

## Personal Statement

Shivika Bisen

My interest in science dates back to my years in secondary school. I loved reading bedtime books, which were science based. I would also eagerly wake up early in the morning just to start my day with the science fact books. It gave my day a bright and cheerful start like nothing else would. My family comes from a humble background. There was no Television in our house when I grew up. But then one day when I was in high school, Computer came to our house for the first time. I would spend most of my time after school exploring it. I had natural inclination towards technology especially for computers. When I was in secondary school, I was ranked first in Mathematics at Maharashtra State level. It was this event, which made me take engineering as career path, seriously. Since I always had an urge to serve people, I choose Biomedical Engineering as my major for undergraduate degree, so that I can apply technology to solve health problems of society.

When I began my undergraduate studies, I had the opportunity to be exposed to full range of engineering courses, all of which tended to reinforce my intense interest in computer more than anything else. I had also the opportunity to study some subjects from humanities. It taught me the importance of interdisciplinary knowledge and how it can be used to solve most complex problems. I became friends with students of different cultures. My personality expanded exponentially in all the sense, be it interpersonal-leadership skills, sports or academic research. It is during this time I decided to prepare for civil service exam to serve civil society. However, during the preparation of the civil service exam, I decided to go back to scientific field, as I felt dull without it.

I went through major change in 2017 when a new chapter of my life began- Marriage. In India, in the town from where I belong there are little or no job opportunities from women after marriage. Mostly women are confined to household chores and kitchen. I felt a deep void inside me as I was not able to live up to my potential and it felt like my brilliant education is getting wasted.

Finally, when I moved to Michigan in June 2018, it was like a God sent opportunity to live up to my full potential by enrolling for MS program. I choose Data science and analytics, as this is the field, which befits my interest as well as my aptitude. My undergraduate capstone project played a major role in opening the door of fascination for this field for me. Publication of my research in International Journal of Engineering and Technology gave me confidence to pursue Information and Analytics as a career. I strongly believe in Focus, Hard work and Passion and consider them as my three pillars. I am the only woman in engineering and computer science field in my family and community. It has been my cherished desire to study from world's top universities because it makes one meet quality people/scholars from whom one can learn a lot. I am very aware of the excellent reputation of your university, and my conversations with your alumni have served to deepening my interest in attending School of Information. I hope you will give me the privilege of continuing my studies in your fine institution.