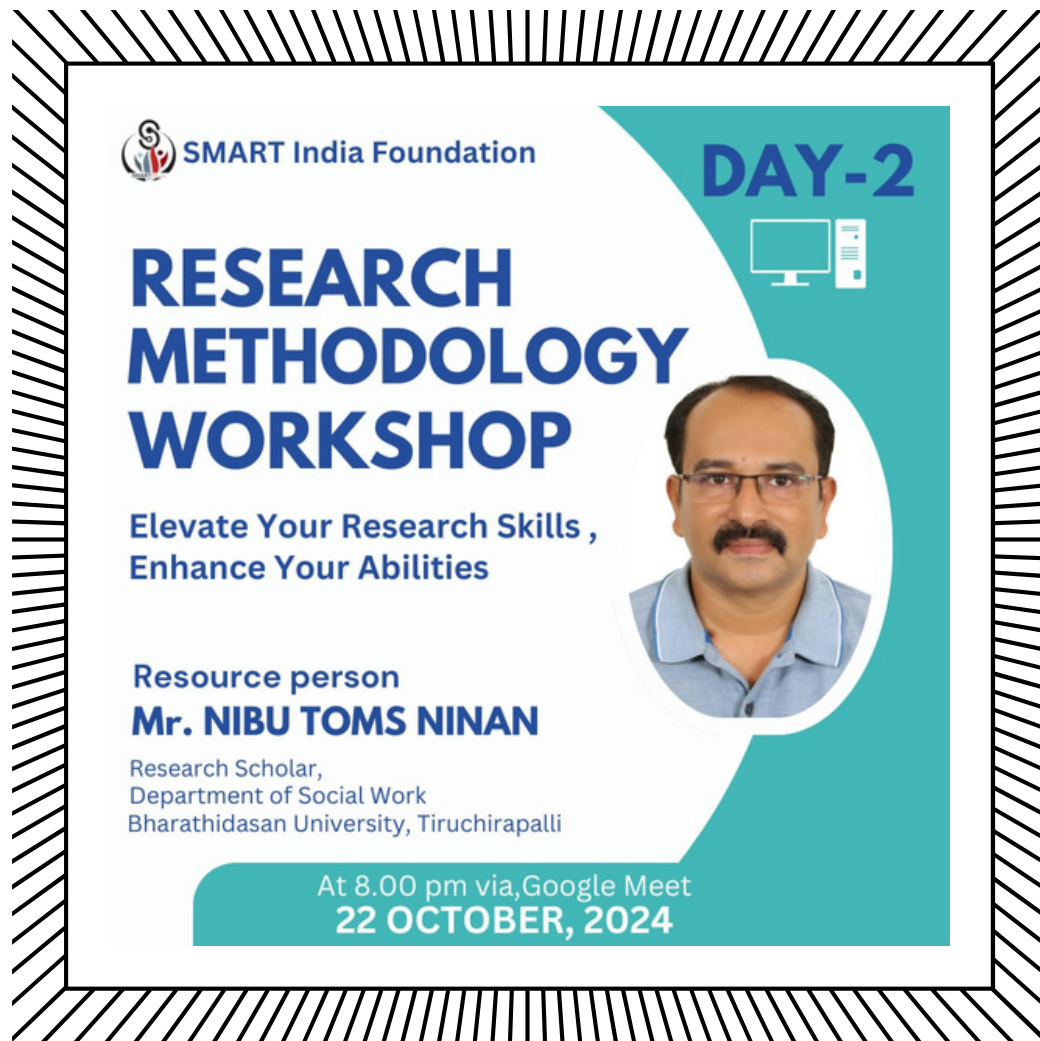
INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



The first day introduced students to the basics of research methodology, covering the definition and significance of research in social work. Mr. Sibin provided insights into different types of research, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods, and gave an overview of the research process, setting a solid foundation for the days ahead.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY WORKSHOP

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PLANNING



On the second day, Mr. Nibu focused on research design and planning. Students learned about formulating clear and researchable questions, setting objectives, and selecting appropriate research designs. This session highlighted the importance of aligning research questions with the selected research design for effective study outcomes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY WORKSHOP

DATA COLLECTION METHODS



Ms. Priya covered data collection techniques, starting with the concepts of universe and sampling and different sampling techniques. She then explained both quantitative (surveys, questionnaires, scales) and qualitative (interviews, focus groups, observations) data collection methods, providing students with practical knowledge to gather data effectively.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY WORKSHOP

WRITING RESEARCH PROPOSALS & REPORTS



The fourth day focused on writing research proposals and reports. Mr. Garsho discussed the structure and content of research proposals and reports, offering writing tips, best practices, and guidance on presenting and publishing findings. Topics such as references, chapterization, abbreviations, and annexures were also covered to aid students in crafting comprehensive research documents.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY WORKSHOP

DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES



On the final day, Mr. Zafar guided students through data analysis techniques, covering both quantitative and qualitative analysis. He introduced statistical tests, including parametric and non-parametric tests, providing a practical understanding of how to analyze data and interpret research results.

SEWAGE TREATMENT SURVEY

MARAD MUNICIPALITY

Smart India Volunteers conducted a two-day sewage treatment survey in Marad Municipality on October 9–10, 2024, after training by the WASH Institute. Teams surveyed six households per ward and two industries daily, using the TOBO digital app for data collection and capturing photos of polluted canals. Findings revealed poor sewage infrastructure in most homes, leading to direct discharge into water bodies, while industries showed inconsistent regulatory compliance, with some releasing untreated effluents. Visible environmental issues, including sewage accumulation and improper waste segregation, highlighted the urgency of intervention. The insights and evidence collected will support the development of strategies to address these challenges effectively.

AT A GLANCE



MENTAL HEALTH DAY



SMART India Foundation, in collaboration with KMM College of Arts and Science, Thrikkakara, celebrated Mental Health Day on October 10, 2024 at Tabitha Old Age Home, Thrippunithura, Ernakulam. This event highlighted the importance of mental well-being, particularly for senior citizens, fostering community support and awareness.

MENTAL HEALTH DAY CELEBRATION GLIMPSES



ORGANIZATIONAL VISITS



HOUSE OF PROVIDENCE



SMART India Foundation, in collaboration with KMM College of Arts and Science, Thrikkakara, organized a visit to an oldage home called House of Providence in Thevara on 15th October, 2024

VIMALA BHAVAN



SMART India Foundation, in collaboration with MMNS College, Raani, organized a three day visit (19 Oct-21 Oct) to a shelter home called Vimala Bhavan in Mattancherry, Kochi. The home is known for its compassionate service, run by dedicated nuns who offer shelter, food, medical care, and spiritual comfort to the residents. The social work trainees had the opportunity to observe the structure of the institution and understand their daily life ,challenges, and their daily activities. They also conducted various interactive sessions for the inmates.

PHC AND FHC VISITS



On 28th October 2024, Smart Interns visited the Primary Health Centre (PHC) and Family Health Centre (FHC) in Njarackal Panchayat to understand local healthcare services.

These visits provided valuable insights for future social workers, highlighting the importance of accessible healthcare in rural communities. It emphasized the role of social workers in collaborating with healthcare providers to enhance health services and support community well-being.

SPECIAL SCHOOL VISITS



SMART interns visited Cottolengo Special School as part of their internship program. During the visit, they interacted with the students and learned about the school's programs that support children with disabilities, including specialized education, therapy, and vocational training.

The visit provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by children with special needs and the role of such institutions in promoting inclusion and empowerment. It was also an important learning experience for the interns in understanding the social work involved in supporting marginalized communities.

ACTIVITIES FROM THE FIELD



CASE WORK AND GROUP WORK



The smart interns participated in case work, group activities, and rehabilitation programs at the Cottolengo Vocational Training Centre, a specialized school for children with special needs.

During their time at the centre, the interns received invaluable support from the management, which greatly enhanced their learning experience.

This collaboration allowed them to gain deeper insights into the unique challenges faced by children with special needs. The interns were able to apply their theoretical knowledge in a practical setting, developing their skills in case management and rehabilitation.

ELDERLY INTERVIEW



The interns of Smart India Foundation conducted interviews with elderly individuals to better understand the challenges faced by the senior population. Through these interviews, they performed a SWOT analysis, identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats affecting the elderly. This activity provided the interns with valuable insights into aging, helping them develop a deeper awareness of the needs and strengths of the elderly while enhancing their research and analytical skills.

MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY



Smart Interns conducted a mental health survey in Ernakulam, Kerala, to assess the mental well-being of its residents. The COVID-19 pandemic worsened mental health for 72% of respondents, particularly due to job insecurity and social isolation. Women, especially younger ones, reported higher levels of anxiety, while men were less likely to seek help due to stigma. Only 25% accessed mental health services, citing barriers like stigma, cost, and lack of awareness. The survey emphasized the need for better mental health education, accessible services, and efforts to reduce stigma, particularly in rural areas.

MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN

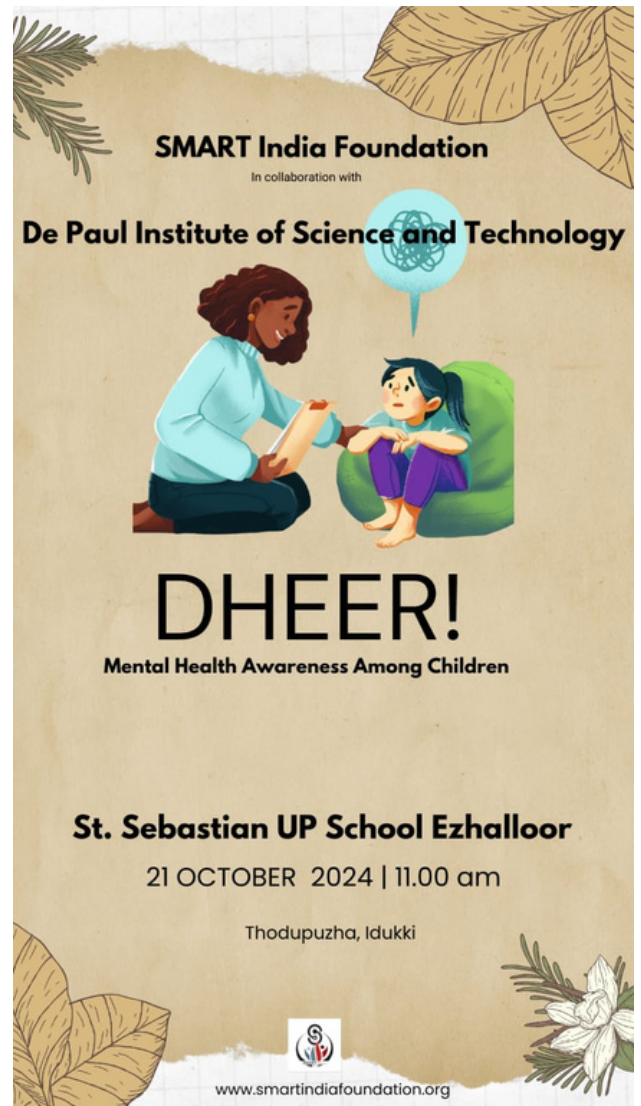
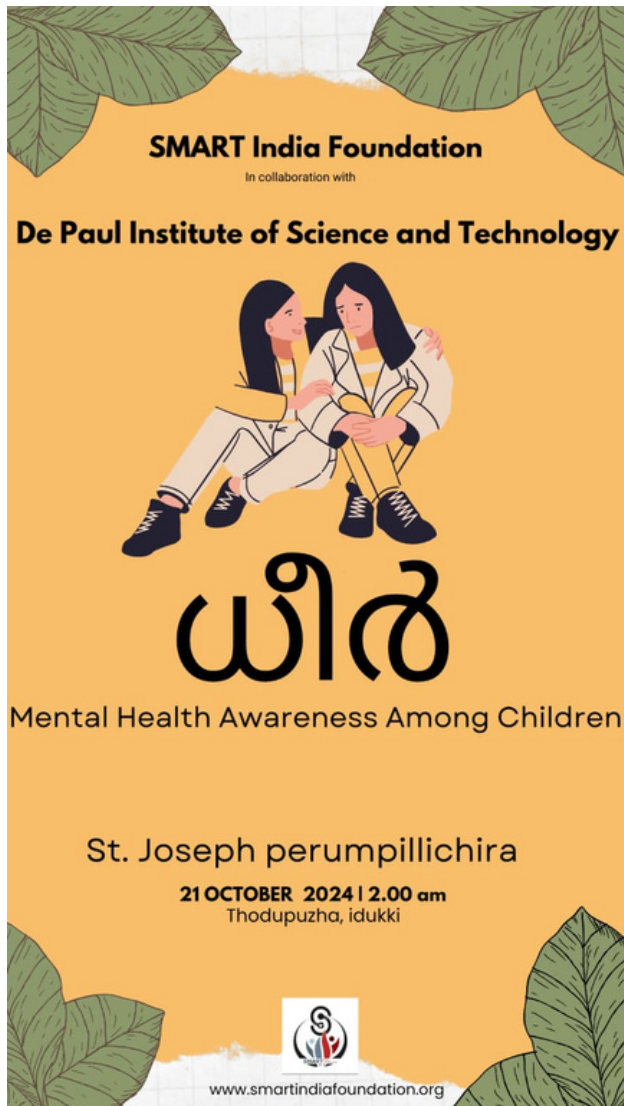


DHEER CAMPAIGN

*In October 2024, Smart India Foundation launched the *Dheer* mental health campaign in collaboration with KMM College and De Paul College. This one-hour campaign included sessions, activities, tasks, and an ice-breaking session aimed at raising awareness about mental health and emotional well-being.*

The program, held in schools and old age homes, began with an ice-breaking session to create a comfortable environment for participants. It then included interactive activities and tasks that focused on stress management, recognizing mental health issues, and building resilience. In schools, students learned coping strategies, while in old age homes, activities were designed to address loneliness and promote social engagement.

The Dheer campaign successfully engaged participants, reduced stigma, and provided valuable mental health education across various age groups.



The "Dheer" Mental Health Campaign, organized by Smart India Foundation in collaboration with De Paul College and MNSS College, Konni, aimed to raise awareness about mental health among school students.

The campaign was conducted in several schools, including R.L.V Govt. U.P. School in Thrippunithura, Vocational Higher Secondary School in Trumpanam, Ezhalloor L.P. School in Thodupuzha, and St. Joseph's School in Perumpallachira. Each session focused on educating students about mental health issues, stress management techniques, and ways to cope with emotional challenges.

DHEER CAMPAIGN GLIMPSES





The Smart India Foundation, in association with KMM College, conducted a Mental Health Campaign at several old age homes, including House of Providence in Thevara, Poornathrayeesa Old Age Home in Thrippunithura, Government Old Age Home in Thevara, and St. Teresa's Mercy Home in Ernakulam. The campaign aimed to raise awareness about mental health issues among elderly residents, providing them with information on coping with isolation, stress, and age-related challenges. The campaign successfully empowered the elderly participants by offering them valuable resources and emotional support, contributing to their overall well-being.

DHEER CAMPAIGN GLIMPSES





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DISCLAIMER

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