

BANKBAZAAR ASPIRATION INDEX®

VOL 8

2025-26



MONEY, REWIRED BY AI

- Hidden gender cost of aspirations Pg5
 - Health remains top priority Pg7
 - AI reshapes money & risk Pg8-9

FROM THE FOUNDERS' DESK

Dear Reader,

We present to you the eighth edition of BankBazaar's Aspiration Index®, a comprehensive study of India's aspirations through the prism of personal finance.

This year, the story is one of cautious optimism. The All-India Index stands at 85.5, unchanged from last year, signalling resilience amid macroeconomic uncertainties and the growing influence of Artificial Intelligence on work and wealth.

The Aspiration Index® continues to track salaried professionals aged 22 to 45 across 17 life goals under five broad aspirations: Health, Wealth, Fame, Relationships, and Personal Growth. It measures how important these aspirations are, how confident Indians feel about achieving them, and how prepared they are to make them a reality.

Health remains the top aspiration, with mental well-being and nutrition dominating priorities. Wealth has climbed to second place, driven by homeownership and a renewed focus on financial security.

Interestingly, AI is beginning to reshape this landscape—impacting job opportunities, income patterns, and financial decision-making. While some segments benefit from smarter money moves, others grapple with uneven gains and emerging risks.

The data reveals a persistent Aspiration-Readiness Gap, especially around health and relationships, though it has narrowed compared to previous years.

Women continue to lead the charge, reinforcing a seven-year trend that underscores the critical role of workforce participation in economic growth.

Three aspirations retain their dominance: mental health, investing for children's education, and homeownership—a clear reflection of India's evolving priorities.

We hope this report offers valuable insights into how aspirations are shifting in an era of technological disruption and economic flux.

RATI, ADHIL, & ARJUN



THE FACES BEHIND THE DATA

Our study surveyed 1529 respondents from 6 metros and 18+ Tier 2 cities of India. This year's study covers working professionals aged between 22 and 45 years.



WHO ARE THEY?



SALARIED PROFESSIONALS AGED 22-45

This segment forms the core of the formal workforce in India and is the primary consumer of all financial products.



SALARY > 30K PER MONTH

Those who earn salaries in this range have the monetary bandwidth to opt for a variety of financial products including credit cards and loans.



DIGITALLY AWARE

They have shopped online or made a digital transaction in the recent past.

AGE COHORTS

EARLY JOBBERS 22-27 YEARS

Early Jobbers are the newest entrants into the nation's workforce. They are the most digitally savvy and receptive to new means and technologies to fulfil their needs.

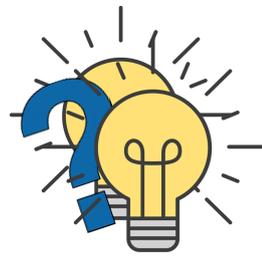
MONEYMOONERS 28-34 YEARS

Moneymooners have a few years of work experience, and their purchasing power is significantly higher. This makes them high-value customers for a range of products such as cars, their own homes and vacations abroad.

WEALTH WARRIORS 35-45 YEARS

Wealth Warriors are not necessarily the most digitally savvy, but their purchasing power makes them a significant target for higher-end goods and services, especially those meant for families and children.

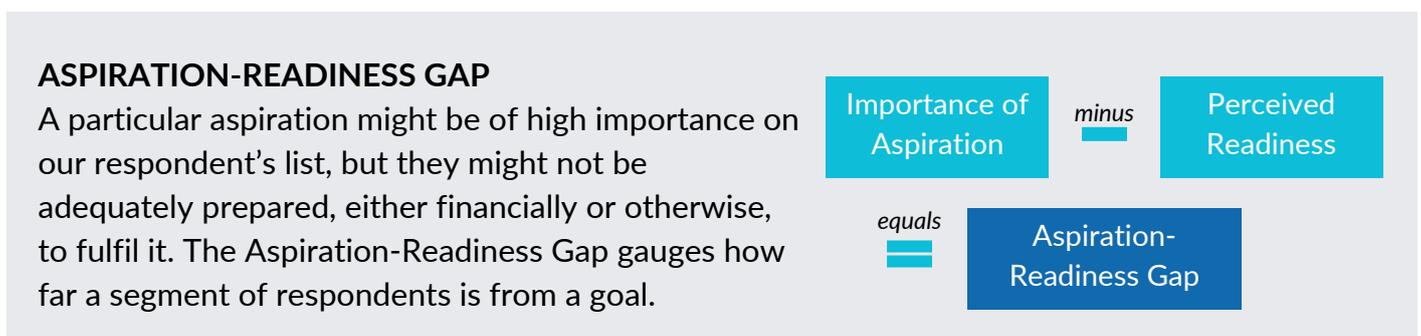
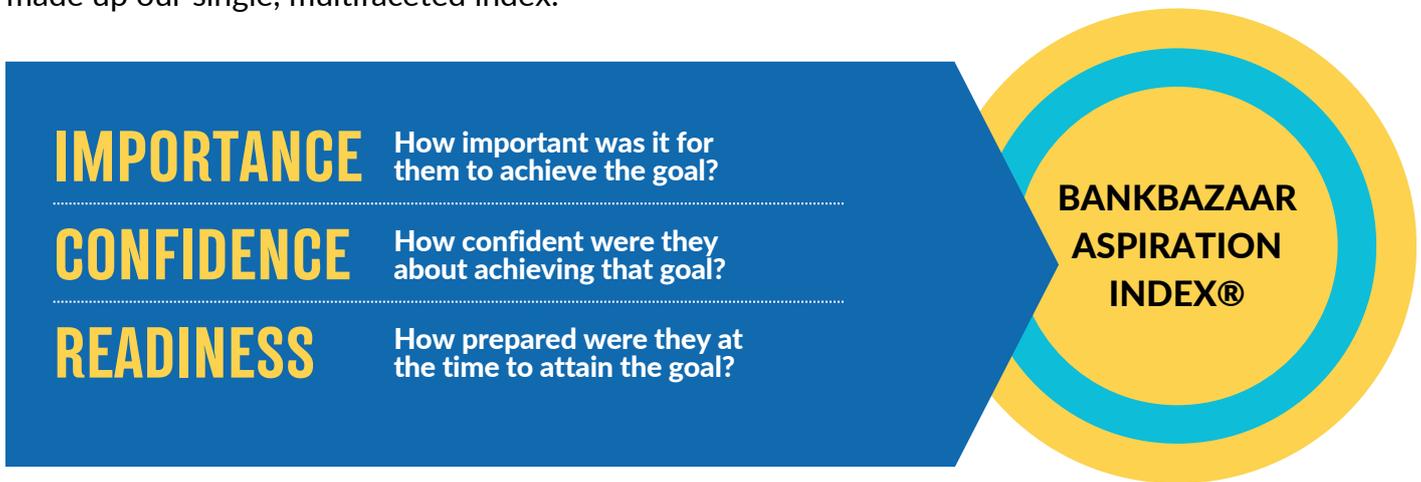
THREE 'MILLION DOLLAR' QUESTIONS MANY PRICELESS INSIGHTS



The BankBazaar Aspiration Index® attempts to understand the aspirations of our respondents from a personal finance perspective. The respondents shared several life goals, which were segmented into 5 broad areas* – Wealth, Health, Relationships, Fame and Personal Growth.

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>WEALTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy a house of my own • Spend on premium products • Travel around the globe • Retire early | <p>HEALTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow a fixed regime • Be mentally healthy and happy • Maintain a nutritious diet | <p>RELATIONSHIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a long-lasting friendship • (If a bachelor) Spend my own money on a lavish wedding • (If married) Save and invest money to provide my children with the best education in life • Live near my immediate family |
| <p>FAME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the go-to person • Stand out distinctly amongst friends • Be an expert or influencer | <p>PERSONAL GROWTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constantly reinvent oneself • Become an entrepreneur • Get back to hobbies or passions | |

Those surveyed had to assess each goal on the basis of three simple questions, which together made up our single, multifaceted index.



* Adapted from the Self-Determination Theory developed by Kasser & Ryan

Graphs for illustrative purposes only and are not to scale.

ALL-INDIA ASPIRATION INDEX

THE ASPIRATION PLATEAU

85.5

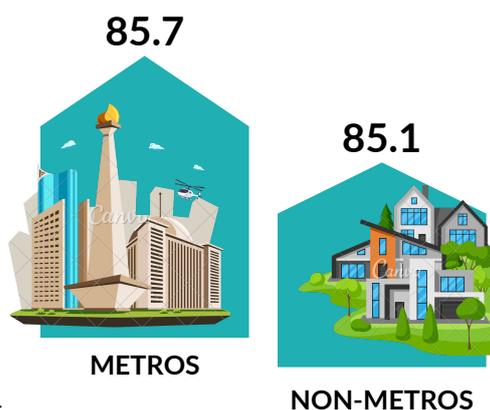
THE 2025-26 NATIONAL
BANKBAZAAR
ASPIRATION INDEX®

The All-India Aspiration Index stands at 85.5 in 2025, unchanged for the first time in eight years. Rather than signalling stagnation, this pause reflects a behavioural reset. AI-led disruption and macro uncertainty are driving salaried Indians to prioritise risk control, income stability, and financial resilience over aggressive aspiration growth.

| 2024 | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 85.5 | 85.3 | 87.3 | 84.4 | 79.9 | 86.9 | 87.4 |

BIG CITIES, BIG ASPIRATIONS

The Aspiration Index for the metros remained unchanged for the second year running, while non-metros continued to close the gap. Housing saw a resurgence. Living close to family and early retirement mattered more for metros while entrepreneurship and close friendships were the focus for non-metros.

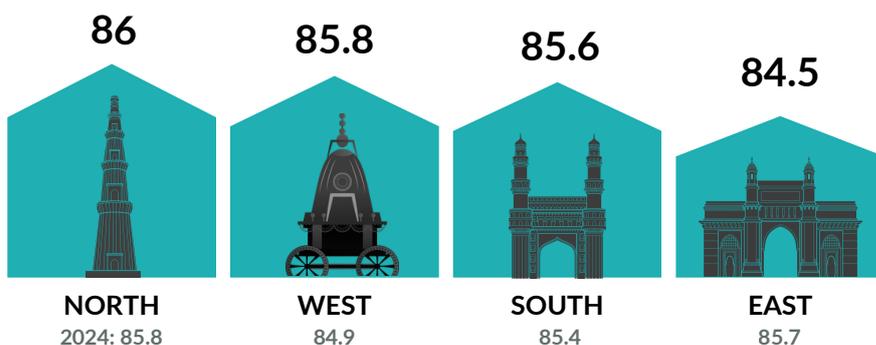


THE HIDDEN GENDER COST OF ASPIRATION

While the overall Aspiration-Readiness Gap has narrowed, the gap for women has widened from 4.2 last year to 4.4 in 2025, compared to 2.5 for men. Despite having consistently higher aspirations, women continue to show lower financial preparedness across health, children's education, and identity-led goals. As AI reshapes career paths and income trajectories, this widening gap highlights a growing imbalance between ambition and readiness in a rapidly changing economic environment.

REGIONAL BIAS

While the overall index for all four regions were clustered closely, the non-metros had a different story to tell. The East has the strongest focus on a premium lifestyle, which ranks as their third top goal. Children's education is at #1 or #2 for non-metros of East, West and South, but at #5 for the North. The non-metros also strongly drive the aspiration to entrepreneurship, led by the West.



HAPPINESS, HOME, OR CHILD'S EDUCATION? WANTS & NEEDS ALIGNING

TOP 5 GOALS BY ASPIRATION INDEX

| Aspiration | Category | Women | Men | Total |
|---|--------------|-------|------|-------|
| To save & invest for children's education | RELATIONSHIP | 90.4 | 88.4 | 89.5 |
| To be mentally happy & healthy | HEALTH | 90.6 | 88.6 | 89.4 |
| To buy a house of my own | WEALTH | 91.4 | 87.0 | 88.7 |
| To be able to maintain a nutritious diet | HEALTH | 89.1 | 87.6 | 88.2 |
| To live near my immediate family | RELATIONSHIP | 90.7 | 86.3 | 87.4 |

TOP 5 GOALS BY IMPORTANCE

| Aspiration | Category | Women | Men | Total |
|---|--------------|-------|------|-------|
| To be mentally healthy and happy | HEALTH | 93.9 | 92.3 | 92.9 |
| To save & invest for children's education | RELATIONSHIP | 90.9 | 90.3 | 91.0 |
| To buy a house of my own | HEALTH | 92.8 | 87.9 | 90.1 |
| To live near my immediate family | HEALTH | 93.2 | 88.4 | 89.5 |
| To be able to maintain a nutritious diet | RELATIONSHIP | 90.1 | 88.4 | 89.2 |

TOP 5 GOALS BY READINESS GAP

| Aspiration | Category | Women | Men | Total |
|--|--------------|-------|-----|-------|
| To be mentally healthy and happy | HEALTH | 8.5 | 8.0 | 8.0 |
| To live near my immediate family | RELATIONSHIP | 8.2 | 6.4 | 6.9 |
| To have a long-lasting friendship | HEALTH | 7.6 | 4.0 | 4.7 |
| To follow a fixed regime to improve my physical health | HEALTH | 7.2 | 2.5 | 4.2 |
| To save & invest for children's education | RELATIONSHIP | 2.0 | 5.2 | 4.1 |

INTERPRETING THIS DATA

Rising food prices and higher living costs as people return to cities are reshaping priorities. Children's education leads the list, followed closely by mental health and home ownership. Nutrition and diet remain key concerns. Wealth Warriors show the highest aspirations, Early Jobbers the lowest, yet women continue to be the main drivers of these ambitions.

IMPORTANCE VS. INDEX

The overlap between the top five aspirational goals and the most important ones continued this year as well. However, men and women ranked goals very differently. For instance, the top two goals for women were house ownership and living near immediate family, whereas for men, it was mental health and children's education. Women, however, continued to rank them higher.

UNDERSTANDING THE GAPS

The biggest gaps were around mental health for both men and women across ages. Women continued to have larger gaps than men. The largest gap by far was for Gen Z women find it difficult to stand out distinctly amongst friends. While the wedding mania of last year seems to be behind us, younger millennial women have a need gap of 11.8 when it comes to lavish weddings.

INDIA'S BIGGEST ASPIRATIONS HEALTH REMAINS TOP PRIORITY

| ASPIRATION INDEX BY READINESS GAP FOR PARAMETERS | | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Parameters | Importance Index | Confidence Index | Preparedness Index | Aspiration Index | Readiness Gap |
| Health | 89.9 | 90.1 | 84.4 | 88.1 | 5.5 |
| Relationship | 86.7 | 87.9 | 82.3 | 85.6 | 4.4 |
| Wealth | 86.8 | 87.4 | 84.0 | 86.1 | 2.8 |
| Personal Growth | 84.6 | 85.5 | 82.2 | 84.1 | 2.4 |
| Fame | 83.3 | 85.5 | 81.6 | 83.5 | 1.7 |

MENTAL HEALTH: INDIA'S MOST IMPORTANT, YET MOST UNRESOLVED ASPIRATION

Mental well-being ranks highest on both the Importance Index and the Aspiration Index, yet it also shows the largest readiness gap at 8.0, worsening again in 2025. Rising work intensity, AI-driven skill anxiety, and income volatility have made mental health India's most unattained life aspiration, with direct implications for productivity and long-term financial planning.

HOMES OVER HOLIDAYS: THE SHIFT FROM EXPERIENCE TO SECURITY

Aspirations for travel and early retirement have declined, while homeownership has re-entered the top three wealth goals. In an environment shaped by AI-led job uncertainty, rising urban costs, and tighter credit conditions, Indians are moving away from experiential spending towards asset-backed financial security.

FAMILY FIRST

Relationships may be only the third most important aspiration, but investing for children is the most important goal at 89.5. Living near immediate family and long-lasting friendship were the next two at 87.4 and 85.5, respectively. Women ranked these much higher than men, with two Relationship goals among their top 5 compared to only one for men.

ENTREPRENEURIAL PUSH FUELS GROWTH

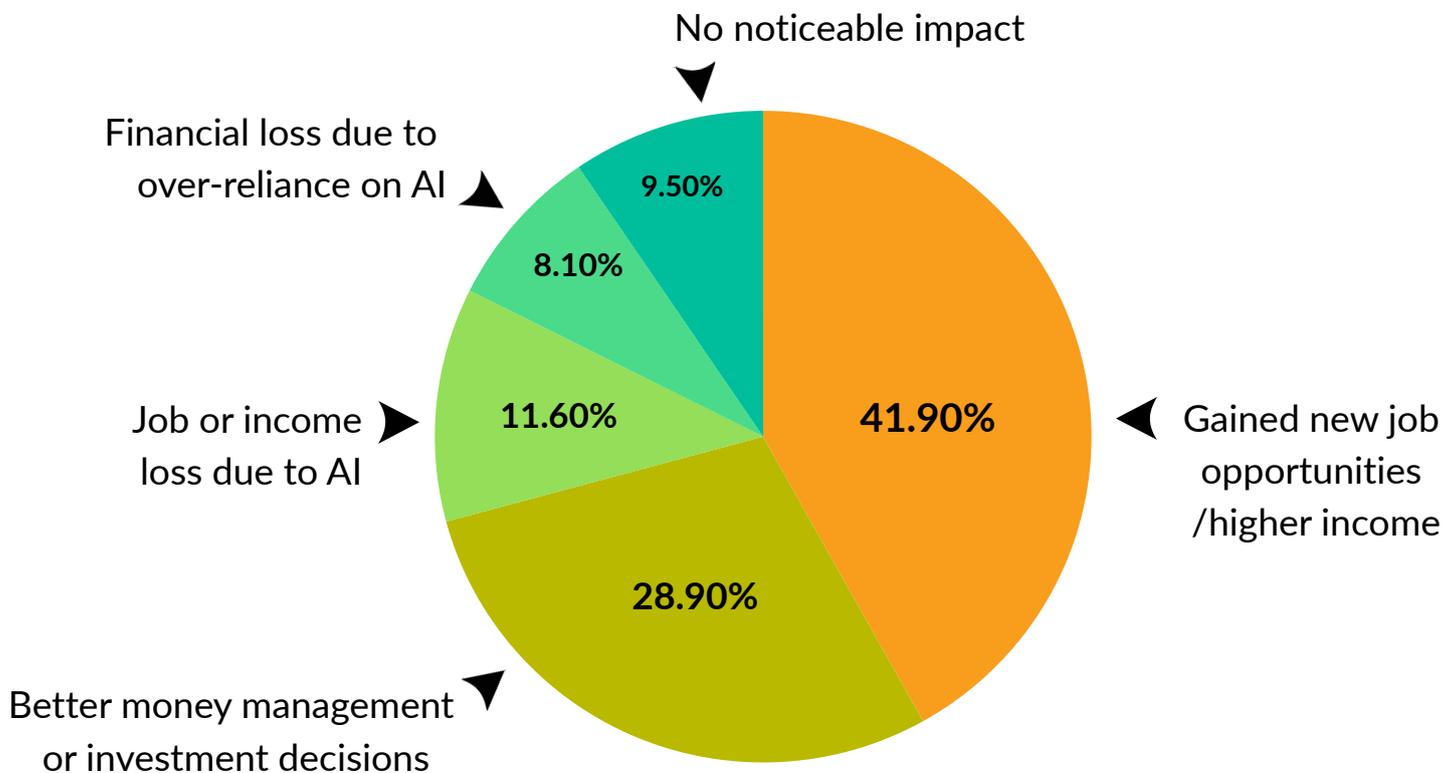
Personal growth at 84.1 inched past Fame, at 83.5, to take the fourth spot, buoyed by entrepreneurial goals and an itch to pursue new opportunities personally and professionally. Interestingly, women score entrepreneurship higher, but they rank it much lower compared to men. Interestingly, Wealth Warriors are least inclined to entrepreneurship while Moneymooner men are the most keen, ranking it at #5.

COVER STORY

AI RESHAPES MONEY AND RISK

This year's BankBazaar Aspiration Index 2025 focuses on the growing impact of Artificial Intelligence on personal finance. Income enhancement has emerged as a leading benefit, closely followed by improved money management.

At the same time, concerns around job displacement and rising dependence on AI-driven decisions are becoming more pronounced. As AI reshapes careers and income trajectories, opportunity and risk appear to be advancing in tandem.



COVER STORY

AI - AN ENABLER, NOT DECISION-MAKER

While a majority of respondents report positive financial outcomes linked to AI, its role remains largely assistive rather than decisive. Tracking, alerts and insights are widely accepted use cases. However, comfort levels dip when it comes to high-value or irreversible financial decisions. As AI becomes more embedded in everyday money management, convenience is rising, but caution continues to shape consumer behaviour.

AI's gains are outpacing its risks, with higher income driving optimism even as job concerns and over-reliance remain. People see it as a useful assistant, not a final authority.

AI now sits at a turning point in personal finance. It is trusted for efficiency and income support, but caution holds on big decisions. The next phase will hinge on clarity, accountability and its ability to work alongside human judgement.

What the Data Reveals

- **AI's benefits outweigh perceived risks** - Positive outcomes exceed reported losses, keeping overall sentiment constructive.
- **Income gains drive optimism** - Higher earnings and new opportunities shape favourable perceptions.
- **Job and financial loss concerns persist** - A meaningful segment remains wary of displacement and income volatility.
- **Over-reliance is a rising behavioural risk** - Some users report setbacks linked to excessive dependence on AI decisions.

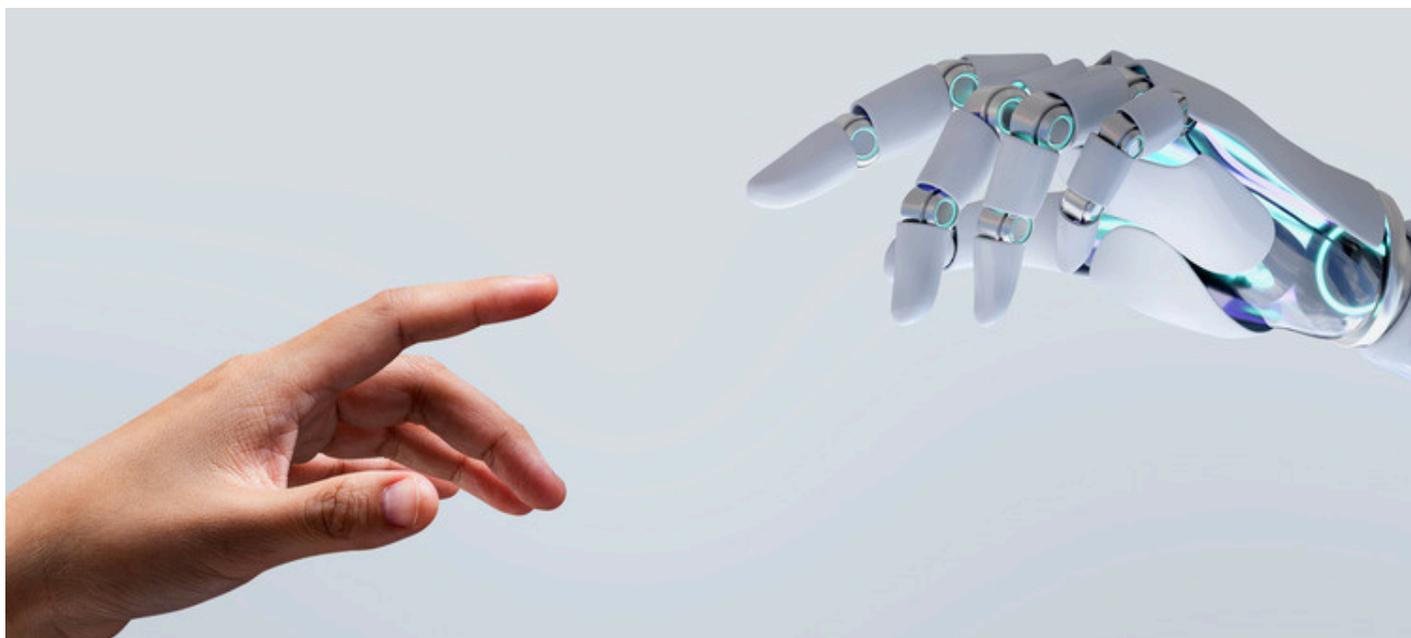
What This Means

- **Adoption brings value, but also risk** - AI delivers clear benefits, even as concerns grow.
- **AI is viewed as a support tool** - It improves efficiency but does not replace decision-making.
- **Trust will drive continued use** - Clear rules and transparency will be key to confidence.
- **Human judgement stays central** - AI can guide, but final financial decisions remain with individuals.

COVER STORY

MEITY'S SEVEN AI SUTRAS

HOW AI IS RESHAPING WEALTH, WORK, AND WINNERS IN INDIA



Artificial Intelligence is fundamentally reshaping professional life in India, creating clear winners alongside emerging losers. While 42 per cent of respondents report gains from AI-driven opportunities, 12 per cent have faced income disruption, and 8 per cent have suffered direct financial losses due to over-reliance.

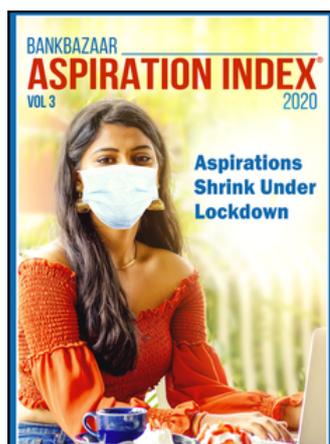
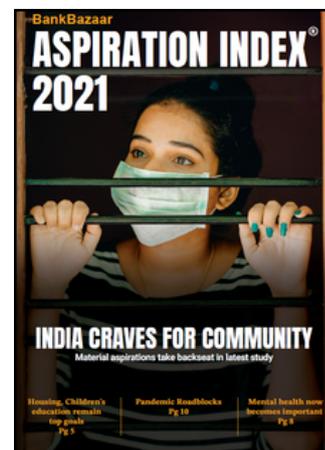
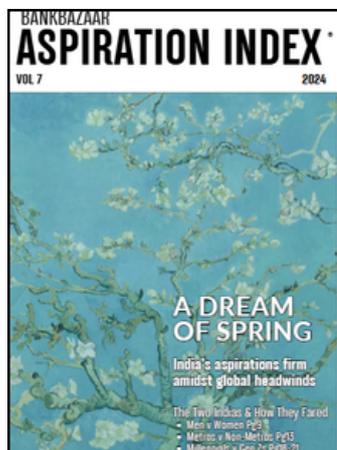
The AI narrative has largely been framed as a future-of-work story. However, the data reveals a more complex wealth impact. AI functions as a financial amplifier—rewarding mid-career judgement and informed usage, while penalising early adoption without adequate literacy or critical evaluation. The uneven outcomes underline that AI's influence on wealth is neither neutral nor evenly distributed.

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About Us

BankBazaar.com is a leading fintech co-branded credit card platform and online platform for credit score tracking. It has a base of 70 million registered users who use the platform for its co-branded credit products, credit score improvement and in-depth personal finance content and comparison tools.

Supported by global investors such as Experian, Eight Roads, Peak XV Partners, WSV, and Amazon, BankBazaar has been at the forefront of democratising finance by providing Indians with frictionless access to credit.



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