Beyond the Classroom: Exploring How Student Organizations Shape Development of Indian College Students

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ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
	In the lives of students, books play an integral role in shaping their intellectual competencies so much so that it gets misperceived in the popular narratives that the only friendship that students should embrace is with their books. However, recent researches emphasize the imperative role of extra-curricular participation by students. Even though most of the school curriculums in India have begun incorporating holistic learning beyond the books, the Higher-educational institutions (HEIs) still hold an excessively disproportionate focus on academic assessments. Unfortunately, as a consequence, thousands of students in our country have to go through academic stressors as well as personal-social turmoil. Thus, these ever-increasing impediments in students' lives need urgent amelioration. In this regard, the objective of this research was to examine the potential of student organizations, clubs, and societies in enhancing the personal-professional growth of students in HEIs. This qualitative study used the Hermeneutic-Phenomenological approach to understand the lived

experiences of six recently graduated students' accounts of participating in student organizational endeavors, aiming for personal-professional development while cultivating their purpose in life. Semi-structured virtual interviews were conducted which were analyzed by Thematic Analysis. In this study, three common themes have emerged: (i) Community participation for personal well-being and development, (ii) Honing professional competencies through building communities and (iii) Becoming catalysts for change through collaboration in Society. Findings suggested a pressing need for systemic transformation in the HEIs, ensuring the presence of active student communities on their campuses to contribute to the nation-building process.

Introduction

Student life during college years is a transformative period marked by personal growth, academic challenges, and social development. In India, this phase is particularly significant as it shapes not only academic and professional futures but also personal identities. The current education system compounded with societal pressures has continually reinforced the idea of having good grades above everything. As a consequence, overemphasis on assessments and marks has downplayed the importance of personal identity construction which is vital for dealing with the challenges of later life.

This transition from school to college brings with it a myriad of changes in how one perceives one's self about the world. There is a significant shift in the social dynamics. In this process, students end up struggling with their new social environments and forming meaningful peer relationships. They often look up to diverse social interactions with age-mates and seniors to explore the social world which adds another layer of complexity to college life.

While many colleges do offer student organizations and activities, there are several reasons why some institutions might not provide as many opportunities or support for active student communities. A study conducted by A. R. Kulkarni and S. M. Rao (2018) found that a lack of appropriate resource allocation and funding discourages collective participation from the students Several college authorities face

budgetary limitations due to which financial aid to talented students is withheld, hence impeding on their possible opportunities to growth and creative endeavors. Another challenge that students have to face in colleges includes the absence of administrative support and bureaucracy that hinders the expansion of student collective groups within the campuses (**Nair & Tiwari, 2020).**

Unnecessary supervision and vigilance of student activities do nothing except chucking down the morale of students and hindering their route to thrive during college years. Lack of awareness and engagement among students about the available opportunities becomes a barrier and they start to perceive college as a phase of academic stress and challenges while ignoring the wonderful chances that can be made possible. They are either not informed by seniors due to a lack of social culture beyond academia or often not encouraged by the staff and teachers to participate, due to which existing opportunities might not be fully utilized (Jain & Sharma, 2018).

Singh & Bhattacharya (2020) conducted a study to understand cultural Influences on student engagement and community participation in Indian Colleges. They found that traditional values and norms can impact the types of activities that are encouraged or deemed appropriate, affecting the range and nature of student involvement.

To address these challenges, Higher-educational institutions must adopt a holistic approach that encompasses adopting congenial academic environments (promoting blended learning methods), making available mental health resources, and establishing active student organizations in the form of cultural societies/ clubs/ diverse communities.

Thus, the rationale of the current study is to understand the importance of student groups in college campuses and to document the lived experiences of students who are now working as professionals in various fields. The study has the potential to generate evidence for policy implications.

Review of literature

During college years, academic stress is found to be one of the single most common factors that lead to poor mental well-being in youth. Issues of unfamiliarity with college culture's need for exposure/ opportunities for growth also arise due to which students consciously seek student communities with the campus. Literature has highlighted the impediments faced by college students studying in Indian universities. The competitive environment during college years, one of the significant learning stages is driven by high expectations from ambitious families and societies which can lead to significant stress,

anxiety, and depression among the students affecting their mental health. Experiencing stress, anxiety, depression, and having negative automatic thoughts are some of the challenges that they have to face daily. Research by S. Patel and S. K. Desai (2021) indicates that mental health issues such as depression and anxiety are prevalent among Indian college students. The challenging environment furthermore makes it difficult for them to sustain a healthy balance between their coursework and personal well-being (R. K. Sinha and S. N. Choudhury, 2020).

Balancing personal hobbies and social involvement along with academic responsibilities requires constructive management and passionate planning of the allocated time. Effective time-management skills are a crucial skill set, needing continuous practice, that aids students in managing their extra-curricular activities, part-time work and social life alongside academic obligations (V. N. Gupta and S. K. Mehta, 2022).

Personal Development is the ongoing process of self-improvement in various aspects of life, including emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual growth. This can include activities like learning new skills, pursuing education, practicing mindfulness, and improving relationships (Roberts, 2017). Ultimately, personal development aims to increase overall well-being and fulfillment. Professional Development involves setting goals, gaining new insights, and cultivating habits that enhance personal growth, such as improving communication, increasing self-awareness, and fostering resilience. Professional Competencies are the skills and abilities required to perform effectively in a job or profession. They typically include technical skills, soft skills, critical thinking, adaptability, and leadership.

Community psychology also has a role to play in addressing student challenges as its core values help in sustaining positive impacts on students. These include empowerment, social justice, collaboration, diversity, and prevention (Rappaport, 1977) Research review suggests that academic performance can improve as a result of satisfying experiences of college students in various student communities. A recent study has found that students who engaged in peer support groups had significantly higher academic performance and motivation levels compared to those who did not participate in such communities (Choudhary &Sahu,2020). Another study has highlighted the importance of peer support groups in enhancing the psychological well-being of students. It indicated that students involved in extracurricular activities reported lower levels of anxiety and depression, suggesting that these communities provide essential social support and coping mechanisms (Gupta & Singh, 2019).

A study conducted by Hurtado & Carter (2018) found that participation in student organizations focused on diversity and inclusion enhanced students' cultural competence and engagement with social justice issues, positively impacting their overall college experience. Linder et al. (2020) in the Journal of Higher Education found that students who engaged in collaborative projects reported improved problem-solving skills and increased social capital. This networking not only enriches their academic experience but also prepares them for professional environments by building essential interpersonal skills and connections.

The existing literature has many studies on the effect of student organizations on the development of students, however, they focus on Western contexts and the majority of them employ quantitative tools to investigate the specific issue. Thus, the present research can reveal unique cultural influences on personal and professional development using a qualitative lens to offer rich insights into the lived experiences of Indian students and explore a broader range of student organizations and their collective impact.

Methodology

Research Question: How do student organizations and communities influence the personal and professional development of Indian college students?

Aim: To elucidate the lived experiences of 'participating in student organizations' and understand its influence on personal-professional development in the description of Indian college students.

Objectives:

•   To study how community participation influences personal growth and well-being.

•   To study how active participation in student organizations builds the professional competencies of students.

•   To study how community collaborations transform students in becoming catalysts for change in Society.

Methodological approach: Hermeneutic-Phenomenological approach

Procedure: Purposive sampling method was used. Semi-structured telephonic interviews were conducted from December 2024- February 2025 stretched across two-three sessions (40 min each). Thematic analysis was done to bring out the common themes from participant's responses.

Eligibility Criteria: With the intention of getting an account of how participation in student communities during college helps in professional and personal growth, the participants were selected keeping in the mind the following criteria:

(i) Participant must have had affiliation with one or more student clubs/ societies/ cultural communities etc during their graduation years.

(ii) Participant must have been recently passed out from college (not more than 5 years ago from the date of interview).

(iii) Participant must have been employed in private/ public organization or self-owned firm/ business.

Participants

Participant's name	Age (in years)	Sex	Educational Qualification	Affiliated Student community	Present occupation/ designation	City of Residence
Ms. Bhavya	25	F	B.Sc Math (H)	Chess club, Indian Dance Society	Data Scientist (AI and Machine learning)	Delhi (Recenty shifted to Bangalore for work)
Ms. Neha (name changed)	26	F	MA Psychology	Indian Dance Society, Dramatics, Rotaract (social welfare) club	College teacher	Delhi
Ms. Rupal Sharma	26	F	MA Psychology	Music Society, Departmental Club, Fashion Society	School counselor	Guwahati
Mr. Raghav Gusain	25	M	B.Sc Math	Dance Society	Senior Account Manager	Noida, U.P
Mr. Mayank Tripathi	24	M	B.Com	Photography club, Fine Arts club	HR Recruitment Manager	Ahmedabad, Gujrat
Mr. Sudhir Kumar	23	M	BBA	Theatre Society, Social club, Department	Business executive	Chandigarh, Punjab

				Society		

Results and Discussion

The consolidated themes that emerged after the thematic analysis of the six interviews have been presented below.

Theme 1: Community participation for personal well-being & development

The sub-themes have been presented below:

(i) Initial Expectations, getting familiar with and expanding horizons

It was found out in all of the interviews that as students enter college life, they actively seek out new experiences to explore their potential. In this age of late adolescence i.e. fifth stage of psychosocial development given by Erik Erikson: 'Identity Vs role confusion', adolescents explore their sense of self and independence (**Schwartz, 2017).**

"I was a person who loved to hang around people but never had exposure/ opportunities to work with them. So, I could see myself in college trying to make good use of resources, and social support when I found that there are some societies where I can join." (Mr. Raghav)

However, when they learn about insufficient resources or peer communities, disappointment surrounds them, because students have expectations from the college.

"When I entered college, I was looking for a chess community so that I could play for my college since I used to play for my school. I was expecting someone from the sports quota to come to college. But contrary to my belief, there was nothing. I wanted an opportunity, However, during my class discussions got to know that few students in my class play chess at a high level. We started playing games before classes and during free time during college." (Ms. Bhavya)

During the initial days of college, students are oriented about various clubs/ societies. While many do appear for auditions, few get selected based on interest or talent. The substantial period is invested in knowing the culture of the club by seniors.

"In 2nd year I was an active part of the department's activities and in 3rd year, I also took the role of responsibility under the core committee. My other societies irrespective of fest time, took a lot of effort and time commitment. The initial time was to learn about how societies work, warm up, work on basics, and learn from seniors. In fashion Society, I learned how to walk in heels, how to design costumes, understand different textures of fabric."(Ms. Rupal)

"Learning from seniors is a crucial part of your life... you learn existing culture, on-ground work, what works best here. Learning soft skills, negotiation, and understanding are the nuances of how to manage the community. All of that is reflected in your approach when you become the senior the next year".(Mr. Mayank)

Amidst learning new routines, cultures, and functioning of student groups, these freshers simultaneously adjust to new environments and expand their existing horizons; as Ms. Bhavya states, *"Dancing for the first time on stage how things need to be handled is something that I have learned. Observation and communication expanded my horizon. So I discovered that".*

(ii) Balancing act: Psychosocial support, handling pressures and mental wellbeing

Upon thematic analysis, it was found that getting along with peers and seniors was one of the essential factors that attracts and retains group membership. The consequent sense of belongingness is an innate human need that gets fulfilled once active participation in club/ Society work takes place.

"We used to work hard to make our annual dance events a success...that feeling of fulfillment is beyond anything. Winning in competitions was another major milestone for our collective efforts that helped define our identities to a great level". (Mr. Sudhir)

The collective interviews reflect the relevance of community psychology in bringing out personal growth and student wellness. A recent study shows that community psychology can inform diversity and inclusion initiatives, fostering environments where all students feel belongingness and supported (Williams & Patel, 2021).

As Ms. Rupal states, *"2nd year, as a senior, you get to teach your juniors what you have learned. In 3rd year, it was difficult because the focus also shifted towards building a career. Nonetheless, due to initial passion and sense of community that helped me with gaining a collective identity, I could also give my time for my passion".*

Communities in college not only help in maintaining interpersonal skills but also help one in dealing with academic pressures. Recent research shows a link between community engagement activities and academic success, suggesting that participation in community service fosters a sense of belonging and ameliorates retention among college students (Brown, L., & Davis, K. (2020)

She continues to share, "My bond was very good with seniors as it raises my sense of community, a feeling of belongingness. I've been friends with 6 bathes of my music Society. Being in 3 years, I could get exposure to 6 years through learning from senior's experiences. Seniors who make you feel welcomed plays a crucial role in maximizing your retention in the Society".

"I was a studious person yet wanted to learn new skills. So, I tried something equally good that demanded less time as compared to other big societies…At the end of the day, we are answerable to our parents and we don't want to compromise on our marks, so we try to manage both by giving time to interests that help in managing academic pressure."(Ms. Bhavya)

It was found that students engaged in extracurricular activities were more satisfied with their college experience and showcased better academic performance.

"I don't know how I achieved to manage my studies with active Society participation. Probably, I had secure social support from my classmates who helped me with the notes and files. Since I was in 3 societies initially, only two were active in their work so during the phase of exploration, I managed all of them, in 2nd year, I along with other batch mates reshaped the Society where I was solely investing my time in as a senior"(Ms. Mayank).

The presence of psychosocial support when clubbed with the engagement of one's own interests yields a fruitful result. The fruits that one bear comes in the form of inner peace and satisfaction. As Ms. Bhavya states,

"I have seen if you have a hobby out of your interests, then it helps in your work area. Chess or dance is like an activity where you invest yourself and for that time, you are cut off from the world and feel like landing on another world. So, one should pursue interests in life."(Ms. Bhavya)

When one sees that their contribution is making an impact on the overall functioning and achievements of Society, students experience enhanced self-worth, feel productive and tend to regard their work as meaningful.

"Our college being outer campus had few students who were primarily interested in classical forms of music. Me having a bit of training quite helped a lot in giving assistance and expertise to the Society and my juniors". (Ms. Rupal)

In all of the interviews, one commonality that has come up pertains to resilience building and patience in the process of adjustment and accommodation to the new social culture and going through ups and downs being an active part of the student community. Research has found the role of peer support networks in decreasing stress and promoting resilience, suggesting that community psychology core values do address the interventions in social support networks (Martinez, R., & Lee, T., 2019)

"Now since I have seen how I managed I know now that I'll be able to deal well with whatever life has to offer me now in terms of hectic schedules. There is resilience building in the process".(Ms. Neha)

Similarly, Ms. Bhavya shares, *"Winning trophy is at surface level. The process of shedding the sweat while enjoying is fruitful and satisfying. Dance is about expressions, postures, and energy in motion. The ultimate goal of making societies is to not just win, they are not established to burden students with the pressure of winning. It is for finding solace, exploration and building skills through repetition. It's like a bargain. You're getting something out of the efforts and time in terms of happiness and satisfaction. Winning is momentary It helped us build our patience. We used to explore new places to shift our mood which helped a lot. It's about working for the process rather than just outcome".*

Theme 2: Honing professional competencies through building communities

(i) Leadership

While working in a college Society, students learn numerous skills and competencies that are applied to future workplace settings. Furthermore, the fest season at college/ university is a time of bearing various responsibilities including logistics, material handling, coordination with sponsors, execution of various events, reaching out to different teams and organizing concerts, conferences, seminars etc.

"As a senior, I had to overlook the funding and finances of the Society. All of that was important included purchasing proper, registering for competitions, stitching costumes, purchasing makeup etc. All that includes fine management of assigned tasks". (Mr. Raghav).

Additionally, senior students put extra effort into maintaining a congenial environment for the new juniors to come. A study found out that those senior students who mentor their leadership skills also impact positively the lives of freshmen (K. A. Kessels and M. M. P. Mei)

As Ms. Rupal says, *"As a senior, I took care of how my juniors perceive this Society. Knowing how much are they able to connect with their age-mates or seniors is crucial as that connection will be the driving force for their long-term retention and how they see themselves as members of the collective., so to solve the mismatch between freshers' expectations and reality"*.

Another study conducted by Komives et al. (2005) highlights how involvement in community-building activities, such as student organizations and service projects, fosters essential leadership skills among students. By engaging collaboratively, students learn to communicate effectively, resolve conflicts, and take initiative, ultimately enhancing their leadership capabilities. The findings of this research are consistent with existing literature.

"Skill learning comes up after repetition and practice. My membership in student communities has something to do with people and my career is also about dealing with people and challenges. I saw myself grow in leadership and communication. There is an instilled sense of confidence in me that I can put out in my resume with evidence of my record. I have handled cases in practical settings through my college experiences".(Mr. Mayank)

Common in all the interviews were the benefits of Society's involvement in the professional world.Skills like negotiation, organizing and planning, commitment and delivering, accountability, citizenship behavior (doing more than what is required), technical skills, and team building are relevant in today's world that they learned in their college.

Ms. Rupal says, *"I've career in psychology, I can relate so much with my experience in interpersonal skills, their application of dynamics has helped in the professional area. You see yourself in a shade that you never had existed. My covert skills manifested through the student community platform. You can test yourself and generate evidence about your perception of skill acquisition"*.

Ms. Bhavya says, *"I had few juniors who were better than me. At that time, I wanted to work to keep my learner spirit active while also being assertive as a leader. That balancing was challenging, but I believe I worked out with some combination"*.

(ii) Conflict resolution at workplace

Findings of the current research suggests that participating in group activities, dealing with people's differences helped one teach how to manage their emotions, thus, helped in learning how to manage conflicts at their workplace. As Mr. Sudhir shared, *"I learnt to manage arguments in college. The panic situation which I used to had also got managed when tacking with issues on regular basis being a part of student community... Learnt to manage my emotions, mood side by side..."*

This is consistent with a study which suggests that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle workplace arguments, leading to more constructive outcomes (K. K. Daus and J. C. Ashkanasy, 2005).

"I vividly remember how I once showed my aggression to one of the Society member for something that she denied to do at the last moment. From the experience, I learnt that people do have some real reasons that needs to be addressed. So, whenever I encounter a heated argument at my workplace, before accusing anyone, I take a back step and introspect so to prevent conflicts". (Ms. Mayank)

"I have only learnt that conflict management can happen when one starts to think from other's point of view, keeping aside one's own biases. Middle ground should be approaches to pacify the aggravated opinion. It didn't happen in college, I thought I was doing best as an opinion giver, may be, I wasn't mature back then. But now in retrospect, I know how far I have come. It taght me to learn from mistakes". (Ms. Raghav)

The participants shared that they all learning spirit, their observational skills and self-control learnt from hurdles of being in peer groups/ clubs helped them deal with the challenges of workplace, and view things from other's perspective.

"From a lens of power, I would answer that there have been moments of competition within Society. At the same time, there's a part of me that wants to learn from others. Relation with batch-mates should be seen as non-competitive as there is no such hierarchy. I learnt to incorporate other's point of view otherwise envy is bound to occur". (Ms. Rupal)

(iii) Bearing responsibilities and building resilience from loss

Being accountable and holding responsibilities is one key skill set that high-achieving professionals are expected to showcase despite the consequences and adversities. This takes a lot of courage, grit and resilience that build over time with practice and experience.

Ms. Neha shares, *"In 3rd year, I was thinking about leaving Society due to time issues. Coordination is very important to match the dance steps. Still, we made it possible despite having time issues and this trade-off was far better than not being able to work on my interests"*.

Astin (1999) in a study found that students involved in extracurricular activities reported greater personal and social development. It boosts leadership skills and community commitment, fostering overall accountability. These skills are vital in the world of work.

Mr. Raghav shared, *"If I'm involved in group work, I learned to make sure that there is no such issue because of my absence, so I kind of managed, so back-out was never an option. My morals are very strong in that sense"*.

Ms. Bhavya also shares, *"Now, when I was in 3rd year when I wanted to focus solely on studies, I realized that my efforts and collective efforts with seniors would go in vain if there is no one to lead. If two seniors have built a Society to this level, at least we collectively can continue the legacy. We should also contribute for the Society. So there was a responsible commitment involved"*.

During college fests, students have the extra burden of putting effort into competitions and also facing the harsh realities of losing despite working hard. This makes them resilient enough to stand up again.

"During college fest season, you see the pressure amongst all the members, then you get to know how they deal with the stressors, you go through difficult times together, navigate through challenges. As seniors, one needs to take care of the people because that is the matrix where other things will embed". (Ms. Neha)

The participants also shared how extra-curricular work boosted their career growth showcasing how important student activities in college life are. *"Collaborative working, leading initiatives and pitching new ideas during club meetings discussions, managing with people around, pulling crowd is what I learned. I have got a push during my internships. Most work environments are the same, and roles are similar. At the initial level, when organizational hierarchies are established, employers do consider the experience of working in various societies. I believe it's an underrated advantage that pushes one to*

build a career. People with good experience with clubs, etc have an extra edge over other people in general".(Ms. Bhavya)

Theme 3: Becoming catalysts for change through collaboration

(i) Harnessing the Power of networking

Networking plays a crucial role in becoming a catalyst for societal change by facilitating connections, sharing resources, and fostering collaboration. Society collaborations in college are vital for fostering innovation, enhancing learning experiences, and building community. All interviewees agreed on the significant role the act of networking plays during and post-college phase.

"Building rapport with people is important which I believe I didn't do much, but I have seen closely how others have focused on networking and collaboration and its impact is evident in our societies. I also tried pushing myself, as this doesn't come easy to me.....There was some part of me, that may have wanted to network. And I was one of the students in my class who used to have 1:1 interaction with the classmates while others didn't do it". (Ms. Rupal)

A study by Cress et al. (2019) in the Journal of Higher Education found that collaborative projects among student organizations significantly improved students' problem-solving skills and civic engagement. Participants shared how during fest season, they used to collaborate with other groups to make the event a success. That was how the collective goal was achieved.

"During fests at college, I remember how our dance Society often worked collaboratively with the Fine arts club, photography club, fashion club and instrumental club to decide props, design costumes, and finalize sponsorships".(Ms. Neha)

Three participants shared that they work in the social and development sector, and the networking they did in college has helped them become better leaders as in many ways, they collaborated with different organizations, and resource persons for professional work. (As Ms. Neha shared, *"I emphasize on holistic growth of my students. To familiarize them with different opportunities and services, I connect them with different social clubs like Rotaract, cultural societies etc. I believe as an educator, one should actively invest their efforts in building harmonious relations across diverse professionals".*

A recent study by Van Winkle et al. (2021) in the Journal of Social Issues found that individuals who actively networked were more likely to engage in community initiatives and lead social movements.

These connections help amplify voices, mobilize support, and drive impactful change, making networking an essential tool for societal catalysts.

(ii) Challenging the existing attitudes and norms

In this research, all participants shared about their efforts and hard work in activating Society clubs/ societies which only existed on university documents. The existing norms were such that teachers, principals and other staff used to degrade societies and student groups. They were de-motivated to leave the clubs and only attend lectures. However, they challenged the existing negative attitudes and worked collaboratively with student unions, senior alumni and freshers to build respectable names for their societies.

"Our dance Society was inactive with hardly 6-7 seniors. With this number, we can't perform anywhere. To register for competitions, we had to expand our teams, take multiple auditions, and train the selected students. Even had to pay the choreographer from our own pockets, and had no assistance from the authorities. We were not even allowed to use the college auditorium or stage..but through our grit and sweat, we managed to build Society, and over time established our name in the college".(Mr. Raghav)

A study by Dwyer and Peters (2019) also highlighted that student organizations effectively reshaped campus dialogues and policies. These societies empower students to question the status quo, encouraging a more progressive and inclusive campus environment.

Another challenge is rooted in current trends in the Society that college groups face. One such barrier includes building a non-conventional club. These clubs find it difficult to pull the crowd and attract students for auditions.

"Earlier it was the Indian Classical Dance Society; we had few members since people were not even aware of classical dance forms. We worked hard every day to win competitions and make the Society famous among students. Next year, we included folk dance forms as well, and by collaborating with Professional Dance companies and making educational visits to eminent Dance studios, we familiarized students with Indian dance forms. Every year, we collectively worked with the college admin in organizing Spic Macay Dance festival in our college. I'm proud I was part of a community that popularized Indian culture in today's times". (Ms. Neha)

Another participant says, *"I never knew that my membership in the Society would enhance my interest so much that I started pursuing classical dance when I moved to another city for a job. In a way, I was promoting Indian dance forms that young people lose touch with in growing westernization. I received direction from Society, and I got to know things better when I re-started my dancing journey as a new learner. I could understand the basics since I had some experience at the Society"* (Ms. Bhavya)

Ms. Sudhir shared, *"We used to collaborate with other clubs like art, photography, and poetry. Group choreographies used to be based on dying art forms and social issues to spread awareness among the masses. We actively spread awareness through our official social media page…. during fests used to meet other college students, and societies and get to learn a lot from them, We tried to understand how different utilization of knowledge in the domain can help one's Society as a group thrive and how it can contribute in re-shaping mind of youth through music as an art-form"*.

Through collaboration, students can become catalysts to bring change in the college and replicate the same in the world. Mayank shared,

"In classrooms, you meet people with similar educational backgrounds and interests. However, actively participating in Society/ college clubs makes you have meaningful relations with diverse people with similar interests and helps you achieve collective goals".

Life's purpose is to make others feel better. Societies give you a chance to explore the hidden purposes that can be continued in later life and can become a catalyst for change by applying the learning in practical scenarios.

"One thing that helped in bringing a change in Society starting from the ground level of working in student communities starts with an intention of giving regard to human diversity, and inclusivity. This has the potential to make difficult things seem seamless work with especially when people are involved". (Mr. Sudhir)

A recent study emphasizes the role of community coalitions in enhancing student support systems, and how community psychology approaches can improve student's mental health on college campuses (Thompson, A., & Green, E. (2022). Participants shared how they collaborated with different social clubs, and NGOs, and raised awareness on social issues like women empowerment, drug deaddiction, mental health etc. They believed in the essence that art is a medium to ameliorate the existing conditions of the world they live in. Remarkably stated by Ms. Neha,

"Through art forms, you come up with new concepts, and ideas and can contribute to the building of Society... through art, one can work on various social issues. This is also something always looked forward to. Collaboration is a key to solving all sorts of problems".

Fig.1 Word Cloud

Conclusion

Through thematic analysis of six qualitative interviews, the study attempted to investigate the vitality of student communities in ensuring the personal and professional development of college students. This study has numerous policy implications that encompass a dire need for the systematic establishment of diverse student groups/ societies on their campuses and for providing necessary infrastructure and logistical support and contributing to students' holistic welfare.

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