

**Motivations and Challenges of UPSC Aspirants in Delhi  
Lokniti-CSDS Study**

F0. Mode of conducting interview

1. Face to Face
2. Online

F1. **(If 1 in F0)** Locality:

1. Old Rajendra Nagar
2. Mukherjee Nagar
3. Karol Bagh
4. Laxmi Nagar

F2. Name of the Respondent: \_\_\_\_\_

F3. Name of the Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

**INVESTIGATOR'S INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I have come from the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (also give your university's reference), a social science research organization in Delhi. We are conducting a survey to explore the motivations and challenges faced by UPSC aspirants in Delhi. Your participation in this survey is voluntary but if you take part in this survey and answer our questions, you will help us in understanding the issues and problems of the students who are studying and preparing for their upcoming entrances here. This survey is an independent study and is not linked to any political party or government agency. Whatever information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. The findings of this survey will be used for research purposes. It usually takes about 15-20 minutes to complete this interview. Please spare some time and help me in successfully completing the survey.

F4. Would you like to take part in this interview?

1. Yes
2. No (***End the interview***)

F5. Have you enrolled in any coaching centre?

1. Yes
2. No

F5a. **(If yes)** Are the classes in the coaching center conducted online, or held in-person?

1. Online
2. Session held in person.
3. Both
99. NA

F5b. **(If no)** Do you take any free lectures that are available online?

1. Yes
  2. No
  3. I take notes from friends who have joined coaching institutes
  4. I take photocopies of notes that are being sold in the market
99. NA

<b><i>INTERVIEW BEGINS</i></b>
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Q1. What is your age? (**Write down the age; if not told please write 0**) \_\_\_\_\_ years old

Q2. Gender (**determine on your own**)

1. Male
2. Female
3. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Q3. Why have you come to Delhi (**Do not read answer categories**)?

1. To prepare for UPSC
2. I stay here in Delhi
3. Preparation of any other competitive exam
97. Any other(**specify**) \_\_\_\_\_
98. No response

Q4. Which **state** have you come from? (**Please note down the name of the state and click on the options given below**) \_\_\_\_\_ 98. No response 99. Not Applicable

Q4a. (**If not from Delhi**) Is your home place- in a city, a small town or a village?

1. City
2. Small Town
3. Village
99. NA

Q5. What is your current level of education? (**Please note down the class and click on the options given below**) \_\_\_\_\_

1. 11<sup>th</sup>
2. 12<sup>th</sup>
3. Undergraduate (Pursuing First year, second year or third year)
4. Graduate
5. Pursing post-graduation
6. Post graduate and above
97. Any other \_\_\_\_\_
98. No Response

Q6. Are you enrolled in any college/University?

1. Yes
2. No

Q6a. **(If yes)** Is it regular or distant learning?

1. Dummy school/irregular/online
2. Regular classes
98. No response
99. Not Applicable

Q7. For how long have you been living here in Delhi?

1. Less than 6 months
2. 1 year
3. 2 years
4. 3 years
5. 4 years and above
6. I am from Delhi
98. No response

Q8. **(If 1 in F5)** What was the main reason you started taking coaching classes in Delhi? (***Do not read options and if respondents give multiple reasons, please ask them to specify the most important factor***).

1. Friends were going so decided to go as well.
2. Through recommendations from friends or family.
3. Based on the reputation of coaching institutes in Delhi.
4. After researching online reviews and success rates.
5. Because Delhi is known for quality coaching in my field of interest.
6. It was suggested by my mentors or teachers.
7. To stay in a competitive environment
8. Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Q9. With whom do you live with, in your current place of residence in Delhi (***Do not read answer categories***)?

1. I live with my closed ones (Parents/sibling)
2. Friends
3. I live alone
97. Any other(***specify***) \_\_\_\_\_
98. No response

Q10. How many times have you appeared for the civil service exam (***Do not read answer categories***)?

1. This would be my first attempt
2. Once
3. Twice
4. Three times or more
98. No response

Q10a (*If 2,3 or 4 in q10*) Have you ever cleared these stages ?

	Yes	No	No response	NA
a. Prelims	1	2	98	99
b. ( <i>If 1 in a</i> )Mains	1	2	98	99
c. ( <i>If 1 in b</i> )Interview	1	2	98	99

Q11. Have you previously received coaching elsewhere?

1. Yes
2. No
98. No response

Q12. What is the main motivation for choosing this field? (*Do not read answer categories and record what the respondent says*)?

1. Prestige and Respect
2. I have interest
3. Career Stability and Security
4. Want to serve the nation
5. Good Salary
6. Family Tradition/inspiration
7. Any other \_\_\_\_\_(Specify)
98. No response

Q13. After being away from their families for some time, students frequently mention feeling homesick in this environment. How often do you feel homesick-often, sometimes, rarely or never?

1. Often
2. Sometimes
3. Rarely
4. Never
5. I stay with my family
97. Any other \_\_\_\_\_
98. No response

Q14. How often do you meet your parents in a year?

1. Once a month
2. Once every 3 months
3. Once every 6 months
4. Once a year
5. I haven't met them from the time I came to Delhi
6. I haven't met them, because of financial limitations
7. I stay with my parents/Delhi is my hometown
97. Any other \_\_\_\_\_
98. No response

Q15. On average, how much time do you dedicate to studying each day? (*Please note down the hours*). \_\_\_\_\_

Q16. (If 1 in F5) On an average, how much do you spend on coaching annually (*Do not read answer categories*)?

1. 50,000 or below
2. 50,000 - 1 Lakh
3. 1 Lakh - 2 Lakhs
4. 2 Lakhs – 3 Lakhs
5. 3 Lakhs and above
98. No response

Q17. How confident are you that you will crack the upcoming Civil Service exam?

1. Yes, I am fully confident
2. Somewhat confident
3. Not much confident
4. Difficult to say right now
98. No response

**Stress and Strain**

Q18: How often do you feel the following-- often, sometimes, rarely or never?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	NR
a. Loneliness	1	2	3	4	98
b. Stress	1	2	3	4	98
c. Fear of under- performance	1	2	3	4	98

Q19: How often do you feel these kinds of pressure while preparing for your competitive exams --- often, sometime, rarely or never?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	NR
a. Family pressure	1	2	3	4	98
b. financial pressure	1	2	3	4	98
c. Peer pressure	1	2	3	4	98
d. Self-pressure	1	2	3	4	98

Q20. Do you have a friend/confidant to share your feelings and thoughts when you feel low or de motivated?

1. Yes
2. No
97. Any other \_\_\_\_\_
98. No response

Q21: What would you normally do when you are extremely stressed? (*Can choose more than one option*)

1. Talk to family/friends/sibling
2. Go to sleep
3. Go for a walk/start exercising/meditate
4. Start studying
5. Watch web series/TV, listen to music
6. I go out for a smoke
7. I consume alcohol
8. I don't know what to do
97. Any other \_\_\_\_\_
98. No response \_\_\_\_\_
99. I do not feel stressed

Q22. (If 1 in F5) Some people complain that students are being discriminated on various accounts in Coaching Centers. Please tell me how often have you felt discriminated about the following – frequently, sometimes, rarely, never?

	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	NR
a. Economic status/condition	1	2	3	4	98
b. Caste	1	2	3	4	98
c. Gender	1	2	3	4	98
d. Religion	1	2	3	4	98
e. Your state of origin/region	1	2	3	4	98
f. Medium of instruction (language)	1	2	3	4	98
g. Based on your academic performance	1	2	3	4	98

Q23: Since you started preparing for the exam, have you noticed an increase or decrease in these emotions?

	<b>Increase</b>	<b>Decrease</b>	<b>Not change</b>	<b>NR</b>
a. Loneliness	1	2	3	98
b. Fear	1	2	3	98
c. Pain (body ache, stomach ache, headache)	1	2	3	98
d. Mood swings	1	2	3	98
e. Fatigue	1	2	3	98
f. Anger	1	2	3	98
g. Nervousness/ Anxiety	1	2	3	98
h. Sadness	1	2	3	98
i. Depression	1	2	3	98
j. Frustration	1	2	3	98
k. Jealously	1	2	3	98

Q24. We hear about a lot of students hurting themselves or ending their life due to the pressure or failure. Do you know of any student who have harmed themselves or ended their lives due to such pressure?

1. Yes
2. No
98. No response

Q25. Have you taken any of these medications since starting your preparation- Often, sometimes or never?

	<b>Yes, only once</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>No response</b>
a. Sleeping medication	1	2	3	4	98
b. Anti-Depressants	1	2	3	4	98

Q26. How would you rate your overall mental health now compared to before you started preparing for the UPSC exam? Has it improved or deteriorated?

1. It has improved
2. It has deteriorated
3. It remained the Same
98. No response

Q27. Does hearing about cases of self-harm and suicides among those preparing for civil services affect your motivation toward achieving your academic goals?

1. Yes
2. No
98. No response

Q28. To relieve the burden from studying, do you think every coaching center should make arrangements for students to have at least one-day completely set apart for leisure activities?

1. Yes
2. No
3. We have one day off
97. Any other \_\_\_\_\_
98. No response

Q29. Since the start of coaching did you feel the need to go to a therapist for mental health difficulties? **(if the respondents say 'Yes', carefully probe further whether they visited or not and then see the option 2 to 5 and code the correct option)**

1. Yes, I visited a Mental Health Professional
2. Yes, but I couldn't afford therapy
3. Yes, but I didn't because people would look at me differently
4. Yes, but I prefer to fight it alone by myself.
5. Yes, but, there is no access to such facilities
6. No
97. Any other \_\_\_\_\_
98. No Response

Q30. The money you get from home, is it sufficient to fulfill your expenses?

1. Yes
2. No
98. No response

Q31. **(If option 2 in q30)** If it is not sufficient, what do you do **(Do not read answer categories)?**

1. I borrow money
2. Ask parents for extra money
3. Take tuitions
4. Doing any other part time job
97. Any other \_\_\_\_\_
98. No Response
99. Not applicable

Q32: I will now ask you some question about your experience before and during the start of UPSC preparation. For each, please tell me how these have changed? **(Read all the answer categories except no response for each of them)**

- | a. What time did you/do you usually sleep? | <i>Before Preparation</i> | <i>Now</i> |
|--|---------------------------|------------|
| 1. Between 8 and 10 pm                     |                           |            |
| 2. Between 10 pm and 12 am                 |                           |            |
| 3. Later than 12 am                        |                           |            |
| 98. No response                            |                           |            |

**b. What time did you/do you usually wake up?**

1. Before 6 am
2. 6-7 am
3. 7-9 am
4. After 9 am
98. No response

**c. How many meals a day?**

- 1.3
- 2.2
- 3.1
4. Not fixed
98. No response

**d. Exercising/walking:**

1. Never / Not routinely
2. One or two times a week
3. Three or four times a week
4. Five to six times a week
5. Almost daily
98. No response

**e. Self-study time:**

1. 1-3 hours
2. 3-6 hours
3. 7-10 hours
4. More than 10 hours
98. No response

Q33: How often do you engage in each of the following to divert your attention from your studies- Many times, Sometimes, Rarely, Never?

	<b>Many times</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>NR</b>
a. Reading anything else other than syllabus	1	2	3	4	98
b. Use social media for sometime	1	2	3	4	98
c. Catch up with friends	1	2	3	4	98
d. Talk to family	1	2	3	4	98
e. Meditate/Exercise/yoga	1	2	3	4	98
f. Leisure activities like Watch movies/TV series/music	1	2	3	4	98
g. Go out in the city/travel	1	2	3	4	98

Q34: Sometimes we hear students indulging in substance to release stress. Have you ever used such substances- frequently, sometimes, rarely or never?

	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	NR
a. Smoking	1	2	3	4	98
b. Alcohol	1	2	3	4	98
c. Drugs	1	2	3	4	98

Q35. (If 1 in F5) Based on your coaching experience here in Delhi, would you recommend it to others?

1. Yes
2. No
3. The education quality here has degraded
4. Too much pressure
5. There are no other options
98. No Response

### Aspiration and Ambition

Q36. What will be the major change in your life, if you clear UPSC? (*Do not read answer categories*)?

1. Economic conditions will become better
2. Respect in society will increase
3. I will settle down
4. Passion fulfillment
97. Any other \_\_\_\_\_
98. No Response

Q37. We sincerely wish you well on your forthcoming exam, but if you are unable to pass it, what other options do you have in mind besides continuing your studies (*Do not read answer categories*)?

1. I will clear this exam no matter what
2. Seek employment opportunities related to my field of study.
3. Consider further education.
4. Explore vocational training or skill development programs.
5. Take a break and reassess my career goals.
6. Start a business or entrepreneurial venture.
7. Explore opportunities in a different field or industry.
8. Consider part-time work while preparing for re-examination.
9. Seek guidance from career counselors or mentors.
10. I have no plans
11. I have not thought about it
97. Any other \_\_\_\_\_
98. No Response

## Recent Issues

Q38. What is your opinion on the recent NEET 2024 controversy (regarding the alleged paper leak and the adjustment of marks as compensation for time lost)? Do you think this controversy was planned or a result of unexpected events?

1. It was planned
2. Result of unexpected events
98. No response/ Can't say

Q39. And what about the cancellation of UGC NET exam-was it planned or a result of unexpected events?

1. It was planned
2. Result of unexpected events
98. No response/ Can't say

Q40. How much do you worry about the possibility of a paper leak affecting your exams- A lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?

1. A lot
2. Somewhat
3. Not much
4. Not at all
5. 98. No response

Q41. How would you describe your trust in the NTA in preventing paper leaks- a lot of trust, some trust, not much trust or not trust at all?

1. A lot of trust
2. Some trust
3. Not much
4. Not at all
98. No response

Q42. Which one of these three statements related to reservation do you agree with most?  
(**Read out statements 1 to 3 only and then take the answer from the respondent**)

1. Reservation should only be on the basis of caste.
2. Reservation should only be on the basis of economic condition/criterion.
3. Reservation should be scrapped altogether.
4. (**Not to be read out**) Reservation should be based on both caste and economic condition
8. (**Not to be read out**) Can't say

## **BACKGROUND DATA**

Z1. What is the occupation of the main earner of your family? (*First note down the response in the space given below and then click on the right/most suitable option from the menu provided*)

1. **Higher Professionals:** Engineers, Doctors, Lawyers, Chartered Accountants, Professors Etc.
2. **Lower Professionals:** Computer Operator, Data Entry, Ayurvedic Doctor, Nurse, School Teacher, Tutor, Priest, Astrologer, NGO worker etc.
3. **Government Managerial job:** Manager, Director, Executive, MP, MLA etc.
4. **Government Administrative job:** First-Second Class Officer, Major in Army, Colonel, Brigadier, Police Inspector
5. **Government Clerical Jobs:** Class III Officers, Clerk, Typist, Army Jawan, Police Constable
6. **Government Class IV:** Peon, Postman, Gram Sevak, Amin, SafaiKaramchari etc.
7. **Big and Medium Traders:** Big Shop keepers, Factory Owners, Hotel Owners, Petrol Pumps, Taxi Owners, Big Travel Agency, Small Hotels, Property Dealers, Jewelers etc.
8. **Small Trader:** Grocery Shop, Small Travel Agency, Phone Booth, Broker, Parlour, Rickshaw Owner, Landlord, etc.
9. **Small/Temporary Business:** Temporary Shopkeeper, Sales Man, Delivery Boy, Shop Assistant.
10. **Service/Service Area:** Cook, Waiter, Washerman, Barber, Domestic Servant, Chowkidar, Private Guard, Safai Karam chari etc.
11. **Skilled Workers:** Driver, Mechanic, Electrician, Plumber, Jeweler, Tailor, Cobbler, Carpenter, Sailor
12. **Semi-skilled workers:** Artisans, bricklayers, potters, stonecutters, furniture, basketry, matmakers
13. **Wage laborer:** Rickshaw pullers, loaders, construction workers etc.
14. **Farmer:** tilling own land or someone else's land
15. **Agricultural Laborer:** Landless farm laborer
16. Dairy/Fish/Poultry/Animal Husbandry work
17. Student but doing part time job
18. Housewife/househusband but doing part time job
19. Unemployed or looking for employment
97. Any other work(*specify*)\_\_\_\_\_
98. NR

Z2. Can you specify the educational qualification of your father?

0. Non-literate (Can't read or write at all)
1. Less than Primary
2. Primary pass (Class 5)
3. Middle pass (Class 8)
4. Matriculation pass (Class 10)
5. Intermediate pass (Class 12)
6. Diploma (after Class X or XII)
7. Graduate/pursuing it/in college
8. Post Graduate/pursuing it

9. Higher degree (MPhil, PhD)
10. Professional courses/degree/pursuing it (Law, engineering, etc.).
98. No response

Z2a. Can you specify the educational qualification of your mother?

0. Non-literate (Can't read or write at all)
1. Less than Primary
2. Primary pass (Class 5)
3. Middle pass (Class 8)
4. Matriculation pass (Class 10)
5. Intermediate pass (Class 12)
6. Diploma (after Class X or XII)
7. Graduate/pursuing it/in college
8. Post Graduate/pursuing it
9. Higher degree (MPhil, PhD)
10. Professional courses/degree/pursuing it (Law, engineering, etc.).
98. No response

Z3. What is your caste group – SC, ST, OBC or general?

1. Scheduled Caste (SC)
2. Scheduled Tribe (ST)
3. OBC
4. General
97. NR

Z3a. **(If 4 in Z3)** Do you belong to an EWS category?

1. Yes
2. No
98. No response
99. NA

Z4. Which religion do you belong to?

1. Hindu
2. Muslim
3. Christian
4. Sikh
5. Jain
6. Parsi
7. Buddhist
8. No religion
98. No response

Z5. What's your monthly household income after putting together the income of all members?  
*(First note down the response in the space given below and then click on the right/most suitable option from the menu provided)*

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- 01. Up to 5,000
- 02. 5,001to7,500
- 03. 7,501to10,000
- 04. 10,001to15,000
- 05. 15,001to20,000
- 06. 20,001to30,000
- 07. 30,001to50,000
- 08. Over50,000
- 98. No response

**Record Location**