2024 - 2025

ANNUAL REPORT

COLOURS OF LIFE ACADEMY

COLA
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COLOURS
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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT COLOURS OF LIFE

The Colours of Life (COL) Trust was established in 2002 and operates in **15 urban and rural Bangalore Government schools**. Our mission is to support Government school students **"from cradle to career,"** empowering them to take an active role in their education and personal growth. We have various programs designed for different age groups: our **Anganwadi program** focuses on the formative years for children aged 3 to 6, while our **school interventions** aid students through their primary and high school years, up to the age of 16. Our **Colours of Life Academy (COLA)** assists students as they transition into higher education or enter the workforce. COL emphasizes **holistic student success** by integrating academics with social, emotional and extracurricular development.

ABOUT COLOURS OF LIFE ACADEMY

Colours of Life Academy (**COLA**) represents the **final stage of interventions** in COL's 'cradle to career' support system for students. COLA ensures that students **maintain contact** with COL while pursuing **higher academic degrees or employment opportunities**.

The program's primary objectives are to **maintain high enrolment rates in higher education institutions** and provide students with a wide array of **skills training and employment opportunities**. Another significant goal is to empower students to take control of their futures; this is reinforced through group counselling and one-on-one sessions with students. The program's motto is **"Your Choices = Your Life"** which helps students understand how their decisions can impact their lives. With these 2 objectives in mind, COLA activities all revolve around **3 main pillars** – academic support, skilling programs as well as counselling (college and career).

THE NEED

LIMITED SCOPE OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, commonly known as the Right to Education Act (RTE), currently **applies only to students up to 14 years**. Unfortunately, the Act does not cover high school or college education, which means the financial burden for these levels of education falls on students' families.

FIRST GENERATION LEARNERS

The majority of COLA students are first-generation learners; their **families lack epistemic resources** to guide their children on available education or employment pathways.

QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Many colleges lack qualified faculty, relevant curriculum, quality infrastructure and modern teaching methods, leading to **substantial drop-out rates**.

STRESSED SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTS

Economic constraints faced by students' families contribute to low enrolment rates in higher education institutions. All our COLA students come from low-income households where families struggle to afford tuition fees. Additionally, our COLA students encounter various obstacles when seeking employment. They often feel **pressured to accept jobs quickly** to ensure immediate income for their households. Given their socio-economic backgrounds, these students **must prioritize short-term gains over long-term benefits**. This urgency is another reason many students drop out of college and settle for menial jobs that offer little opportunity for skill development or salary improvement.

MONITORING

CARD DISTRIBUTION

All Class 10 students from the **3 COL high schools** (Bettahlasuru, Cox Town and Pottery Town) are **issued COLA ID cards** when they graduate. The team distributes these cards to students after the SSLC exams and reminds them to keep in contact with the COL office. These cards serve as a **tangible link** to the office, reinforcing their identity as COLA students. In 2024-2025, COLA cards were distributed to students in **May 2024** after SSLC exams ended.

BADGE DISTRIBUTION

Each year, the COLA team distributes **COLA badges** to students in **Classes 7 and 8**, ensuring they remain connected to the COLA community even if they enroll in other high schools. As of March 2025, **105 badge recipients** have returned for academic or skilling support, highlighting the initiative's impact. Badge distribution was conducted between **February and March 2025**.

COLOUR CATEGORIES

We currently have **1,759 students** in our database with 1,410 in regular contact with the COL team. The team tracks the education and employment status of students in the COLA database periodically, classifying them into 6 possible categories. COL team made **3,047 individual calls** to COLA students between April 2024 and March 2025. The **main goal across the academic year** is to see a high percentage of students enrolled in higher studies (Blue, Yellow) or employed (Green, Purple). We also want to see the number of students who are not employed or not studying (Red) decrease.

Table 01 shows the distribution of students in the current COLA database across the **6 colour categories** for the academic year 2024-2025.

Table 01

Colour Category	Key	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Q1 to Q4	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Blue	*Studying with a COL scholarship*	168	10%	298	17%	309	18%	302	17%	134	7%
Yellow	*Studying without a COL scholarship*	507	29%	592	34%	588	33%	560	32%	53	2%
Green	*Any employed*	198	11%	260	15%	268	15%	269	15%	71	4%
Red	*Not studying and not working*	226	13%	176	10%	165	9%	170	10%	-56	-3%
Purple	*Employed or married for a period > 6 months*	64	4%	72	4%	74	4%	109	6%	45	2%
Black	*No contact available*	60	3%	117	7%	117	7%	115	7%	55	3%
Inactive	*Not contactable or category unknown*	503	29%	238	14%	237	13%	234	13%	-269	-16%
		1726		1753		1758		1759			

As of March 2025, nearly **50% of COLA students are pursuing higher education** (this is **23% more** than India's National Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for higher education and **15% higher** than Karnataka's). The percentage of **students enrolled in higher studies has increased** by 7% for the Blue category and 2% for the Yellow category. The percentage of students in the **Red category has decreased** by 3% from June 2024 to March 2025. We also have a **4% increase in employed students** (Green) and 6% of our COLA database in the 'independent' Purple category as of March 2025 (a 2% increase in 2024-2025).

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

SPONSORSHIPS

On 4th June 2024, **₹88,500** was distributed to **36 CX1 students** who passed their SSLC exam. **102 BH1 students** received **₹2,47,500** on 7th June and **30 PT1 students** were awarded **₹62,500** from Featherlite Products Pvt Ltd on 24th June 2024. The purpose of distributing cheques was to motivate students to pursue higher education after Class 10.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarship applications for the academic year 2024-2025 opened at the end of May 2024 and continued throughout the academic year. For the **academic year 2024-2025**, **272 students received scholarships amounting to ₹ 37,65,398**; 216 of these are repeat scholarship students. We also have 4 students enrolled in the Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology on a COLA scholarship; 26 students are on a continuing scholarship from the academic year 2023-2024 (their semesters paid for are not yet complete).

Table 02 shows the breakup of **scholarship students (per degree)** in 2024-2025, compared to previous years. PUC refers to Pre-University Course.

Table 02

Degree	2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2024-2025		2021 to 2025	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
1st PUC	35	34%	64	41%	70	42%	117	39%	82	5%
2nd PUC	23	22%	31	20%	38	23%	79	26%	56	4%
Bachelors	43	41%	53	34%	46	28%	90	30%	47	-12%
Masters	1	1%	1	1%	4	2%	2	1%	1	0%
ITI/Diploma	2	2%	7	4%	8	5%	14	5%	12	3%
	104		156		166		302			

Although the percentage of Bachelor's degree students has decreased (-12%), the overall number has increased between 2021 and 2025 (+47 students).

Table 03 shows a summary of the **PUC and Bachelor's subject combinations** of 265 students (who availed scholarships in 2024-2025). Please note that percentages are taken based on the parent row total.

Table 03

Degree and Subject	Count	%
1st PUC	117	44%
Arts	12	10%
Commerce	90	77%
Science	15	13%
2nd PUC	76	29%
Arts	22	29%
Commerce	44	58%
Science	10	13%
Bachelors	72	27%
Arts	6	8%
Business Administration	7	10%
Commerce	32	44%
Computer Applications	18	25%
Education	1	1%
Engineering	4	6%
Pharmacy	2	3%
Science	2	3%

Across PUC and Bachelor's degrees, most students are enrolled in commerce subjects. However, we also have **students pursuing a variety of subjects**, including arts, science, business administration and computer applications. In India, students are often pressured into choosing science streams to become engineers or doctors. COLA is helping **shift this mindset** by **exposing students to diverse career possibilities**. Additionally, 4 students are currently studying at Srishti, exploring fields like interior design, creative manufacturing and user interface design.

SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE (SSLC) EXAMS

The SSLC examination in 2024 began on 25th March and ended on 6th April 2024. Across all 3 high schools (BH1, CX1 and PT1), **231 students received hall tickets** for the exam; **168 (73%) passed** and 55 (24%) failed. A pass percentage of 73% is a **19% increase from the previous academic year**. Table 04 shows the percentage of students who passed per school.
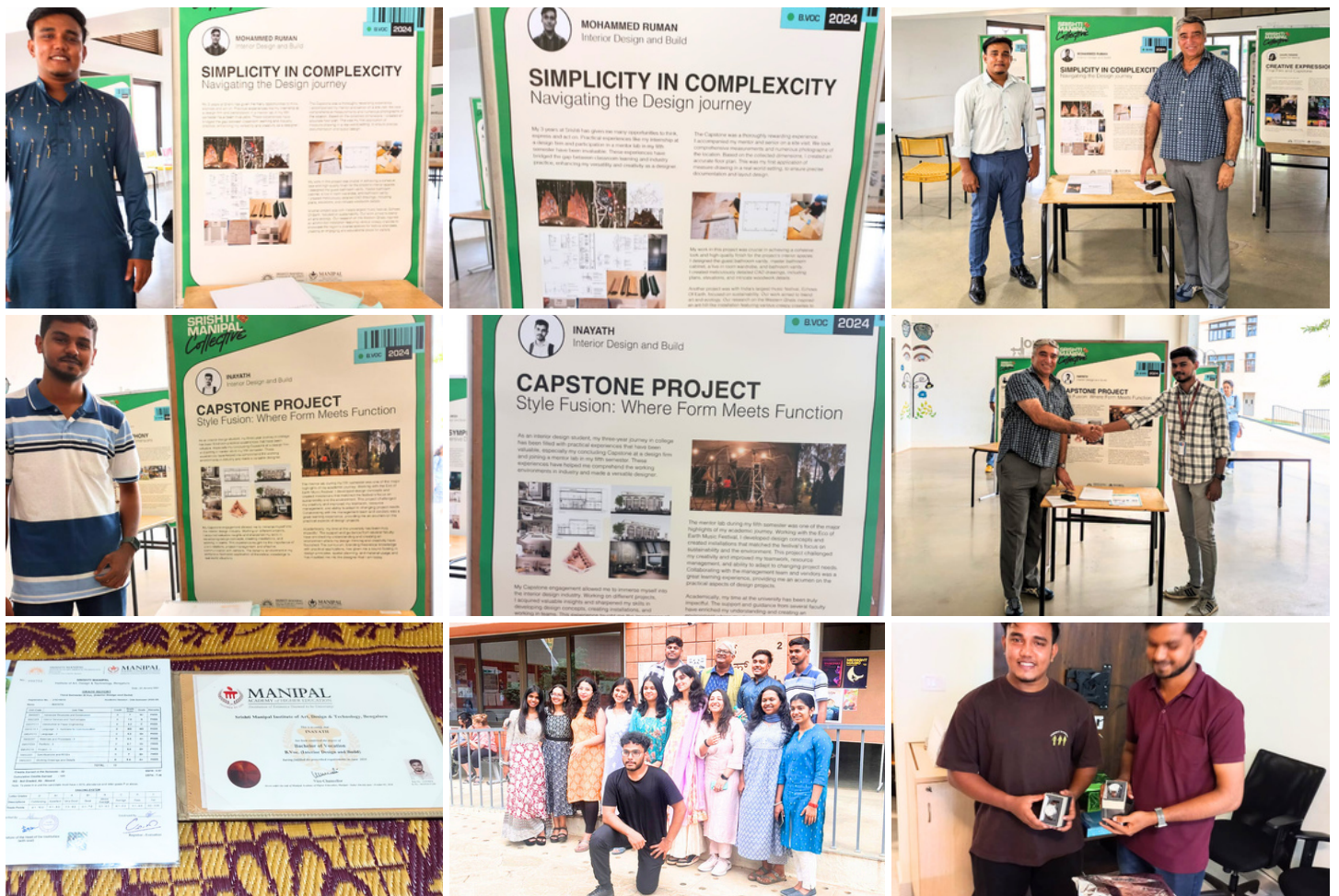
Table 04

Metric	BH1	CX1	PT1	TOTAL
Count	129	55	47	231
Pass	102	36	30	168
Pass %	79%	65%	64%	73%
Fail	25	17	13	55
Fail %	19%	31%	28%	24%
NA	2	2	4	8
NA %	2%	4%	9%	3%

In the 2023-2024 academic year, 26 students attended **remedial classes** with COL, with 22 appearing for the SSLC exam as private candidates or repeaters. 5 students from the remedial batch successfully cleared the main SSLC exam in May 2024. The supplementary SSLC examination was held from 14th to 21st June 2024, with 6 students taking the test. Remedial classes continued at the COLA office throughout the year for students writing the SSLC exam in March 2025. The main SSLC exam began on 21st March and will conclude on 4th April 2025.

SRISHTI MANIPAL INSTITUTE (SMI)

In May 2024, **2 students** (Ruman and Inayath) **completed their Bachelors of Vocational Studies** (B.Voc) in Interior Design and Build from the Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology. Students had a capstone exhibition as part of their graduation, where they presented their portfolios. A small graduation ceremony was held at the COL office to celebrate the students' achievements. Both students have been employed since their graduation in 2024.

Syed Israr and Akash TS are in their **second year** of User Interface and Interaction Design and Interior Design and Build respectively. They are both in the process of completing their internship requirement for Year 2. Students who are completing their **first year** at Srishti include **Magimai Cathrin**, who is pursuing a Bachelor's of Vocational Studies (B.Voc) degree in User Interface and Interaction Design and **Wajiha Jasmine**, who is pursuing a degree in Creative Manufacturing.

The COL team **tracked students' results** each cycle and **supported them (academically or financially)**. The COL team is also identifying students for the 2025- 2026 academic year. Table 05 shows the complete record of COLA students with SMI.

Table 05

Full Name	Gender	COL School	SSLC Year	Joining Year	Graduation Year	Course/Subjects	Current Status
Farhaz	Male	PT1	2016-2017	2020	2023	Interior Design and Build	Employed with Embassy
Mohammed Shams	Male	PT1	2017-2018	2020	2023	Interior Design and Build	Employed with Embassy
Inayath	Male	PT1	2018-2019	2021	2024	Interior Design and Build	Employed with Botaniclay and Bricks LLP
Mohammed Ruman	Male	PT1	2018-2019	2021	2024	Interior Design and Build	Employed with Design To Build Spaces
Syed Israr Ahmed	Male	PT1	2018-2019	2023	2026	User Interface and Interaction Engineering	Completing Year 2
Akash T S	Male	BH1	2020-2021	2023	2026	Interior Design and Build	Completing Year 2
Magimai Catherine J	Female	CX1	2021-2022	2024	2027	User Interface and Interaction Engineering	Completing Year 1
Wajiha Jasmine	Female	PT1	2021-2022	2024	2027	Creative Manufacturing	Completing Year 1

SKILLING PROGRAMS

The COLA team targets students in the Red and Green categories for skilling programs; students are always contacted through individual calls for each opportunity. Skilling programs are open to any COLA students irrespective of their colour category. Identifying skilling programs is crucial for students who **might not be academically inclined**; succeeding in a skilling program can significantly **boost their confidence and self-esteem**. It also shows students alternative pathways to success. In the past, COLA skilling programs have included tailoring classes, beautician classes, the basics of animation, as well as facilities and maintenance.

BANGALORE RURAL AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

5 students completed the BREADS skilling sessions in the academic year 2024-2025. **All 5 students** are **currently employed**; 3 (Harish, Mohammed Shabaz and Rabiya Sultana) are working with Muthoot Finance.

SPOKEN ENGLISH SESSIONS

From **22nd April to 29th May** 2024, in-person Spoken English classes were conducted for COLA students. Jeevika Foundation was the partner engaged to deliver the classes, which were conducted for 3 hours each day (Monday to Friday). A total of **20 students** attended the classes and all received a certificate upon completion.

COLLEGE AND CAREER COUNSELLING

COL has an **open-door policy** for all COLA students; a student is free to request a one-on-one session with a team member whenever they require; **370 one-on-one counselling sessions** were conducted between April 2024 and March 2025. Students can also approach the COLA team for help with r**efining their resumes** and setting up accounts with **online job portals**. The team also follows up with individual students during exam periods and before COLA meets.

COLA MEETS

The COLA team conducts **multiple COLA meets each year** for different student categories. In-person meetings give students a chance to interact and learn from their peers. They also allow students a chance to network and share experiences.

2ND PUC PASS MEET

On **21st June 2024,** a session was conducted for **23 students** who had passed their 2nd PUC and were entering their Bachelor's degrees. The session covered strategies for academic planning and preparation, along with ways to prioritize physical and mental well-being. Students also had the opportunity to showcase their non-academic talents, such as singing and drawing, creating an engaging and interactive atmosphere.

RED CATEGORY MEET

On **30th July 2024**, a meeting was held for **17 Red category students** (who were either unemployed or working in informal labor and not studying). The COLA team discussed upcoming SSLC classes, while a team from BREADS introduced skilling opportunities. By 30th September 2024, **6 students had transitioned out of the Red category to Green, 1 to Yellow, and 1 to Blue.**

2ND PUC MEET

On **11th January 2025**, a meet was held for 2nd PUC students to help them with exam preparation and planning for their Bachelor's degrees. An Anahata United Efforts team member addressed students on possible Bachelor's degrees and career options for each of their PUC subject combinations. The COLA team also communicated the SMI scholarship and provided a rough idea of dates for the same. **60 students** attended the meet.

FINAL DEGREE YEAR MEET

On **21st February 2025**, a COLA meet was conducted for students in the final year of their Bachelor's degrees (semesters 5 and/or 6). The COLA team covered career and Master's degree options for students. The team also conducted a session on soft skills in the workplace; this helped students create their resumes and identify the types of jobs they wanted to apply for. **8 students** attended the session.

WEWORK VISIT

On **13th March 2025**, **8 female COLA students** visited the WeWork office to gain an understanding of the operations of the large multinational company. WeWork employees shared their personal journeys with students.

OUTDOOR EXPOSURE AND EXCURSION EXPERIENCES

Exposure experiences provide students with valuable opportunities to explore the world beyond the classroom by broadening their perspectives. By exposing students to diverse environments and real-world experiences, such initiatives inspire curiosity about different fields. They also offer **insights into potential career paths** by connecting academic knowledge to practical applications, allowing students to see first-hand how their skills and passions can be applied in various professions.

Between **2nd and 29th December 2024**, day or overnight trips were sponsored by COL for **14 schools**. Students from the graduating classes (7, 8, or 10) visited either a cultural or environmental site. An example of a cultural site is Mysore, where students learned about the significance of the Mysore state in Karnataka's history. For environmental sites, students explored coastal areas of Karnataka and locations such as Jog Falls. A total of **950 students and chaperones** attended the school trips in 2024.

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The Mentorship Program in 2024-2025 was **re-launched on 23rd May 2024** with 4 mentors and 33 mentees in Q1; this number has increased to **9 Mentors with 42 Mentees** by March 2025. Mentors are volunteers (including WeWork employees).

MENTEE MEET

On **22nd September 2024**, a meeting was held for COLA Mentees, who were assigned mentors during their 2nd PUC in 2023-2024 and had moved to their first-year Bachelor's degrees (with some even working part-time). **4 students and 3 mentors** attended. The COLA team discussed improving communication skills and self-learning strategies. Students requested Spoken English classes, which the team promptly implemented.

SUCCESS STORIES

Veerendra E joined Government High School, Cox Town in 2020. An extremely committed student; he actively engaged with COL's online program (Project Sputnik), developing foundational digital literacy skills. Veerendra topped his high school during the SSLC examination, scoring 93%. He was sponsored and counselled by the COLA team for his 1st and 2nd PUC. He pursued his 1st PUC from Sheshadripuram PU College, where he scored 78% overall. Veerendra realized he needed to improve his Chemistry and Electronics scores; he did so by watching YouTube videos and through disciplined self-learning (as the family could not afford additional tuition classes). He also spent additional hours in college consolidating and studying all lecture notes. His hard work paid off and he went on to achieve distinction in his 2nd PUC exam with an overall result of 93%! His goal is to work in the software industry and he opted to write the Common Entrance Test (CET), achieving a rank of 43,342! As the family could not afford coaching classes for the CET, he achieved this rank through sheer hard work and dedication, supported by COLA. He accepted a seat at the M.S. Ramaiah Institute of Technology (MSRIT) for Chemical Engineering in 2024-2025.

- Veerendra E, COLA Student, CX1 Alumnus

Madhavan S (from Pottery Town High School) funded his own PUC degree due to a stable financial situation. When he enrolled in St. Aloysius College for a Bachelors in Commerce, his family couldn't pay his second fee instalment for the first year as their financial situation had deteriorated. Madhavan's college blocked him from writing his final exam. Knowing the COLA office was a trusted place where students could find support, Madhavan reached out to the team for help as he was not allowed in the exam hall. Without hesitation, the COLA team's Scholarship Administrator (Ms. Navida Khan) spoke to the principal and assured him that the cheque would be sent to the college to cover the installment. The Principal immediately confirmed that Madhavan could write his exams the next day. His story reflects students' deep trust in COLA as an unfailing source of assistance in times of need.

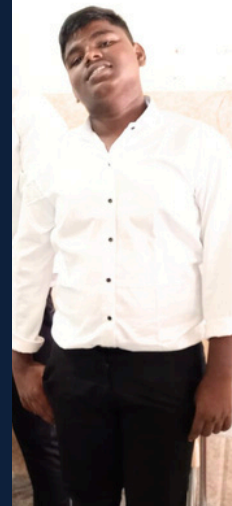**- Madhavan S, COLA Student, PT1 Alumnus**

Rabiya Sultana has been with COL since 2018 and graduated from Government High School, Pottery Town in 2020. She cleared her SSLC exam with a score of 58%. She was sponsored and counselled by the COLA team for her 1st and 2nd PUC. She pursued her 1st PUC in Commerce (Statistics, Economics, Business, Accounts) from BBMP Girls College, Cleveland Town, where she scored 55%. Her father was diagnosed with a serious kidney problem; due to financial problems, she had to drop out of her 2nd PUC. Her mother was extremely protective and did not allow her to attend any COLA skilling sessions. The COLA team kept in touch with the family for over 2 years, counselling both the mother and Rabiya. The COLA team's efforts paid off and in 2024, Rabiya enrolled in BREADS skilling sessions with her mother's full support! Rabiya completed the training program and started working with Muthoot Finance in November 2024.

- Rabiya Sultana, COLA Student, PT1 Alumnus

Nandagopal was initially labelled a 'difficult' student by school staff due to his disruptive behaviour in class; he was asked to leave school and write the SSLC exam as a private candidate. The COLA team spoke to his parents and convinced them to send him for remedial classes. After attending SSLC classes with the COLA team in 2023-2024, he still did not pass and the school was unwilling to reintegrate him. Refusing to give up on him, the COLA team introduced him to BREADS skilling sessions and spoke to the trainers about focusing on developing crucial soft skills. This intervention led to a remarkable transformation—his behaviour improved drastically and he developed into a more responsible, disciplined individual. Nandagopal is now gainfully employed at a flower retail shop since 2024, marking a significant turn in his life.
- Nandagopal, COLA Student, CX1 Alumnus

Sameena Taj has been with COL since 2017 and graduated from Government High School, Pottery Town in 2020. She scored 66% on her SSLC exam and chose to pursue higher education in the Commerce stream. She was sponsored by COLA for her 1st and 2nd PUC. Her subjects were History, Economics, Business Studies and Accountancy; she scored 92% in her 1st PUC and 47% in her 2nd PUC. She approached the COLA team after completing her 2nd PUC as she was not satisfied with her chosen academic stream and wanted advice on possible next steps. After a few counselling sessions, she expressed interest in teaching. In 2022, she applied to be a Math mentor with Colours of Life. She currently teaches Math for Classes 1 to 4 at Hegdenagar Urdu medium school.
- Sameena Taj, COLA Student, Math Teacher (HG2), PT1 Alumnus

Gurukiran was a Government High School, Pottery Town student who completed his SSLC in March 2017, scoring 66%. He pursued his 1st and 2nd PUC from BBMP College, Shivajinagar in Arts (History, Economics, Political Science and Sociology). His final 2nd PUC score was 61%. He then went on to pursue a Bachelor of Arts from Lalbahadur Shastri College, where he scored 76% in his final year. After completing his Bachelor's degree, he came to the COLA team saying he wanted to work as a teacher in one of our Government schools. He said he knew the issues he faced as a Government school student and wanted to use his experience to help other students. He is currently employed with Colours of Life as a Kannada mentor since 2024; he teaches Classes 4 to 7 at Hegdenagar Kannada medium school and Government Primary School, Pottery Town. Gurukiran's efforts in both schools have been extremely well received - we even have HMs from other schools asking for Kannada classes based on Gurukiran's teaching!
- Gurukiran, COLA Student, Kannada Teacher (CX2 and HG1), PT1 Alumnus