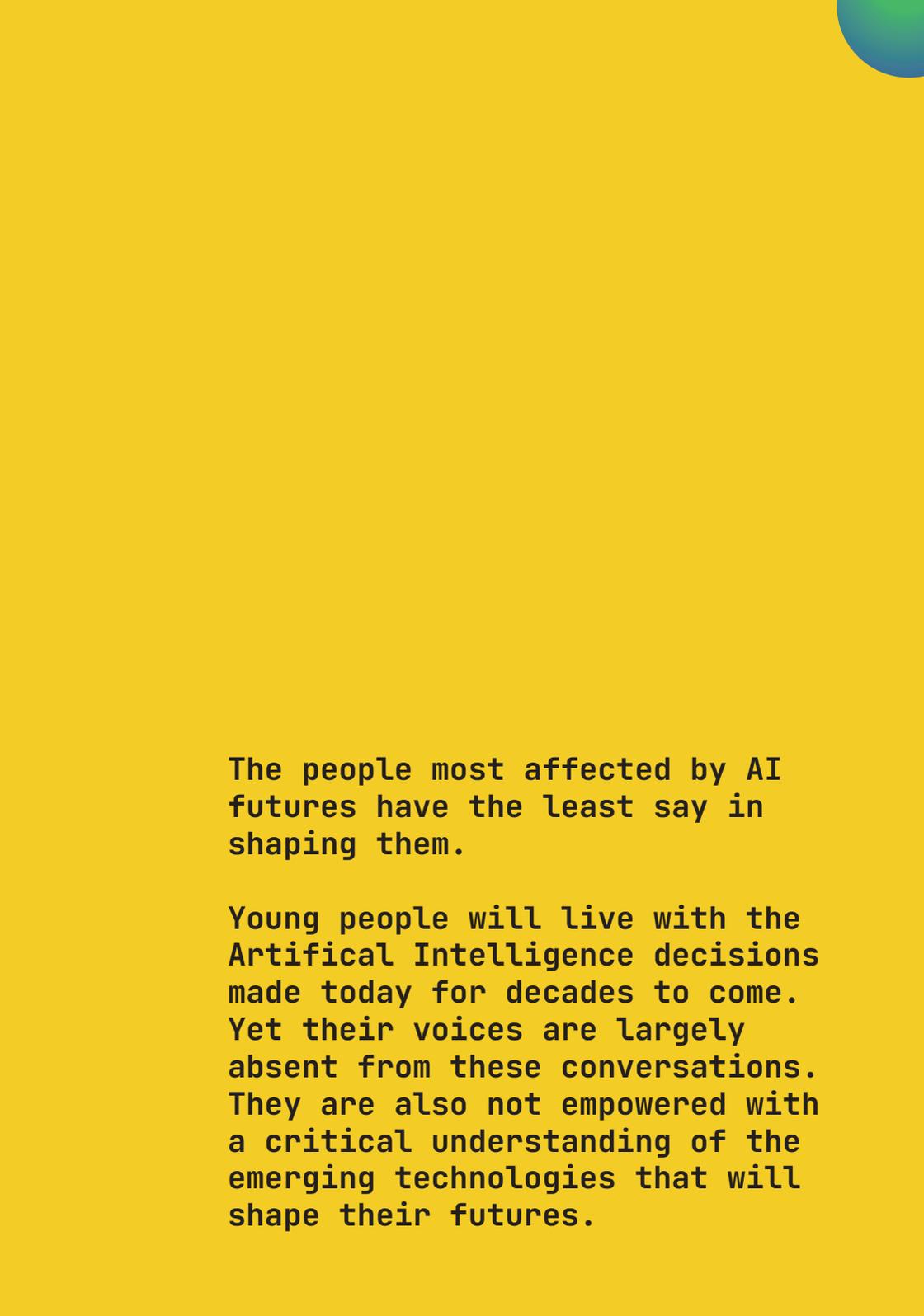QUEST
ALLIANCE

WHEN WE THINK
ABOUT AI FUTURES,
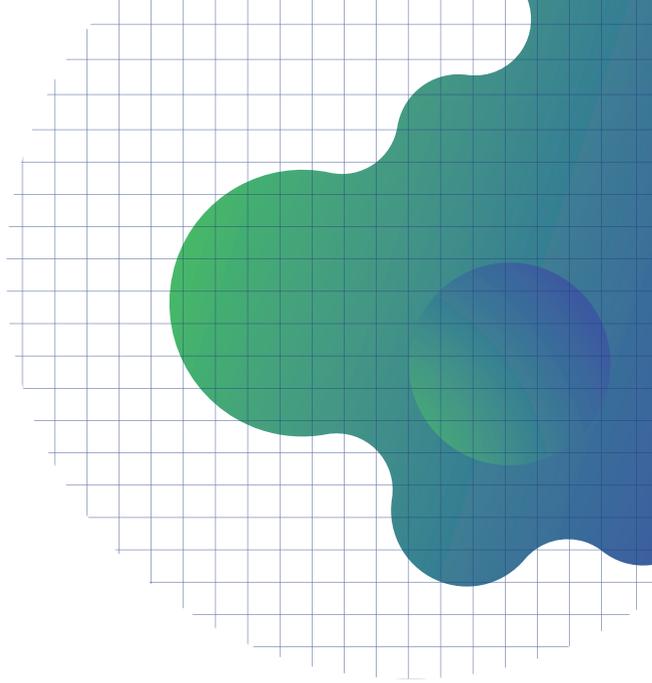WHOSE VOICES ARE HEARD
IN THE DECISIONS AND
WHOSE ARE LEFT BEHIND?

The people most affected by AI
futures have the least say in
shaping them.

Young people will live with the
Artifical Intelligence decisions
made today for decades to come.
Yet their voices are largely
absent from these conversations.
They are also not empowered with
a critical understanding of the
emerging technologies that will
shape their futures.

We engaged with **144 students** from
government secondary schools and
vocational training institutes,
over the course of 6 months, to
understand how they percieve AI
and what their hopes and anxieties
are about AI futures.

We found that many young people
from marginalised communities had
little awareness of AI. They were
not exposed to the technology, and
where they were, they lacked the
critical understanding of its
functioning and its impact on
their futures.

haryana

delhi

gujarat

odisha

kerala

# 2 out of 3
# students were not sure what AI was

Of the students who knew AI more than 50% were from Delhi.

And more than 90% were older than 16.

Even when they were not sure
about what AI was, it had still
percolated into their lives in
some ways.

# YOUNG PEOPLE ARE USING AND MAKING MEANING OF AI IN MYRIAD WAYS

## AI As A Source Of Knowledge

"I want to be a politician, and politicians don't need to study. But yes, I want a degree and ChatGPT helps me with all assignments and projects!"

- A girl in ITI Pusa, Delhi

"Whenever I have to post youtube shots, I create it with AI. I also use it for photo and video editing. I had edited all the farewell and picnic pictures in AI"

- A boy 10th in Jharsuguda who works part time as a photographer
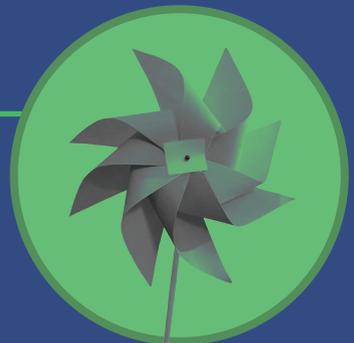
## AI As An Emotional Confidant

MetaAI listens to us more than other people in our lives. It gives such long thoughtful responses. It understands our emotions."

- Girls in 10th grade in Jharsuguda

"When I have free time I casually chat with snapchat AI. I just ask random things like - tell me something about yourself. If my girlfriend is not free I just talk to the chatbot."

- A boy from ITI delhi

## Ai As A Rookie

**"It must have its own mind, cause its working that way"**

- A boy in 10th grade in Jharsuguda after being introduced to Quickdraw.

**"We trusted you and you betrayed us!"**

- Girls in Jharsuguda after realising ChatGPT gives wrong answers for prime numbers

**"It wouldn't even know that a language like ours exists. The people who created this also wouldn't know our language"**

- 8th grade girls in Narmada, Gujarat after using adivasi language on ChatGPT.
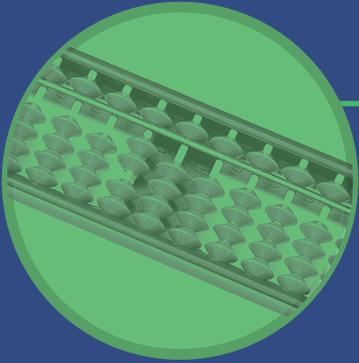
## Ai As A Lifestyle Guide

**"I use it for making gym plans. I put height, weight, age and it gives me a proper workout and diet plan."**

- An ITI boy in Kerala, who works as a part time gym trainer.

**"For a person who believes in astrology a lot, AI gives very accurate responses. I added my birth details and asked if I am allowed to travel today? It said no and my ticket got canceled the same day."**

- An ITI girl in Delhi

## AI As A Black Box

"I'm not sure how Youtube works… maybe there's a person sitting behind Youtube!"

- Girl in ITI Haryana

"The video that we see is sent by the employees of youtube. They are allotted common people to send videos to. They steal our information, store it and send it to us,  that's how the videos reach us!"

- Girls in Jharsuguda

## Ai As An Unknown Territory

"We had seen the blue ring on Whatsapp but never clicked on it because we were worried that it willlead to some scam."

- Girls in 10th grade in Narmada, Gujarat

"If you add your Ghibli image in ChatGpt and ask it to convert it back to the original picture, it will do it! It has all our photos saved!"

- A girl in ITI Pusa, Delhi

# YOUNG PEOPLE WORRY THAT THEIR FUTURES WILL BECOME MORE UNEQUAL BECAUSE OF AI

Young people feel that they have to passively accept AI futures and its consequences. They feel they have to adapt to these futures even if they bring more inequalities.

# How will our lives change because of AI?

## Future Of Work

### Will our current skills become redundant?

"If AI is developed for drafting, definitely our job will be lost. It will be good if AI develops without us having to lose our jobs."
- Civil draftsman Students in Kerala ITI.

### If AI is used in hiring, will it consider our humanness?

"If AI takes our interview it will choose the perfect human. No one is perfect, everyone improves over time. People like us might not get jobs at all."
- Girls in Delhi ITI.

## Future Of Human Behaviours And Cultures

### Will we lose faith in God and ourselves?

"People would lose trust in their abilities. With so many AI bots around we will even leave our faith and trust in Gods"
- Boys in Pathra

### Will AI increase our divides?

"If you add anti muslim data in AI, then it will start discriminating between hindus and muslims."

- Girls in Jharsuguda school, belonging to muslim community.

## Future Of Education

### Won't we become entirely dependent on these AI systems?

"We will start going to AI for the smallest of things. We will stop using our minds and our creativity will reduce"
- Girls in Delhi ITI

### Will AI control our students?

"In 2047 maybe AI will start teaching. They will be made to sit in AI pods and study all the time. They might not be able to walk, roam around or do any leisure activities"
- Girls in Delhi ITI

# Can we even trust these systems?

## Alogorithmic Bias

### Does building a healthcare AI put our rural population at disadvantage?

"People in rural areas don't go to hospitals much. They go to medical shops instead and hence not much data is available. If the AI is trained on only urban data, rural people will not be included in it."
- Boys in Jharsuguda

### Will this make our lives in the future harder than our present?

"If the AI takes 20 years of my community data, it will view us very differently. Our community was branded criminals 10 years ago but that's not the truth now, we have progressed from there. How will AI understand this?"
- Girls in Jharsuguda

## Data Transparency

### What is the government's role?

"Government should ensure people are aware of what data they are giving to private companies"
- Students in delhi ITI

### Should all the data be stored in one place?

"AI will have data of our entire health history, so other countries who give us medicines, can stop giving us medicines."
- Boys in Kerala ITI

## AI Ownership

### Can we localize the AI solutions?

"It should be created and managed by elected committee from the village"
-Boys in odisha

### Can it not be owned by profit making companies?

"If these AI solutions are meant for public, people and non profits should own it"
- Boys in delhi

# BUT, YOUNG PEOPLE WONDERED IF THERE CAN BE FUTURES WHERE AI ENABLES EQUITY?

> ## *I wish AI can help us learn efficiently and provide better guidance for our future.*
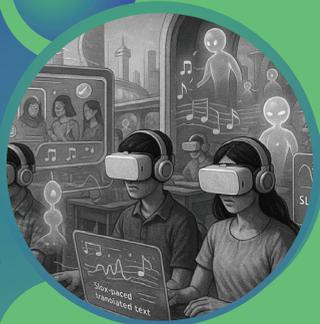
Delhi ITI students

**Educational institutions do not account for individual capabilities of the young learners and fail to instill curiosity beyond the classroom. In the long run, young people end up feeling confused regarding their career paths.**

## AI enabled learning institutions

**A central AI system used in the institutions will be owned by a committee of young people and non-profits which will ensure representation of young voices in decision making. The AI system assists students in personalized learning, career guidance and mental health support. It creates learning content tailored to a student's learning pace, language and cognitive abilities. When required the bot will match them with a relevant counsellor or therapist as well as find them relevant mentors from anywhere in the world.**



**Personalized learning | Informed career choices | Data privacy | Holistic wellbeing**

# " I wish AI can help us keep the government officers accountable in the future

Students in Odisha and Delhi

**The current local government bodies fail to fulfill their responsibilities and do not cater to the needs of the marginalized**

## AI platform led by youth

On this platform all the youth in the country will express their concerns and an AI would analyse and synthesize youth's concerns from local to national level. The bot will provide daily reports to the citizens and youth will then be able to vote on the top 3 concerns which the government takes forward. Young people will work with local governments to build this and the system will ensure data transparency.

**Decision making power | Reduced communication gap | Community Ownership**

## *I wish AI can help us gain more freedom and autonomy over our bodies*

9th grad girls in Jharsuguda

**Girls in Odisha felt women were bogged down by the expectation of giving birth and the burden that comes with it.**



## Babybox: AI enabled artificial wombs

Women will no longer have to go through pregnancy or periods and therefore their lives will not be restricted. AI enabled artificial wombs will be provided by the government to ensure that families have children. An AI system will also verify the documents and suitability of the applicants. There will be a strict regulation to curb sex selection. The box will be allotted only after the consent of the woman. The womb will be co-created with mothers.

Women as autonomous beings | Gender discrimination is eradicated

# THE PROCESS
# & THE PEDAGOGY

## Understanding the Digital lives of Young People: An Exploratory Research

We started by conducting FGDs across 5 states: Delhi, Haryana, Kerala, Gujarat and Odisha. In this phase, we explored how young people understand and interact with the digital world.The findings revolved around the serendipitous learning patterns of young people, gendered experiences of self, community-disciplining replicated on digital platforms and meaning-making of AI and algorithms.

The findings from the first phase highlighted a need to engage young people in critical understanding of AI - an aspect which formed an integral part of their lives.

## The Critical AI Futures Pedagogy

We developed an AI futures pedagogy based on futures thinking framework, where we engaged with young people for 15 hours to empower them to imagine the AI futures that they want to inhabit.

Futures thinking approach uses a variety of techniques to explore possible, probable and preferred futures. With young people we use this approach by creating a safe and critical space for them to move from anxieties about the futures to imagining hopeful futures. The process allows participants to feel more agentic in moving away from the dominant narratives to imagining the futures they want for themselves.

# HOW DID WE USE THIS FRAMEWORK IN OUR WORK?

## 01

### Introduction to AI

- Developing a basic understanding of AI using audio-visual tools
- Encouraging them to tinker with publicly available AI tools - ChatGPT, QuickDraw and Teachable Machine.
- Understanding AI data correlations through a group activity

## 02

### Anxiety as a site of transformation

- We developed different scenarios across agriculture, workplace, education, healthcare and based on the current advancements in the field, projecting it in the future.
- Using scenarios in the future to explore what the unforeseen consequences of technology will be, young people are given a situation from the future to enact.
- Learners stay with the anxiety these futures cause. This also helps students explore the assumptions and challenge the status quo they make when they think about the futures.
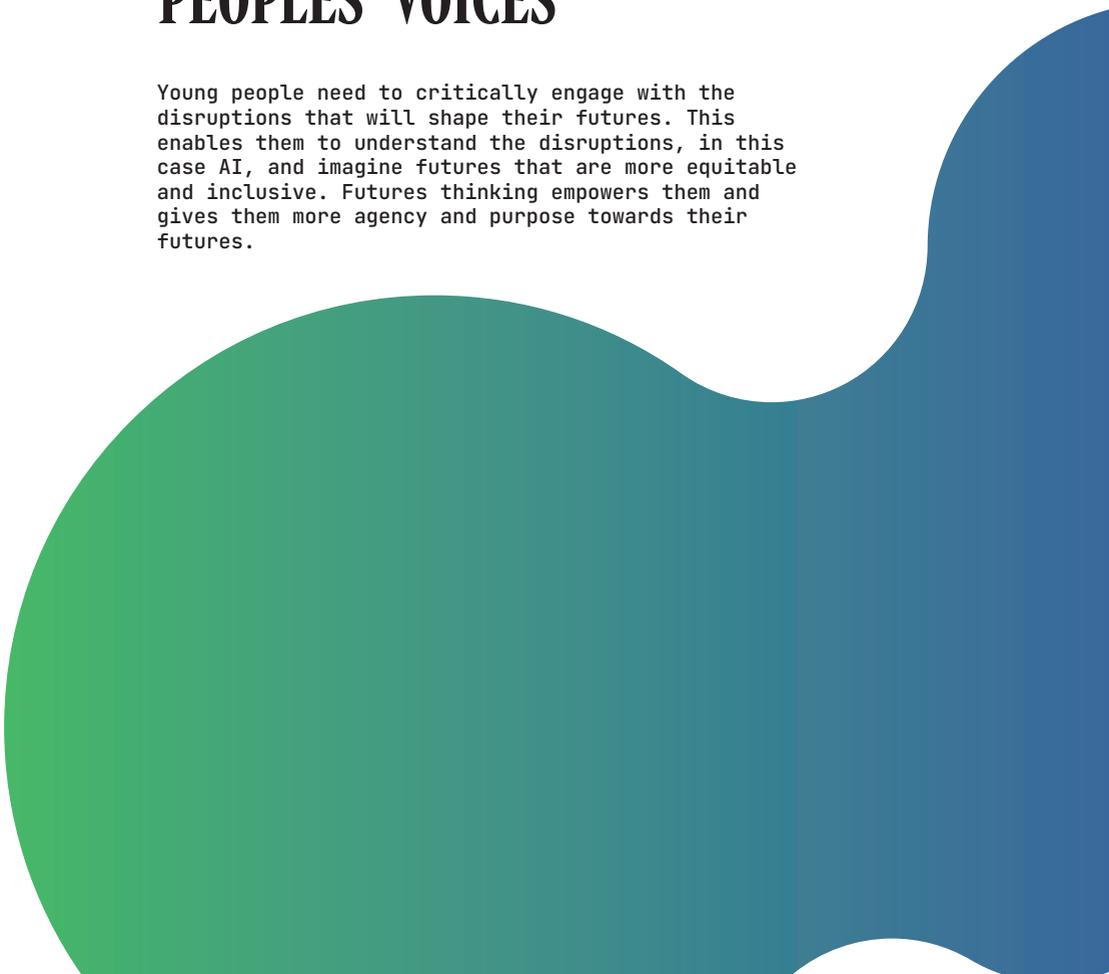
**03**

# Exploring desired futures

- Nudges and provocations to observe what the future will look like in 2047 Become curious about futures and think of multiple possibilities that may exist.
- The students are urged to then think of the futures that they want and the challenges they want solved in the future.

# NEED FOR YOUNG PEOPLES' VOICES

**Young people need to critically engage with the disruptions that will shape their futures. This enables them to understand the disruptions, in this case AI, and imagine futures that are more equitable and inclusive. Futures thinking empowers them and gives them more agency and purpose towards their futures.**

**Youth Futures Studio, Quest Alliance**

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