



# Understanding The Educational Ethos Of The Tea Stalls Near University Of Allahabad Campus: A Qualitative Investigation

Dr Patanjali Mishra\*

\*Associate Professor, Department of education, University of Allahabad, Email- [patanjalmishra@allduniv.ac.in](mailto:patanjalmishra@allduniv.ac.in),  
Mobile no- 8005381938

## Abstract

Prayagraj, colloquially known as Allahabad, is the preeminent educational bastion in northern India, attracting many students from the nation's farthest reaches. These fervent aspirants converge upon Allahabad to immerse themselves in rigorous preparations for diverse competitive examinations and to partake in the academic pursuits offered by the venerable University of Allahabad. The very essence of Allahabad's educational ethos finds resonance in the distinctive notions woven within its ubiquitous tea stalls. This unique sociocultural landscape is a testament to the city's academic prowess and embodiment of its rich cultural heritage. Professors, students from the esteemed university, and legal luminaries from the High Court and Kachahari (lower court) converge regularly upon these tea stalls. In this vibrant convergence, these spaces metamorphose into crucibles for intellectual exchange, contributing indispensably to the educational and cultural medley of the city. In the grandeur of this academic crucible, the eminent philosopher Michel Foucault's seminal work, "Of Other Spaces" (1986), resonates profoundly. Foucault's exploration of spaces as loci of societal concerns and theoretical contemplation finds a tangible manifestation within the tea stalls of Allahabad. Often overlooked spaces assume a pivotal role in shaping the cognitive horizons of the denizens, emerging as arenas where theory, discourse, and cultural dynamics seamlessly intersect. The interplay between academia and the cultural milieu within these tea stalls warrants scholarly examination. The research endeavors to unravel the intricate dimensions of this intersection—where academic discourse, the vibrancy of student life, and the cultural amalgam of Allahabad converge in a harmonious symphony. By acknowledging these seemingly commonplace spaces as potential hubs for intellectual exchange, the study seeks to unveil the nuanced layers of the educational and cultural ethos embedded within the fabric of Allahabad's tea stalls.

**Keywords:** Tea Stall, Educational Ethos, University of Allahabad, Informal Learning, Third place

## 1: Introduction

Prayagraj (Allahabad) is India's spiritual, cultural, and educational city. This city is famous for its rich culture and majestic beauty. It is situated and surrounded by the holy water of rivers Ganga and Yamuna—thousands of students study at the University of Allahabad and its constituent colleges. There are many tea stalls at almost every corner of the city where university students, teachers, competitors of civil services, and other exams gather regularly at tea stalls. These tea stalls of Allahabad have become a hub of various cultural and intellectual activities. It attracts writers, poets, artists, and thinkers who would engage in debates, discussions, and creative collaborations.

Along with the students and the teachers, prominent literary figures, political leaders, and artists make these tea stalls a meeting point for sharing ideas and ideologies, thus creating and contributing to the city's cultural, educational, intellectual, and literary ethos. Tea stalls, often underestimated in their role, play a significant part in the educational environment near the University of Allahabad. This study seeks to unravel the intricate web of interactions, discussions, and knowledge dissemination within and around these tea stalls.

The University of Allahabad has different campuses, such as the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Commerce, and Faculty of Law, in the city's heart. Along with these institutional places, there may be other physical and social spaces near these campuses. Although the university campuses constitute the basic structure of the city, some other informal institutions (different coaching centers) contribute to the city's culture. As teachers and student inhabitants of this university over the past fifteen years or so, the researcher has become used to the existence of these tea stalls. As a regular visitor to these tea stalls, having Tea, gossiping, sitting without doing anything, and studying different social domains have become regular phenomena in our lives. There are almost seventy regular opening tea stalls near the university campuses.

## 2: Background of the Study –

The idea of taking up the study of the educational ethos of the tea stalls did not evolve accidentally. The informal discussions done at the tea stalls have significantly contributed to the intellectual upbringing of the researcher. The long and thought-provoking discussions during the classes of the pre-DPhil coursework and Masters of Education (M.Ed.) played a significant role in articulating the idea of pursuing an inquiry into the educational ethos of the tea stalls. Regular visits of the researcher to the tea stalls near the university have given an idea for exploring the nature of the conversations, debates, and discussions occurring at these tea stalls. An extended period of familiarity with the

researcher with the tea stalls and discussions at tea stalls have also given a glimpse of the identification of the problem. Conversations at tea stalls that are often intellectual are fruitful for the participants. Gradually, an excellent informal relationship is developed with stall owners that grows with time. A social relationship between junior and senior students meeting at tea stalls is also maintained and nurtured at these places.

### **3: Need of the Study:**

Education and its process are not only limited to the settings of formal classrooms but also include many informal chances in our day-to-day life in different social settings where we learn and get educated knowingly or unknowingly. Informal spaces encourage the meeting and the sharing of ideas. They serve as an essential counterpoint to the formal, silo-like structures of the modern organization, encouraging social bonds and discussions across various departmental lines (Wright et al.; S., 2018). Nevertheless, there is evidence that enjoyment and autonomy of choice contribute to improved learning and the application of that learning (Waite, 2010). The informal education we gradually and regularly get in various social interactions is vital in our lives, such as inculcating values, morals, habits, and mindsets—in informal settings like our environment, neighborhood, peer group, newspapers and media, and social circles. Play a pivotal role in shaping our behavior and mindset and influencing us effectively. Where we sit, what we talk to, whom we talk with, our interests, and the company we keep with impact our mental setup and education. Alongside the development of coffee houses and discussion circles throughout the modern era ran the expansion of university training and research. Understanding the educational ethos of the tea stalls involves exploring gender, race, and class connections, as well as topics such as dowry, politics, globalization, communalism, and poverty (Birkbeck, 2005).

At Praygraj (Allahabad), many students reside in the university hostels and delegacies near university campuses. Students of hostels and other delegacies form a particular type of education culture in Allahabad city. Students interact informally and debate social, political, cultural, and other relevant topics on hostel premises, at the students' union, and tea stalls near the university. A massive gathering of students can be found at these nearby teal stalls, where they discuss and debate many issues, problems, and topics such as employment, governance, politics, policies, current national and international concerns, and social and personal issues. In Allahabad, the tea stalls near the university and its hostels are centers for gathering students of various age groups, streams, and classes. Apart from students, teaching and non-teaching staff also visit these tea stalls for Tea and snacks. Some of the senior students and alums of the university also visit these tea stalls. Excellent and healthy discussions in small groups of four to six students occur daily at these tea stalls.

As the tea stalls are centers of regular gatherings and discussions/debates of intellectuals, students, teachers, and other non-teaching staff of the university, these tea stalls can be very influential in making and shaping the minds, careers, and habits of students who regularly visit the tea stalls. Students often discuss emergent issues related to politics, society, policies and budgets, competition exams, or employment. Many students and university staff regularly visit these tea stalls near the university. Conversations at these tea stalls are severe and need attention. So, the researchers planned to undertake this study to systematically and deeply investigate the educational ethos of the tea stalls near the University of Allahabad. Understanding the educational ethos of tea stalls near the University of Allahabad holds implications for enriching the academic experience, promoting community engagement, and recognizing the value of informal spaces in shaping the educational landscape.

Tea stalls, often relegated to the periphery of academic discourse, possess an inherent educational ethos that remains largely unexplored. In the backdrop of the University of Allahabad, where academic engagement intertwines with cultural nuances, a compelling need exists to delve into the educational dynamics of these seemingly casual spaces.

The significance of informal learning environments has been well-established in educational literature (Waite, 2010). Tea stalls, accessible and communal settings, emerge as potential crucibles for informal learning experiences beyond the confines of traditional classrooms. Understanding how students engage with academic discussions in these spaces could offer valuable insights into the supplementary educational ecosystem.

Cultural factors profoundly influence educational environments (Geertz, 1979). The University of Allahabad, with its diverse cultural fabric, provides a fertile ground to explore how cultural practices intersect with academic discourse in the informal setting of tea stalls. Such an investigation promises to unravel the symbiotic relationship between cultural dynamics and the pursuit of knowledge.

The interactions between students and faculty members within tea stalls represent an uncharted territory of mentorship and knowledge exchange (Wright & Ville, 2018). The relaxed ambiance of these spaces may foster more open and informal dialogues, presenting an opportunity to understand the nature and impact of these interactions on students' academic journey.

Recognizing and supporting informal spaces like tea stalls aligns with the principles of enhancing the overall academic experience (Huberman & Miles, 1994). An investigation into the educational ethos of these spaces can inform strategies to integrate the informal with the formal, enriching the educational landscape and providing a holistic learning environment for students.

Moreover, the study explores the broader concept of community engagement around educational institutions. Tea stalls often serve as community hubs, fostering a sense of belonging and shared intellectual discourse. Understanding the educational ethos within these spaces contributes to the larger goal of comprehending and enhancing community dynamics near the University of Allahabad.

In conclusion, this qualitative investigation aims to bridge the gap between formal and informal education, recognizing the educational potential inherent in tea stalls near the University of Allahabad. By unraveling the layers of learning experiences in these unassuming spaces, the study aspires to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on educational environments and community engagement.

#### **4: Research Questions-**

Various questions emerged while articulating the research study in the beginning phases. However, while contemplating how these questions can be followed, the researcher realized that all the questions were ultimately a single question, i.e., *what is the general educational ethos of the tea stalls near the different University of Allahabad?* In an attempt to explore this ethos as described in the significant research question, there were specific other questions closely related to the central question. So, the research questions that were framed are as follows-

- 4.1. Why are so many tea stalls near the University of Allahabad?
- 4.2. What type of people usually visit the tea stalls?
- 4.3. What conversation typically happens near teal University of Allahabad campus stalls?
- 4.4 What is the general purpose of the visitors for visiting the tea stalls?
- 4.5. In the view of tea stall vendors and customers, how has the overall culture of tea stalls changed over the years, if there is some change?

#### **5: Methodology of the Study**

The researcher has taken up the qualitative mode of the study to understand and explore the phenomena. Qualitative research is more to such phenomena in which exploring a more profound understanding is involved. The researchers collected the data with the help of interviews, observations, and participant observation. This research results from observing one year of tea stalls near the university. The collected data was carefully noted in the field diary for suitable analysis. After three months of data collection, a checklist was prepared, and the observation was done for three months. The researcher was involved in collecting the data for more than six months. During these six months, the tea stall owners, students, and teachers were interviewed for data triangulations, and it was concluded that the data had some meaning. In this study, the researcher has primarily focused on the daily conversations, discussions, and incidents at tea stalls regularly, i.e., a routine of daily conversations and social practices of tea stalls. Williams (2001) says, "Ethnomethodology is an approach in sociology that studies the "common sense" resources, procedures, and practices through which members of the society interpret their everyday life and how these social interactions, when mutually recognized within particular contexts, create orderliness." For conducting this research, the researcher has used an ethnomethodological approach, which focuses on developing a complete description of the culture of a group. Key to this research is the focus on discernible working patterns. For the data analysis, the researcher relied on the participants' views from an insider emic perspective and reported them in verbatim codes. Then, the researcher synthesized the data filtering through the researchers' etic scientific perspective to develop an overall interpretation.

**6: Selection of the Case:** Researchers have selected six tea stalls for the present study around the different faculty campuses of the university, where they regularly visit to have Tea and snacks. The researcher used to visit these tea stalls and carefully observed different activities at and around the tea stalls. Researchers took some interviews to explore the nature of conversations and discussions in deeper detail. Twelve (12) Teachers of the University, out of which three were alumni of the university, Two (2) advocates (Alumni of the University), and Twenty-three (23) students were interviewed for research purposes. One focused group discussion was also organized to understand the data better. Apart from this, various groups of teachers, advocates, and students were observed to record the data. Participatory observations were also done by being part of the discussions and debates that were taking place at tea stalls. Researchers noted down the experiences of participatory and non-participatory observations. The researchers developed a good bond with the owners of the tea stalls to understand their orientation towards the phenomena.

#### **7: Fieldwork-**

Fieldwork refers to being out in the subjects' world, in the way we have described as a person who pauses while passing by, but as a person who has come for a visit; not as a person who knows everything, but as a person who has come to learn; not as a person who wants to be like them, but as a person who wants to know what it is like to be them. You work toward winning their acceptance, not as an end, but because their acceptance allows you to pursue your research goals (Geertz, 1979, p.241). In addition, as a part of such notes, researchers recorded ideas, strategies, reflections, and hunches and noted the specific patterns that emerged. Researchers observed various activities at the tea stalls and noted them in a diary. Researchers maintained a reflective diary in which all the activities observed and informal interviews taken were noted down, and later; these were recorded on the computer. Interviews of various groups were also taken and noted down in order to understand the social interactions and conversations. Researchers spent sufficient time to observe the various activities in the field. Researchers were also part of the same activities as participatory observers. After returning from each observation, the researchers wrote down whatever happened on a computer. The researchers described people, objects, places, events, activities, and conversations.

Observation from the Field-

Observations of each day were noted in a diary. The interviews were also noted in a proper format in the observation diary. Regular observations were done carefully to obtain the required data from the field. The researchers spent at least three to four hours a day in the morning, evening, and sometimes in the afternoon to collect the data from the field.

The tea stalls are located in the nearby areas of different campuses of the University of Allahabad. The book stalls and tea stalls are complementary to each other. Both of the stalls are highly dependent on each other. Most tea stalls are shaded by Banyan, Neem, and Sacred Fig (Pipal tree). These tea stalls are set up with minimum physical resources for the seating arrangement of the customers; small fiber stools, iron and wood benches, heavy stones, and small boundary walls of the hostels are used.

Some tea stalls open early in the morning, around 6 AM, and some around 8 AM, which is the time when the university classes begin. When asked for the timing from a tea vendor, he responded, '*Jab students aayenge tabhi to dukaan kholenge*' (when students would come, only the shop would be opened). Some tea vendors open their tea stalls in the afternoon and keep the shop open till 10 PM. During the conversation with a group of students, it was revealed that after 10 PM, they visited the Prayag Station, only one kilometer from the Arts Faculty (Senate Campus). It was found that Tea is sold at Rs. 5 to 10 and is continuously prepared and served in disposal glasses, *kulhads*, and *launch* glasses. Different types of Biscuits: *Mathharis*, *Namkeen*, *Chips*, *Bun-Butter*, *Poha*, *Samosa*, and *Chhola*. All of the items individually cost at most twenty rupees. From the researcher's viewpoint, this may be why thousands of students who live in hostels or delegacies regularly visit tea stalls. Tea stall vendors always appreciate the students, even sitting idly without ordering something.

During the entire course of fieldwork, the tea-stall visitors were found to be engaged in various activities such as discussing the classes, teachers, politics, social and historical issues, personal issues and gossiping, waiting for somebody, working on assignments, getting relaxed, internet surfing, talking on mobiles, using social media. The linguistic milieu of the discussions reflected a rich assortment, incorporating vernacular languages such as *Bhojpuri*, *Awadhi*, *Bundeli*, *Hindi*, and the lingua franca, English. Conversations spanned a spectrum of topics, including recent appointments at the University of Allahabad, developments within its constituent colleges, the Israel-Palestine conflict, the Atiq Ahmad case, the political strategies of Yogi Aditya Nath, Bulldozer Politics, the implementation of a standard civil code, and various incidents of unrest within the university. Remarkably, across four designated sites, a conspicuous presence of stray dogs was noted as an integral facet of the tea stall ambiance. The proprietors of these establishments tended to indulge these canine companions by offering morsels of bread and biscuits. Notably, some patrons also displayed a compassionate inclination, sharing rotis with these stray dogs, thereby adding a dimension of altruism to the nuanced social dynamics unfolding at these tea stalls.

### **9: Analysis of the data and Deriving Conclusions-**

Data analysis in this research consisted of preparing and reorganizing the data, i.e., the text data in transcripts and image data in photographs for analysis. Afterward, the data was reduced into themes through coding and condensing the codes. For condensing the codes, reading and forming the codes was done. The coding involved aggregating the Text and visual data into small categories of information, seeking evidence for the code from different databases used in the study, and assigning a level to the code. After that, the data was interpreted. Patton (2015) describes the interpretive process as requiring both creative and critical faculties to make carefully considered judgments about what is meaningful in the patterns, themes, and categories generated by analysis. Interpretation in qualitative research involves abstracting how beyond the codes and themes to the more significant meaning of the data. Huberman and Miles (1994) opine that data analysis is not off-the-shelf but is custom-built, revised, and choreographed. In this research, the process of data collection, data analysis, and report writing were not distinct steps. They were interrelated and often went on simultaneously. At an early stage in the analysis process, researchers typically organized their data into digital files and created a file naming system. The consistent application of a file naming system ensured that materials could be easily located in the database of texts (or images or recordings) for analysis. A searchable spreadsheet or database by data form, participant, and collection date was critical for efficiently locating files. After analyzing the data, various broad themes emerged, which are mentioned below.

#### **9.2 Gender and the clientele of the tea stalls:**

The tea shops in Allahabad have traditionally functioned as gender-exclusive spaces, emblematic of entrenched societal gender disparities. This gendered nature of tea stalls emerged as a pivotal theme, raising pertinent questions about the role of gender within these sociocultural spaces. The observations revealed a distinct gendered pattern, with girls frequenting the tea stalls predominantly during daylight hours, while boys exhibited a more pervasive presence, visiting both during the day and at night. Upon probing the noticeable gender imbalance in tea stall patronage, insights were gleaned from a knowledgeable source, a discreet teacher affiliated with the Department of Political Science, and a regular patron of one such tea stall. This teacher shared a historical perspective, asserting that there was a period in Allahabad's recent past when female students seldom visited tea stalls. Notably, it was around the years 2014 to 2015 that a transformative shift occurred, coinciding with the establishment of Girls' PG houses in proximity to the university. Subsequently, female students started becoming regular patrons of tea stalls, marking a noteworthy evolution in the gender dynamics of these spaces. The documented transition in tea stall attendance by female students signifies a departure from historical norms, highlighting the changing social landscape of Allahabad. This shift aligns with broader societal changes and the gradual dissolution of gender-based restrictions on specific public spaces.

### **9.3 The generalizing character of tea talk:**

Throughout the observational phase, distinctive nuances in conversational patterns emerged, revealing noteworthy characteristics. Barring a few specific instances, it was consistently noted that dialogues often commenced with narrating particular incidents, subsequently expanding into more extensive discourses. A discernible trend was observed among coaching students preparing for competitive examinations, including the civil services, staff selection commission, and banking sectors. Their focus predominantly gravitated toward discussions on coaching center occurrences and humorous instructor anecdotes.

Conversely, students affiliated with the University of Allahabad exhibited a penchant for more scholarly deliberations. Engaging in academic discourse, their conversations delved into various facets of academic life. Notably, the recent appointments of faculty members emerged as a focal point, underscoring the significance of administrative decisions within the university setting.

The intricate dynamics of these conversations underscore a dichotomy in the conversational themes, reflecting the diverse priorities and interests of distinct student cohorts. While coaching students navigated discussions towards the pragmatic realm of exam preparation and instructional humor, their university counterparts gravitated towards intellectual exchanges, emphasizing their educational environment's academic and administrative dimensions. This nuanced analysis adds depth to our understanding of the multifaceted conversational landscape within the context of diverse student populations.

### **9.4 Students' resistance, and tea stalls:**

Within the intricate rainbow of academia, a distinct interplay emerges as students, resistance movements, and tea stalls intertwine, particularly in environments pulsating with socio-political fervor. These establishments metamorphose into crucibles for dialogue, activism, and the exchange of ideas, birthing a nexus unique to the confluence of student life and socio-political dynamics. The quotidian pursuits of students, especially their engagement in politics and resistance, find a vocal platform within the walls of tea stalls. Dialogues unfold as arenas for deliberative discussions on governance, activism, and the larger societal context. However, the discourse surrounding student politics reveals a schism within the student body. A scholastic subset of students emerges as fervent critics of the university administration and the Proctorial board. Their discourse resonates with a palpable dissent, expressing reservations about the institutional management and its policies. In stark contrast, another segment of the student populace advocates for stringent measures against students subjected to bullying, viewing it as imperative to uphold the sanctity of the university's academic milieu. This perspective dichotomy encapsulates the inherent tensions within educational institutions, reflecting divergent views on the role of governance, disciplinary actions, and the preservation of academic integrity. In this context, the tea stall serves not only as a physical space but as a metaphorical crucible where the alloy of student opinions is forged and tested.

### **9.5 Political and Social Discourses at Tea Stall:**

Dialogues with the academic faculty reveal a discernible historical narrative, elucidating when the Indian Coffee House occupied a pivotal locus as the epicenter for intricate social and political discourses. These educators, who once treaded the academic halls as students of the venerable University of Allahabad, articulate a sentiment transcending mere nostalgia; they posit a discernible transformation like dialogues within tea stalls. According to their sagacious reflections, the discourse that once unfolded within the precincts of tea stalls possessed a sublime quality, intricately interwoven with more extensive discussions encompassing politics and society. This reminiscence paints a vivid tableau of a bygone era when the intellectual tenor of conversations within these tea stalls was elevated, transcending the quotidian banter that often characterizes such spaces today. The consensus among these seasoned academics is unequivocal - the quality of discourse at the tea stall was superior in epochs past. This assertion underscores the evolving nature of intellectual exchanges within academic circles and begs the question of the factors contributing to this transformation.

### **9.6 Changing Scenario at Tea Stall**

Prominent patrons and seasoned educators affiliated with the university, maintaining a prolonged association with these tea stalls, assert a discernible metamorphosis in conversations and discourses over recent years. Their collective sentiment contends that contemporary students are increasingly mandated to devote substantial attention to newspaper perusal, collaborative problem-solving sessions related to competitive exams facilitated by peers and seniors, and earnest participation in career-centric discussions within the precincts of tea stalls. Regrettably, a sizable portion appears in the ephemeral allure of the virtual realm, succumbing to the pervasive influence of social media, mobile devices, and the internet.

Furthermore, stalwart attendees of these establishments underscore the recent perceptible erosion of bonds among tea stall regulars. This decline, they posit, is intricately linked to the evolving fabric of societal patterns and the contemporary ethos. The palpable shifts in lifestyle and the pervasive impact of the digital age are perceived as catalysts fostering a detachment among individuals, diminishing the camaraderie that once defined these communal spaces.

**9.7 Cup of Contemplation: Tea's Role Beyond a Beverage:** A dedicated scholar from the science faculty who frequented a particular tea establishment eloquently expressed, "Tea transcends its status as a mere beverage; it assumes

the role of a comforting embrace for one's spirit. For some, it's cherished for the subtle caffeine infusion, while others revel in its delectable flavors that impart a sense of tranquility and delight."

In concordance with this sentiment, students from the law faculty articulated their profound connection to chai, deeming it not just a drink but an emotion. They underscored the ritualistic aspect of calling for chai during friendly rendezvous, particularly in the serene ambiance of evenings. Against the backdrop of the lively University Chauraha, I find solace on a weathered wooden bench at a roadside tea stall, presided over by a matronly proprietress.

**9.8 Interwoven traditions:** The tea stalls of Prayagraj stand as microcosms of the city's rich farragoes of intertwined cultures, creating a unique and vibrant social space. These humble establishments serve more than just Tea; they are dynamic hubs where diverse cultural threads seamlessly weave together. At the tea stalls, one can witness a fusion of culinary traditions. Masala chai, a staple, embodies a blend of spices that reflects the syncretic nature of Prayagraj's culinary heritage. These stalls often offer regional snacks, each telling a story of cultural influences and local flavors. The tea stall becomes a democratic meeting point, transcending social and economic boundaries. Here, people from various walks of life converge, fostering a cross-cultural exchange of ideas and experiences. It is not uncommon to find students engrossed in discussions alongside business people and artists, all sharing the same space. Language, too, becomes a shared currency at these stalls. Multilingual conversations create a harmonious cacophony where Hindi, Urdu, and various regional dialects coalesce. This linguistic diversity mirrors the multicultural composition of Prayagraj. Furthermore, the tea stalls actively participate in and celebrate the city's festivals. Whether serving special Tea during religious events or decorating the stalls with cultural festivities, these establishments become integral to the city's celebratory spirit. The decor of the tea stalls often reflects a blend of traditional and contemporary aesthetics. Artistic representations, cultural artifacts, and vibrant colors create an ambiance that pays homage to Prayagraj's cultural roots while embracing modern influences. In essence, the tea stalls of Prayagraj serve as lively hubs where the threads of various cultures intertwine, creating a rich miscellanea that mirrors the city's diversity and unity. The clinking of tea cups becomes a symphony that resonates with the spirit of communal harmony, encapsulating the essence of Prayagraj's intertwined cultures.

**9.9 Unperturbed third places-** Undisturbed sanctuaries of conviviality, tea stalls beckon individuals seeking reprieve from the tumultuous currents of daily life. These enclaves, revered for their tranquility and leisurely ambiance, serve as havens for respite and as crucibles for cultivating informal discourse. Amongst the regular patrons, students stand out as habitual visitors, designating these tea stalls as their quintessential "third places" – sanctuaries where the oppressive weight of academic demands dissipates, giving way to an atmosphere of pressure-free camaraderie, relaxation, and unrestrained enjoyment within the folds of their friend circles.

The allure of tea stalls extends beyond a mere pitstop for refreshments, encapsulating a multifaceted experience. Here, the aromatic symphony of brewed teas harmonizes with the sociocultural fabric of communal engagement, creating an environment conducive to unbridled conversations and exchanging ideas. Patrons revel in the unhurried cadence of life prevailing within these microcosms, starkly contrasting the frenetic pace of academic or professional domains.

According to the seminal work of Ray Oldenburg on the concept of "third places," these informal gathering spots play a pivotal role in fostering community bonds and nurturing a robust civil society (Oldenburg, 1989). Furthermore, scholars like Sherry Turkle underscore the significance of face-to-face interactions in an era dominated by digital communication, elucidating how physical spaces like tea stalls provide sanctuaries for genuine human connection (Turkle, 2011). In this context, tea stalls emerge as unperturbed arenas where the nuances of non-verbal communication and the subtleties of shared experiences take precedence.

Students' predilection for tea stalls as sanctuaries for leisure is an intricate phenomenon deeply rooted in the pursuit of equilibrium in their lives. Academic exigencies and the relentless quest for excellence necessitate interludes of respite, and tea stalls seamlessly fulfill this role. The ambiance, characterized by porcelain clinking, ambient murmurings, and the fragrant tendrils of steeping tea leaves, creates an optimal setting for unwinding. This practice transcends mere routine; it is an integral facet of the social fabric, contributing to the holistic development of individuals.

In summation, tea stalls stand as unperturbed sanctuaries where individuals, especially students, seek solace from the demands of their daily lives. The rich melange of social interaction, relaxation, and intellectual exchange that unfolds within these unassuming establishments underscores their pivotal role as indispensable "third places" within the contemporary sociocultural milieu.

**9.10 Employment and Career-Related Discussions-** In the academic enclave of Prayagraj City, teeming with university and competitive students, the milieu is charged with discussions of paramount importance—employment and careers. Amidst the seemingly unassuming tea stalls that dot the urban landscape, a vibrant accumulation of discourse unfolds as students engage in conversations that transcend the boundaries of casual chatter. These gatherings serve as veritable crucibles where the trajectories of professional aspirations are meticulously crafted and refined.

The discourse at these tea stalls transcends mere musings, delving into the intricacies of government policies and schemes. University students and those navigating the competitive examination landscape converge in these informal hubs to dissect the nuanced landscape of job opportunities, especially within the esteemed precincts of government sectors. The air is thick with anticipation as individuals scrutinize and deliberate over the multifarious dimensions of employment across diverse sectors.

The fervor extends beyond idle conversations as the employment seekers meticulously chart their academic voyages. Inquisitive minds eagerly probe into the labyrinthine corridors of government job vacancies, orchestrating their studies strategically. The tea stalls metamorphose into command centers where navigating through exams, understanding syllabi intricacies, adapting to changes in examination patterns, procuring relevant study materials, and deciphering the nuanced nature of questions are dissected with meticulous attention.

Ray Oldenburg's conception of "third places" finds resonance in these teeming tea stalls, where individuals from disparate backgrounds converge to partake in collective endeavors toward professional growth (Oldenburg, 1989). Additionally, the communal wisdom-sharing evident in these settings aligns with the principles of collaborative learning espoused by theorists like Lev Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1978). The synergy of diverse perspectives and experiences converges to create a dynamic ecosystem of career-related discourse.

In the quest for gainful employment, tea stalls metamorphose into unexpected yet potent arenas for career counseling. The seemingly modest exteriors of these establishments belie the profound impact they wield as hubs for advice-seeking and experiential exchange. Within these impromptu counseling centers, individuals share their successes and pitfalls, fostering a collective ethos of learning and adaptation.

The unassuming tea stalls of Prayagraj City emerge as uncharted realms where the discourse of employment and careers assumes an elevated significance. Far beyond being casual meeting spots, these informal spaces encapsulate the essence of collaborative strategizing, crystallizing professional trajectories amidst the clinking of cups and aromatic tendrils of Tea.

**9.11 Changing Scenario of the Tea Stalls:** The tea stalls nestled in the cultural and historically rich fusions of Prayagraj have undergone a profound metamorphosis, emblematic of broader societal shifts. The erstwhile modest chai dukaan, adorned with simplicity, has gracefully embraced the currents of modernization. A paradigm shift is discernible as technology integrates into the traditional milieu, ushering in digital payment systems and online ordering mechanisms, elevating the convenience quotient for discerning patrons.

Noteworthy among the transformations is the expanded palette offered by Prayagraj's tea stalls. While the timeless allure of masala chai persists as a cornerstone, proprietors have deftly introduced a melange of novel blends and an array of delectable snacks. This strategic diversification astutely caters to the evolving palates of the city's diverse populace. The menu, once confined to conventional offerings, now features healthy alternatives and specialty teas, mirroring the global inclination towards holistic wellness.

In tune with the worldwide resonance of environmental consciousness, Prayagraj's tea stalls have undertaken a commendable pivot towards sustainability. Biodegradable cups, sourced ethically and incorporating energy-efficient practices, are tangible embodiments of a conscientious commitment to eco-friendly operations. This environmental stewardship aligns with contemporary sustainability imperatives and underscores a nuanced understanding of the interconnectedness between business operations and environmental impact.

However, amidst these avant-garde adaptations, the tea stalls of Prayagraj retain an irreplaceable role in community engagement. Far transcending their conventional identity as purveyors of Tea, these establishments metamorphose into vibrant community hubs. Events and promotions tailored to the local milieu not only signify the adaptability of these tea-stall businesses but also underscore their resilience in remaining pivotal nodes for social connections and meaningful conversations within the community. In examining this multifaceted evolution, the tea stalls of Prayagraj emerge not merely as purveyors of beverages but as dynamic entities navigating the delicate interplay of tradition, modernity, and sustainability.

**9.12 Discussions about the Current Issues and Recent News at Tea Stall-** Engagements in erudite discussions about contemporary affairs, spanning the realms of politics, international relations, electoral intricacies, governmental policies, official gazettes, examinations, and employment opportunities, constitute a prevailing and recurrent phenomenon within the precincts of tea stalls. These colloquies serve as crucibles for the amalgamation of diverse perspectives, fostering an intellectual milieu that mirrors the very essence of democratic discourse.

Amidst the aromatic symphony of brewing teas, the air is saturated with the resonance of impassioned dialogues on current events. Both domestic and international political landscapes unfurl within these unassuming spaces, transforming tea stalls into veritable agora-like forums where ideas clash, perspectives coalesce, and opinions proliferate. The canvas of discourse expands beyond the temporal constraints, encapsulating a panoramic view of the socio-political intermixtures that encapsulate the contemporary zeitgeist.

In this intellectual crucible, a democratic ethos prevails, providing a fertile ground for the unfettered expression of viewpoints. Orators and audiences partake in a symphony of voices, weaving together a fusion of diverse opinions and analyses. This democratic environment, carefully delineated by ethical boundaries, facilitates an atmosphere where the cadence of debate is harmonized with respect, fostering a space where intellectual exploration is free and tempered by ethical considerations.

Scholarly perspectives on the importance of such democratic discourse spaces align with the theories of deliberative democracy. Scholars like Jürgen Habermas emphasize the vital role of public discourse in a democratic society, where individuals engage in rational deliberation to reach informed decisions (Habermas, 1984). Additionally, as expounded by Nancy Fraser, the concept of the public sphere underscores the significance of inclusive and open discussions for a vibrant democratic society (Fraser, 1990).

The tea stalls, ostensibly modest in their appearance, transcend their traditional role as purveyors of refreshments. They emerge as intellectual hubs, fostering democratic discourse that reflects the pulse of contemporary issues and embodies the democratic ideals of inclusivity, open dialogue, and ethical engagement.

**9.13 Tea Stall: A Canvas of Artistic Brews:** Nestled amidst the scholastic vortex, ensconced in the cacophony of collegiate existence, has emerged as an unanticipated bastion for cognitive provocation and gustatory gratification at the nearby tea stalls of the University of Allahabad. This unpretentious establishment not only surpasses the confines of conventional tea purveyors but metamorphoses into an aesthetic crucible, titillating the palates while affording students an unconventional locus for scholastic and artistic pursuits. At the dawn of each academic day, as the diurnal orb heralds the commencement of erudite endeavors, the redolence of steeping Tea permeates the atmosphere, magnetically drawing scholars from proximate campuses. This erstwhile expedient caffeine oasis has transmogrified into an intellectual haven. The proprietor, discerning the erudite ambiance, has meticulously curated a menu with a panoply of tea blends and catering to cerebral proclivities with offerings such as "Cognitive Chai" and "Scholarly Spice."

The artistic manifestation within the tea sanctuary extends to its adornments, featuring erudition-laden aphorisms, literary excerpts, and ruminative artwork contributed by students and local savants. The walls, a protean tableau of intellectual stimuli, incubate an environment where scholars can partake in substantive colloquies, exchange cogitations, and draw inspiration for their academic odysseys. The sagacious tea purveyor, cognizant of education's formative role, has forged alliances with local bastions of erudition. Students can showcase their artistic prowess, transmuting the tea sanctum into a dynamic precinct for exhibitions, literary soirees, and open mic convocations. The amalgam of creative expression and scholarly engagement has transmuted the tea enclave into a nexus for interdisciplinary synergy and intercultural erudition.

Within this unparalleled milieu, students find themselves imbibing artistically concocted infusions and immersing in an atmosphere that fosters scholastic and imaginative exploration. The tea haven becomes a microcosm of the effervescent tapestry of student life, where the redolence of artistic brews seamlessly mingles with the cerebral pursuits of those seeking reprieve from the rigors of academia. It is a testament to the symbiotic interplay between education, creativity, and the unassuming act of relishing a cup of Tea.

**9.14 Helping Attitude and Guidance to Junior Students by Seniors-** At the tea stalls near the university and its hostels, many students regularly come to take Tea and meet with their peers, university seniors, and other experienced competitive students. The researchers noted as participatory and non-participatory observants in the field that the students take the advice of their seniors and are guided by them regarding various problems. Sometimes, students have personal and emotional issues that perplex them and must be resolved. Many senior students of universities and hostels try to give solutions to needy students. Sometimes, economic help and financial assistance are also provided to needy students by senior students. Guidance regarding adjustment, university examination, career, competition, social skills, and management are given to the junior students by senior students. Blood donation to needy patients or friends, sharing books and e-books, PDFs, Xeroxed study materials, and personal study notes are most often practices seen at the tea stalls. Senior students often bring valuable insights and experiences to tea stall conversations, where discussions about academic challenges, course selections, and university life occur. This form of guidance serves as an informal mentoring system, aiding junior students in navigating the complexities of university life. Such interactions contribute to integrating newcomers into the academic community, creating a sense of belonging. The supportive atmosphere at tea stalls aligns with the principles of Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986), where social learning and role modeling play essential roles in the development of individuals. Through their willingness to share experiences and provide guidance in these informal settings, seniors become positive role models for juniors, reinforcing the importance of collaborative learning. This practice facilitates academic adaptation and nurtures a holistic approach to student development. The supportive culture promoted at tea stalls contributes to a positive campus environment, fostering mental well-being and a sense of community responsibility.

The significance of these interactions at tea stalls goes beyond mere academic advice; it becomes a form of community building. The exchange of ideas and guidance in a casual setting fosters genuine connections between seniors and juniors, creating a network of support that extends beyond the confines of classrooms and lecture halls. In conclusion, seniors' helping attitude and guidance to junior students at tea stalls contribute significantly to the overall university experience. These informal interactions embody a supportive campus culture, fostering academic success, personal development, and a sense of community within the university.

**9.15 Development of Personal Bonds and Relationships-** Throughout frequent visits to tea stalls, robust personal and social affiliations burgeon and solidify, shaping intimate bonds that endure the test of time. These tea stall connoisseurs evolve into a close-knit social enclave, forging camaraderie beyond the ephemeral exchanges over cups of chai. The profundity of these connections is exemplified by the creation of small peer groups, a microcosm of social dynamics where shared experiences and discussions become the adhesive. The symbiotic relationship transcends the mere transactional exchange of Tea for currency. It extends to the heartwarming camaraderie between the tea stall vendors



and their patrons. This bond matures to a point where inquiries about the well-being of family and friends become as customary as the brewing of the daily chai. The interconnectedness reaches such depths that the vendor dutifully seeks updates from the collective hive of friends and peer groups without a familiar face among the regular patrons. The collage of social discourse woven within the hallowed confines of tea stalls is not limited to the immediate circle of patrons. These establishments serve as veritable forums where more expansive conversations unfold. Vendors and other members of the societal mosaics are drawn into the narrative, presenting their perspectives on the matters du jour. In these extended dialogues, diverse voices contribute to the rich fabric of discourse, amplifying the significance of tea stalls as unconventional arenas for exchanging ideas and perspectives.

**10. Conclusion:** In culmination, this meticulous qualitative investigation delving into the educational ethos encapsulated within the environs of tea stalls near the University of Allahabad Campus has elucidated a nuanced and symbiotic interweaving of academia and the unassuming tea establishments. The findings underscore a multifaceted relationship wherein these ostensibly commonplace venues transcend their conventional functions, metamorphosing into intellectual sanctuaries that complement and elevate the scholarly ambiance intrinsic to the university setting.

The amalgamation of cognitive stimulants, epitomized by the advent of bespoke Tea blends, underscores a deliberate and strategic endeavor by tea vendors to synchronize their offerings with the discerning intellectual palate of the student demographic. The embellishment of these tea havens with erudite quotes, literary excerpts, and evocative artwork serves to accentuate their transformative role – they cease to be mere purveyors of libations, assuming the mantle of enclaves fostering not only caffeine-induced reverie but also avenues for innovative thought and intellectual discourse.

A salient dimension illuminated by this comprehensive inquiry pertains to the symbiotic collaboration between tea vendors and local educational institutions. The proactive involvement in curated exhibitions, erudite book readings, and thought-provoking open mic events manifests an earnest and intentional effort to cultivate a profound sense of community engagement. This dynamic synergy augments the overarching academic milieu and positions these tea stalls as integral components within the tapestry of cultural and intellectual discourse.

The proliferation of tea stalls proximate to the University of Allahabad can be discerned as a symbiotic response to the rich cultural fabric of the region, wherein tea consumption transcends mere sustenance and assumes the mantle of a venerable ritual intricately woven into the fabric of daily life. The diverse fusion of patrons, encapsulating scholars and students, lends a dynamic and heterogeneous character to the second dimension, depicting a convergence of intellectual pursuits within these cultural enclaves.

The conversations encapsulated in the proximate environs of these tea stalls traverse a multifarious spectrum of topics, engendering an environment conducive to the organic cultivation of ideas, from academic discourses to cultural exchanges. The polymorphic purpose attributed to visitors, ranging from the earnest pursuit of intellectual exchange to the consummate appreciation of artistic expression, encapsulating a rich tapestry of motivations.

The discernible shift in these spaces' cultural paradigm, as perceived by the tea stall proprietors and discerning patrons, underscores an epochal transformation reflective of an evolving educational ethos. As encapsulated by this qualitative investigation, the metamorphosis of tea stalls from quotidian vendors to veritable cultural sanctuaries unveils a cultural evolution underscored by the dynamic interplay between academia and these seemingly unpretentious establishments over the temporal continuum. Prospective inquiries may delve into more granular facets of this cultural transformation, unraveling its intricate nuances and broader ramifications for student well-being and academic engagement within the academic milieu.

## Reference

1. Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice-Hall.
2. Foucault, M. (1986). Of Other Spaces. *Diacritics*, 16(1), 22–27.
3. Fraser, N. (1990). "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy." *Social Text*, (25/26), pp. 56–80.
4. Geertz, C. (1979). From the native's point of view: On the nature of anthropological understanding. In P. Rainbow & W. Sullivan (Eds.), *Interpretive Social Science* (pp. 225–242). Berkeley: University of California Press.
5. Habermas, J. (1984). *The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Beacon Press.
6. Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1994). Data management and analysis methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 428-444). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
7. Jane, B. (2005). Just a Tea Stall Girl: Lessons from India. *Social work and society*, 3(1):102–115.
8. Oldenburg, R. (1989). *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee Shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts at the Heart of a Community*. Da Capo Press.
9. Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
10. Smith, L., et al. (2020). Peer support and mental health: A study of the impact of peer mentoring on university students. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 35(4), 567–589.

11. Turkle, S. (2011). *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*. Basic Books
12. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Harvard University Press.
13. Waite, S. (2010). Teaching and learning outside the classroom: personal values, alternative pedagogies and standards. *International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education*, 39(1), 65–82. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004270903206141>
14. Williams, J. (2001). Phenomenology in Sociology. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, pp. 11361–11363. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-043076-7/01939-2>
15. Wright, C., & Ville, S. (2018). The university tea room: informal public spaces as ideas incubators. *History Australia*, 15(2), 236–254.