

Hindi transcript:

अर्पिता - बारहवीं...ग्यारहवीं और बारहवीं कक्षा में मैंने साइन्स या विज्ञान लिया था। तो ये...ये दो साल बहुत ही...बहुत ही... अमूल्य होते हैं, क्योंकि इनमें... इनके बाद या तो आप अपने इंजीनियरिंग क्वालिफ़ा... इंजीनियरिंग कलेज जाने के लिए exam... entrance exam लेते हैं, या कोई medical college जाने के लिए entrance exam देते हैं। तो पूरे टाइम जो छात्रा इन classes में होते हैं, उनको बहुत मेहनत करनी पड़ती है। तो, सवेरे स्कूल जाने के बाद जब मैं लौटती थी तो सीधे दोपहर का खाना खा के coaching classes में जाती थी। और चार coaching classes एक दिन में होती थीं - physics, chemistry, math और कभी-कभी biology की। और ये आपको बताते थे कि कम्पे IIT के entrance exam के लिए prepare करना है या कम्पे आपको अपने medical entrance exam के लिए prepare करना है और पूरे टाइम यह... इसी बात का पिस्कशन होता था। और...पर उसमें कभी-कभी मजा भी आता था कि जो...जिन लोगों से आप कभी मिलते नहीं थे... क्योंकि, जम्मे लखनऊ में सारी ज... all girls' और all boys' स्कूल होते थे, तो आपको पहली बार पि र interactions शुरू होते थे दूसरे schools के बच्चों के साथ...

प्रश्नकर्ता - तो क्या काफी लोग जाते थे या सब लोग जाते थे? यह coaching classes का जो सिलसिला है वह...

अर्पिता - अगर आप... अगर आप साइन्स के फ़िल्ड... साइन्स स्ट्रीम में थे, तो...आपको जाना ही था क्योंकि यह समझा जाता था कि आप या तो मेपिसिन करेंगे या इंजीनियरिंग करेंगे। और इनके entrance exams बहुत ही ज़्यादा competitive होते हैं। इसके लिए आवश्यकता थी कि आप ये coaching classes करें, और अगर आप नहीं करते तो... और दूसरे लोगों को देखते और वे हर दिन क्लास में अपने स्कूल में पिस्कस् करते कि आज यह पढ़ाया गया, और आज यह पढ़ाया गया। तो पि र अपने आप को... अप... पि र थोड़ी तकलीफ़ होती, और पि र इच्छा होती कि खुद जाके करें। और इन coaching classes से यह फ़ायदा होता था कि हमारे विद्यालय में जो अध्यापक होते थे, वे भी यह मानकर चलते थे कि आप coaching कर रहे हो, तो वे भी कोर्स या syllabi को बस ऐसे ब्रश करके रख देते थे। और बस क्लास जाते थे attendance के लिए, कि गए हैं, स्कूल गए हैं, but... ज... अधिकतर पढ़ाई coaching classes में होती थी।

English translation:

Arpita: In twelfth grade ... in the eleventh and twelfth grades, I studied science (speaker repeats in Hindi). So, these ... these two years [of one's school life] are very ... very ... crucial (speaker says "priceless"), because in them ... after [twelfth grade] you either take your entrance exam to go to engineering college, or take an entrance exam to go to some medical college. So, students (speaker should have just said छात्र to mean students generally – or छात्राएँ, which is the plural of छात्रा (female student)) who take [science classes] have to work very hard at all times. So, after I came back from morning school, I would go to coaching classes directly after eating lunch. There would be four coaching classes in a day – physics, chemistry, math and sometimes, biology. And they would tell you how to prepare for your IIT* entrance exams and how to prepare for your medical entrance exams; and throughout [the class period] there would be discussion on this matter. And ... but sometimes you also had fun [in these classes], [because] people... you had never met before ... because, for instance, all schools in Lucknow were either all-girls' or all-boys' schools; in the [coaching classes] you got to interact for the first time with students from other schools ...

Interviewer: So did many people go, or did everyone go? This business of the coaching classes, it ...

Arpita: If you ... if you belonged to a science field ... the "science stream," then you had to go, because it was expected that you would either study medicine or engineering. And the [entrance] exams for [medical and engineering schools] are very competitive. So it was necessary that you went to coaching classes; and if you didn't go to one, then ... you would see others who did, and [who] discussed things that were taught in coaching classes in their classes at school. So then you would ... you would feel uncomfortable [about your own state of preparation] and then you would wish to go for yourself. The benefit from going to coaching classes was that ... your teachers at school would take it for granted that you were being coached [for those exams], and so they would brush aside (?) their own syllabus or course materials. And, that's it, we would go to school to have our attendance marked – [so that] it could be known that we were going to class, but most of the studying happened in coaching classes.

*Indian Institute of Technology – in India there are five elite government-funded engineering schools by this name. Owing to their excellent curriculum and placement records, there is fierce competition to get into these institutions. A large number of high school students in the "science stream" also study in preparation for the IIT-JEE (IIT Joint Entrance Examination).

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