Zahir Ali

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ABOUT ME

Data Scientist passionate about unlocking insights from complex data. I leverage strong data science skills – analysis, data engineering, visualization and machine learning – to solve problems and deliver actionable solutions. My background in quantitative research ensures I translate diverse data (structured & unstructured) into clear, strategic insights that drive informed decision-making.

EDUCATION

Ashoka University   Sonipat, Haryana
PG.D., Concentration in Economics (3.43/4)   *Sep. 2022 – May 2023*

Ashoka University   Sonipat, Haryana
Bachelor of Science in Psychology, Minor in Computer Science (3.63/4)   *Aug. 2019 – May 2022*

EXPERIENCE

Undergraduate Teaching Fellow   Aug 2023 – May 2024
Ashoka University   *Sonipat, Haryana*
- Supported Dr. Anustubh Agnihotri in delivering *Quantitative Research Methods* and *Data Science for Social Science Research* courses to 50+ undergraduate students. Taught coding in R, covering statistical tools, quantitative research design, hypothesis testing, data mining, analysis & visualization
- Received a mean rating of 4.8/5 in course-end anonymous student feedback

Research Assistant   Sep 2023 – Dec 2023
Ashoka University   *Sonipat, Haryana*
- Supported Dr. Anustubh Agnihotri (UC Berkeley PhD) on exploratory data analysis projects using Python and R
- Developed scalable Python web-scraping scripts to automate environmental clearance proposal data collection across India, encompassing primary data, supplementary documents, and additional files

INTERNSHIPS

Research Associate   May 2021 – Mar 2023
Trivedi Centre for Political Data   *Sonipat, Haryana*
- Performed end-to-end data engineering to build an Urban Local Bodies (ULB) Election <u>dataset</u> ↗ from scratch - involving data mining, wrangling and standardisation
- Generated visualisations and insights from the data and published a piece in <u>TCPD Columns</u> ↗

Core Team - Head of Finance   May 2022 – June 2022
RedBrick Hacks   *Sonipat, Haryana*
- Worked with the Computer Science department, guided by Prof. Debayan Gupta under Mphasis grant at Ashoka University's flagship hackathon
- Managed the DevPost Platform and finances for the hackathon, with over 140 participants from Delhi-NCR

Resident Assistant   Aug 2021 – May 2022
Ashoka University   *Sonipat, Haryana*
- Managed and supported 50+ undergraduate residents — serving as a mediator, mentor, and community-builder
- Held a paraprofessional position in the Office of Student Life and conducted — events, administrative tasks, and one-on-one sessions
- Key Learnings - Crisis Management, Decision-Making, Interpersonal Skills, Organization Skills, Leadership, Communication, and Project Management

Projects

Urban Local Bodies Dataset ⎋ | *R, Python, NLP, Selenium, Pandas*
- Built a dataset for ULB Elections consisting of data from various Indian states, updated with new data regularly

Decision Support ⎋ | *Python, Selenium, NLP, Geocoding*
- Data Mining Project which involved scraping hotel reviews from e-travel platforms, performing sentiment analysis and geospatial mapping

Spam Detection ⎋ | *Python, Networks, Sklearn*
- Python Socket Program with encrypted messaging between server and client and a spam detection model at the server end

Raahi - Web Dev ⎋ | *Python, Django, SQLite, HTML5, CSS3, Bootstrap*
- Hotel booking platform using Django

Stock Prediction ⎋ | *Python, Sklearn, Scipy*
- Stock prediction using PCA and Regression models

Environmental Clearance ⎋ | *Python, Selenium, BeautifulSoup*
- Scraping environmental clearance proposals

Political Economy of Development ⎋ | *R, PCA, ML*
- Using Principal Component Analysis and regressions to examine the relationship between employment, consumption patterns, and different proxies of infrastructural development in rural India

Technical Skills

Languages: Python, R, JavaScript, SQL(SQLite, MySQL), HTML5+CSS3
Frameworks and Libraries: Django, Selenium, BeautifulSoup, Numpy, Pandas, Matplotlib, Sklearn, Scipy, Camelot, Nominatim, Mapbox, Regex, NLTK
Tools: QGIS, Git, LaTeX, PowerBI, Microsoft Office Suite, JASP, Jamovi, Audacity, Adobe Premiere Pro, VS Code

Achievements

- **Dean's List**: Ashoka University - Monsoon 2019, Spring 2020, Spring 2021, Monsoon 2021
- **Test Scores**: CAT (Nov 2023) - 98.52 %ile, SAT (Oct 2018) - 1450/1600 (99th %ile)
- **3rd place** at HackDAV 2015, East India's first high-school level hackathon
- **National Champion**, INCA Map Quiz (2014)
- International Informatics Olympaid (2012) - **State Rank 3, International Rank 126**

Volunteer Experience

Peer Mentor	*Office of Learning Support, Ashoka University*	Jan 2021 – May 2021
Mentor	*Neev, Community Engagement Club*	Sep 2019 – Dec 2019
Organising Team	*HackDAV 2017*	July 2017
Member	*Google Developer's Group, Bhubaneswar*	
Core Team	*Gaming Club, Ashoka University*	Sep 2019 – Mar 2022