

**TESTIMONIAL FEEDBACK OF THE PHD
AWARDEE CANDIDATES
YEAR 2026**



Dr. Shruti Sanjay Joshi

Professor at BNCA

My journey of phd was a long one and full of hurdles too. I was given a lot of encouragement by Dr Anurag Kashyap to pursue phd. Later dr Vasudha Gokhale guided me when I was struck as my original research question was leading to a lot of confusion. I was brought back on the track and then my journey took great speed. Constant support and guidance by BNCA phd centre, made it possible to complete my phd. Thanking Dr. Anurag Kashyap, Dr. Vasudha Gokhale and dr Meera Shirolkar for making this journey possible.



Dr. Anshul Pranay Gujarathi

Founder and Director, of Eco Solutions®

My research journey @BNCA Research Center has been both intellectually stimulating and deeply purposeful. Working on pathways toward low-carbon and net-zero buildings allowed me to connect academic research with real-world sustainability challenges in the built environment in a systematic fashion. The process demanded persistence—refining ideas, navigating data complexities, and balancing professional practice with academic rigor. These challenges ultimately strengthened my perspective and reinforced the value of research as a tool for meaningful impact. My learning included the theoretical and practical glance towards my core subject that stands as a strength in my profession. One of the most rewarding aspects was engaging with mentors and fellow scholars whose insights enriched the journey. This experience reaffirmed that research is not merely about knowledge creation, but about shaping solutions that contribute to a more sustainable and responsible future.



Dr. Prajakta Dalal

Associate Professor in Dept. of Environmental Architecture at BNCA

The PhD Centre was highly supportive throughout my research journey. I had the privilege of working under the guidance of my mentor, Dr. Vasudha Gokhale, whose constant support and insight were invaluable in shaping my work. The timely expert reviews and workshops provided meaningful direction and strengthened the quality of my research. Overall, the journey was enriching, memorable, and enjoyable—marked by rigorous work, strong institutional support, and exceptional mentorship from my guide.



Dr. Dharti Wankhede

Associate Professor at BNCA

The research journey was both exciting and challenging. One of the major difficulties encountered was the lack of proper documentation at the construction site, which made data collection quite demanding. Despite this, the stakeholders were highly supportive, generously sharing the available data and offering valuable insights related to the research topic. Interactions and interviews with experts added significant depth to the study and made the experience truly memorable. The consistent guidance and involvement of my mentor throughout the journey were deeply appreciated and played a crucial role in the successful completion of PhD research.



Dr. Sudnya Mahimkar

Principal at Pillai College of Architecture, New Panvel

It is with immense joy and gratitude that I contribute this testimonial to the BNCA Research Center's Book of Abstracts. Being a part of the very first PhD batch has been one of the most defining and enriching experiences of my academic journey. As a member of the inaugural PhD batch, I hold a special place in my heart for this pioneering program. I entered this space with both excitement and uncertainty and what unfolded was a journey filled with guidance, warmth, and unwavering support. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have had Dr. Vasudha Gokhale ma'am as my mentor. Her mentorship went far beyond academic supervision—she guided me with immense patience, care, and clarity, almost as if she was holding my hand through every step of the process. Her structured approach, constant encouragement, and deep involvement made what initially felt like a daunting journey become a seamless and fulfilling experience. In many ways, I progressed with complete trust in her guidance, only to realize at the end that I had successfully completed my thesis almost effortlessly under her watchful mentorship. The BNCA PhD Centre provided a nurturing and enabling environment that supported my journey at every stage. This was particularly significant for me as I was commuting regularly between Mumbai and Pune. The institutional support, flexibility, and understanding I received made it possible to sustain this demanding routine without feeling overwhelmed. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Anurag Kashyap sir for his constant encouragement and leadership, which played a vital role in shaping a positive research culture at the centre. The sense of belonging I experienced was further strengthened by my batch mates, whose warmth, camaraderie, and shared experiences turned challenges into cherished memories. A special mention must be made of Dr. Meera Shirolkar, a dear friend and colleague, who extended her support generously, especially during the crucial phases of completion and defence. Her selfless help was a lifeline. BNCA didn't just award me a PhD; it gifted me a lifelong academic home, profound friendships, and the confidence to contribute meaningfully to scholarship. This compendium is a fitting celebration of such journeys—thank you for including mine.



Dr. Pranoti Lad

HOD of M.Arch Architectural Conservation in SCOA

I was awarded PhD in June 2022, for the topic ‘Investigating the characteristics of Jain religious architecture in Maharashtra: A case of Kolhapur district’. The PhD journey at BNCA was not only the journey of academic pursuit but also a transformative chapter in my life. The study period was between August 2018 and June 2022; it was also the period of COVID-19. The coursework organized by BNCA as a series of presentations by doctorates helped me to understand the process of PhD and gave a direction towards the finalization of the research area. Under the guidance of Dr Abhijit Natu, I finalized the Kolhapur district -a region having historical significance in Maharashtra known for its layered religious and cultural traditions- as my research study area. The study was about the influence of religious, political, social and geographic factors on built and spatial organizations of Jain religious architecture. The objective of my study was to document, analyze and interpret Jain religious structures—temples, basadis, manastambhas and sacred complexes—spread across urban and rural landscapes of Kolhapur. The religious structures covered were from as early as the eighth century to the modern period. Many of these religious structures were in remote villages and required patience, local coordination and physical endurance. Various challenges were experienced due to COVID-19 pandemic. The lockdown abruptly halted travel and on-site documentation. In that, I managed field study by visiting Kolhapur and collecting data required for my topic. Gradually, my field data got transformed into six chapters from Introduction to conclusion. My work aimed not only to document but also to prove the hypothesis and I also proposed grounded theories based on the study. Looking back, my Ph.D. was more than an academic degree. It was a journey of balance—between fieldwork and family, uncertainty and determination. Living through those years taught me resilience, faith and inner strength. Certainly, it gave a different direction to my life and opened avenues for the future. It connected me with experts in different fields and helped me expand my friend circle. PhD gives a vision and a new thinking to you and your life, everyone should experience it! I am thankful to everyone who directly or indirectly helped me in the process of my PhD!



Dr. Aarti Verma

Associate Professor at BNCA

My research journey has been transformative at each stage of the process—defining the problem, reviewing literature, collecting data, and interpreting findings. It shaped not only my understanding of the subject but also my approach to critical thinking. Among the most memorable experiences was the process of field observation and direct engagement with the people engaged in home gardens. Discussions with them truly enlightened me of the depth of knowledge beyond academic education. Additionally, discussions with peers and mentors provided valuable perspectives, often leading to unexpected insights and refinements in my work. Managing time alongside the iterative nature of research was equally demanding. However, these challenges taught me resilience, adaptability, and the importance of patience in scholarly work. A defining strength of my research journey has been the unwavering tenacity and academic rigour of my guide. His insights, evidence-based reasoning, and methodological discipline instilled in me a strong sense of responsibility towards academic integrity. Looking back, this journey has been more than an academic exercise—it has been a process of personal and intellectual growth. It strengthened my ability to question, analyze, and communicate ideas effectively, leaving me with skills and experiences that extend far beyond the scope of this research.



Dr. Poorva Milind Kulkarni

Professor and Head of Archineering Cell at BNCA

My PhD journey has been a transformative amalgamation of inquisitiveness, patience, perseverance and growth. These moments tested my resilience but also sharpened my analytical ability and problem-solving skills. A particularly enriching part of my research was conducting surveys and interacting with around 500 people. Engaging directly with such a diverse group of people not only strengthened my research outcomes but also played an instrumental role in shaping my life skills. It enhanced my communication skills, empathy, adaptability to situations and confidence in dealing with different perspectives and real-life situations. A major challenge I encountered was getting trained and using SPSS software for data analysis. Understanding statistical tools, performing accurate analysis, and most importantly, interpreting the results meaningfully was initially overwhelming. However, through continuous practice, I was able to overcome these difficulties. This experience significantly strengthened my analytical skills and gave me confidence in handling complex data. One of the most exciting and memorable aspects of my journey was conducting case studies of steel residential buildings in India. Visiting sites in person, analysing structural systems, and understanding practical implementation gave me invaluable real-world exposure. Due to the challenging situation of COVID 19, many scheduled interviews and site visits got shifted to online mode. It put me into more challenging data collection process and tested my patience but ultimately, it rewarded me well in terms of knowledge and experience. The experience of site surveys and interviews bridged the gap between theory and practice and deepened my appreciation for innovative construction techniques and sustainable design approaches in the Indian context. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Vasudha Gokhale, for the endless efforts she has put into this journey to make me learn the process of research. I will be always grateful to her for the constant support, encouragement, motivation, and inspiration. I would like to thank Honorable principal of BNCA, Dr. Anurag Kashyap for always being a source of inspiration to grow with more knowledge. I would like to thank my colleagues at BNCA especially Dr. Meera Shirolkar and friends giving honest advice during the study and being supportive.

Thanks to all the people who participated in the questionnaire survey exercises to make this journey a success.



Dr. Meera Pankaj Shirolkar

Professor and Ph.D. Research Center coordinator at BNCA

Completing my PhD has been a life-changing experience for me. Looking back, I can confidently say that this journey has transformed me in many ways. I have become more inclusive of people and their behavior, more understanding of different perspectives, and more systematic and analytical in my approach to situations. I have grown calmer, deeper, and more thoughtful than I was before. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the PhD center, my esteemed center head, Dr. Anurag Kashyap, for paving this path for the institution and for all of us. I sincerely thank my respected guide Dr Vasudha Gokhale for her unconditional support, lifelong guidance, and constant encouragement. My gratitude also goes to all my peers and friends for always inspiring me to become a better version of myself. I feel truly blessed to have found the right place at the right time, with the right resources, to complete this PhD journey. Like every meaningful journey, this one also came with its testing times, and I had my own set of challenges throughout the process. The transition from confusion to clarity of thought was one of the most beautiful parts of this experience. On the home front, balancing the responsibilities of caring for a six-month-old baby, teaching, and managing research work was a journey in itself, leaving little room for leisure or rest. Sincere gratitude to my parents from both sides and my better half Pankaj Shirolkar and my kids Sourav-Arjun for valuing my work and providing unwavering emotional support. Sometimes, I believe challenges come into our lives to test our potential and help us discover strengths and capabilities within ourselves that we never knew existed. My topic enabled me to learn new tools and devise new methods that were so satisfying as a researcher. I can vividly recall an incident when, just a day before my pre-synopsis submission, my toddler accidentally ran into my laptop and literally broke it into two parts. Another memorable challenge was suffering a ligament injury just a week before my fifth progressive review. Yet, despite everything, the universe has been kind enough to keep motivating me and giving me the strength to give my hundred percent under all circumstances. My institution and peers were always supportive and encouraging throughout. My guide constantly encouraged me to learn new things and stood by me through every high and low. I deeply admire her calm yet disciplined nature. She motivated me to improve my writing, encouraged me to push my limits, and inspired me to aspire toward becoming a research guide myself _ that I am today.

I now consider this as a stepping stone toward a larger journey, where I continue my passion for research through my candidates while making a conscious effort to keep learning and evolving in my field. Today, I can see an exceptional transformation in the way I perceive situations and handle life. This journey has not only earned me a degree but has shaped me into a stronger, wiser, and more resilient individual.



Dr. Sanjeevni Pendse

Associate Professor at BNCA

"Helped me to enhance my teaching methods and also systematically guiding research students and candidates".



Dr. Asmita Joshi

Professor and Director UNAI Cell, Executive Director ISDS at BNCA

My doctoral journey at the BNCA PhD Centre has been an enriching and transformative experience, marked by intellectual growth, challenges, and invaluable support from mentors, colleagues, and well-wishers. I express my deepest gratitude to my thesis guide, Dr. Anurag Kashyap, Principal BNCA and Director of the PhD Centre, for his visionary leadership in establishing the centre and for encouraging me to pursue doctoral studies on a topic of deep interest. His constant guidance, patience, critical insights, and unwavering encouragement have been instrumental in shaping my research and sustaining my motivation throughout this journey. I am sincerely thankful to Dr. Vasudha Gokhale for her expert guidance and for organizing insightful lectures that strengthened my understanding of research concepts, methodologies, and methods. I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to Meera Shirolkar for her consistent administrative support and assistance, which ensured a smooth and well-coordinated PhD process. I feel fortunate to have received the guidance of Dr. Shubhada Kamlapurkar and Dr. Prajakta Baste, whose methodical approach, depth of knowledge, and timely inputs helped bring clarity and coherence to my work. Their mentorship played a significant role in helping me make informed decisions at crucial stages of my research. I am grateful to Dr. Abhijeet Natu, Ar. Suneet Mohindru, Dr. Kiran Shinde, and Varsha Gavandi for their valuable inputs during the formative phase of my study. Their perspectives enriched the direction of my research. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Nikhil Shejwalkar for his assistance in preparing maps and tools, which greatly facilitated the documentation of observational studies and interview schedules. My sincere thanks to Dr. Rama Kawade for her expertise in statistical analysis and logical reasoning, which proved essential in selecting appropriate analytical tools. I extend my heartfelt thanks to all the M.Arch Landscape Architecture Research Assistants (Batch 2018–2020) for their enthusiastic support during onsite surveys. Their teamwork and dedication made data collection both efficient and memorable. I am equally grateful to the management personnel of the selected townships and the residents who willingly participated in the survey, making this research possible. I deeply appreciate the support of my colleagues at BNCA who stood by me during my academic commitments and covered for me during my absences.

I would like to especially thank Dr. Sharvey Dhongde, Dr. Swati Sahasrabuddhe, Shruti Joshi, Nidhi Dixit, Mohit Jadhav, Madhuri Zite, Dhruv Chandvania, Mahesh Bangad, Sujata Kodag, and Anupama Khatavkar for their encouragement and cooperation. I also extend special thanks to Dr. Avanti Bambawale for her valuable guidance in report writing. This journey has been filled with challenges in fieldwork, data collection, and analysis, but each obstacle became an opportunity to learn and grow. The collaborative environment, academic discussions, and shared experiences have created lasting memories. I remain deeply grateful to everyone who contributed directly and indirectly to this research journey, which has not only enhanced my academic capabilities but also enriched me personally.



Dr. Rupali Kavilkar

Professor-KLS Gogte Institute of Technology, Belagavi, Guide- VTU Belagavi

Research at BNCA is progressive, intensely critical and well guided.



Dr. Sudhir Ramesh Deshpande

Associate Professor and Academic Coordinator at SMEF's Brick School of Architecture

It would be an absolute honor to contribute to the 'Book of Abstracts.' My research journey at the PhD Center has been a profoundly transformative chapter of my life, characterized by both rigorous intellectual challenge and immense personal growth. From the outset, the center provided a nurturing yet disciplined environment that pushed me to refine my architectural and academic perspectives. While the path was not without its hurdles—balancing complex site data with theoretical frameworks and navigating the intricacies of extensive fieldwork—the unwavering support of my mentors and the collaborative spirit of the research community made every challenge a stepping stone. One of my most memorable experiences was the vibrant exchange of ideas during our seminars, where critical feedback often sparked the most innovative breakthroughs in my work. I am deeply grateful for the resources and guidance provided by the Center, which have not only shaped my current research but have also instilled in me a lifelong commitment to social and architectural excellence. I hope my reflections serve as an encouragement to fellow scholars to embrace the rigors of research with curiosity and resilience.



Dr. Nupur Dipak Chichkhede

Assistant professor at Dr. D Y Patil College of Architecture, Akurdi , Pune.

I sincerely appreciate the BNCA PhD Research Centre for offering a nurturing, well-organized, and intellectually engaging environment throughout my doctoral studies. The Centre has significantly influenced my research journey through its thoughtfully designed coursework, enriching seminars, and valuable academic interactions, all of which helped broaden my perspective and strengthen my professional capabilities. I am especially thankful to Dr. Anurag Kashyap, Head of the Research Centre, for his guidance, encouragement, and for fostering a constructive and research-driven atmosphere. I also extend my gratitude to Dr. Meera Shirolkar for her continuous coordination and support, which ensured the smooth functioning of academic processes. I would like to acknowledge Ms. Harshada Gadgil for her efficient administrative assistance, which made various procedural aspects of my research journey much more manageable. The overall institutional support, along with the collaborative and motivating environment at BNCA, has played an important role in my academic development. My association with the BNCA PhD Research Centre has been a meaningful and rewarding experience, contributing greatly to both my research growth and professional advancement. Thank You!



Dr. Vaishali Mangesh Anagal

Associate Professor; Coordinator- Housing and Urban planning Research cluster at BNCA

I am honored to have completed my doctoral research at the BNCA Research Center. The center is well-equipped with a comprehensive library, advanced laboratories, and both quantitative and qualitative research software, providing an excellent research environment. The staff members are highly cooperative and consistently support research scholars at every stage of their work. The research guides are experts in their respective fields; their knowledge and extensive research networks aid scholars to receive critical evaluation and constructive feedback throughout their doctoral journey.