# Dr. Urvashi Sahni

## Founder and CEO
(Study Hall Educational Foundation)

usahni@studyhallfoundation.org

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### Education

**Ph.D. in Education**, University of California, Berkeley, USA
1991 - 1994

**MA in Education,** University of California, Berkeley, USA
1989 - 1990

**MA in Philosophy,** University of Lucknow, India
1982 - 1984

**BA in Political Science,** University of Pune, India
1973 - 1976

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### Research & teaching interests

Education reform, Gender Justice, Language and literacy, Critical Feminist Pedagogy, Critical literacy, Drama in Education, Technology and education, Education for Democracy and Social Justice, Teacher Training, Curriculum Development for diverse populations

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### Current positions

**Founder President And CEO**, Study Hall Educational Foundation, Lucknow, India
**1994 – Present**

**Founder and Academic Director,** Prerna Girls School
**2003 – Present**

**Founder President and Academic Director,** Vidyasthali Kanar High School
**2005 – Present**

**Co-Founder and Director,** Digital Study Hall
**2005 – Present**

**Founder President and Chief Mentor Sisters in Solidarity,** Didi's Foods and Creation
**2008 – Present**

**Founder,** The Aarohini Gender Transformative Education Program
**2011 – Present**

**Founder and Academic Director,** Study Hall Center for Learning
**2013 – Present**

**Founder and Academic Director,** Prerna Boys School
**2013 – Present**

**Founder and Academic Director,** The Study Hall College
**2016 – Present**

**Founder and President**, SURAKSHA Women's rights organization
and first family counseling center in Uttar Pradesh
**1983 - Present**

**Co-founder**, Catalyst 2030 and Co-Lead of the Global Education
Collaboration
**2021 - Present**

**Co-Founder and Co-lead,** Catalyst 2030, India Education
Collaborative
**2023 - Present**

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## Fellowships and memberships

**Advanced Leadership Initiative Fellow, Harvard University**
2024

**Board Member, India Literacy Board**
2023

**Member Gender Policy Revision Committee for the National
Institute of Open Schooling, organized by UN Women**
2021

**Co-Moderator Room 4, in the 17 Rooms Project, by Brookings
and Rockefeller Foundation**
2021-2022

**Member of Steering Committee for National Education Policy
2020, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh**
2020- Present

**Member of Global Girls Alliance, led by the Obama Foundation**
2018- Present

**Member, Chief Minister's Advisory Council, Govt. of Rajasthan**

Member of sub-group on Education and Skill Development
2015-2018

**Non-Resident Fellow, Center Of Universal Education, The Brookings Institution**
2013- Present

**Echidna Global Scholar, Center of Universal Education, The Brookings Institution, Washington DC**
2012- Present

**Ashoka Fellow**
2010- Present

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## Academic positions held

**Visiting Professor, University Of California, Berkeley, USA**
2003 – 04
Taught
- Language Study for Educators - Masters Students
- Issues in Literacy in Developing Countries - Doctoral students
- Qualitative Research in Education - Doctoral Students
- Literacy: Individual and Societal Development - Undergraduate Students

**Honorary Project Director, Computer-Assisted Education Program**
2001 – 05

**Project Director, Strengthening Girls Education in Rural UP, Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts at Amherst**
1996 – 1999

**Honorary Director, School reform project funded by EICHER Ltd**
1996 – 99

**Education Consultant, UNICEF**
1995 – 1996

**Founder Principal, Study Hall School, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India**
1986 –2008

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## Publications

Sahni, U. (In Press). Educating students to think, feel and behave democratically: Study Hall Educational Foundation (SHEF): A magical space of possibility. In *Designing Schools and Democratic Learning Environments : A Global Perspective*. Springer Nature.

Sahni, U. (2023). Trembling: The winds and I. *Nordic Journal of Art & Research, 12(2).* https://doi.org/10.7577/ar.5641

Sahni, U. (2022). A life knowledge approach to life skills: Empowering boys with new conceptions of masculinity. In *Life Skills Education for Youth* (pp. 193-213). Springer, Cham.

Sahni, U. (2020). Methodology as 'Resistance Aesthetics': Young Girls in Lucknow, India Talk Back to Patriarchy. In *Global Youth Citizenry and Radical Hope* (pp. 67-88). Springer, Singapore.

Gallagher, K., & Sahni, U. (2019). Performing care: re-imagining gender, personhood, and educational justice. *Gender and Education, 31(5), 631-642.*

Sahni, U. (2019). The Prerna girls' education initiative in India: Scaling literacy to reach for the sky. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 62*(5), 568-573.

Sahni, U. (2018). Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Empowerment Education in Post-Primary Schools in India. Policy Brief. *Center for Universal Education at The Brookings Institution*.

Sahni, U. (2017). Reaching for the Sky: Empowering Girls Through Education: Empowering Girls Through Education. Brookings Institution Press.

Sahni, U. (2016). Classrooms as radical spaces of possibilities. Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance, *21*(1), 134-136.

Miller, P. J., & Sahni, U. (2016). Resources for composing. In Child Cultures, Schooling, and Literacy (pp. 151-166). Routledge.

Sahni, U. (2015). Primary education in India: Progress and challenges. The second Modi-Obama summit: Building the India-US partnership, 35-38.

Hull, G., Jury, M., & Sahni, U. (2014). Developing Girls' Agency in India across Domestic and Civic Spheres through Feminist Media Practice. *# youthaction: Becoming Political in the Digital Age*, 81.

Anderson, R., Robertson, C., Nabi, E., Sahni, U., & Setia, T. (2012, March). Facilitated video instruction in low resource schools. In

*Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development* (pp. 2-12).

Sahni, U. (2012). From Learning Outcomes to Life Outcomes: What Can You Do and Who Can You Be. A Case Study in Girls' Education in India (Center for Universal Education at Brookings, 2012).

Hull, G. A., Stornaiuolo, A., & Sahni, U. (2010). Cultural citizenship and cosmopolitan practice: Global youth communicate online. English Education, *42*(4), 331-367.

Saxena, A., Sahni, U., Gupta, R., Arora, A., Anderson, R., & Linnell, N. (2010, December). Evaluating facilitated video instruction for primary schools in rural india. In *Proceedings of the 4th ACM/IEEE International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development* (pp. 1-10).

Sahni, U., Gupta, R., Hull, G., Javid, P., Setia, T., Toyama, K., & Wang, R. (2008, March). Using digital video in rural Indian schools: A study of teacher development and student achievement. In *annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York*.

Sahni, U. (2007). KEYNOTE: Drama in Education: Finding self, finding "home". *Caribbean Quarterly*, *53*(1-2), 37-48.

Kam, M., Ramachandran, D., Raghavan, A., Chiu, J., Sahni, U., & Canny, J. (2006, June). Practical considerations for participatory design with rural school children in underdeveloped regions: Early reflections from the field. In *Proceedings of the 2006 conference on Interaction design and children* (pp. 25-32).

Kam, M., Ramachandran, D., Sahni, U., & Canny, J. (2005, July). Designing educational technology for developing regions: Some preliminary hypotheses. In Fifth IEEE International Conference on Advanced Learning Technologies *(ICALT'05)* (pp. 968-972). IEEE.

Wang, R., Sahni, U., Sobti, S., Garg, N., Singh, J. P., Kam, M., ... & Anderson, T. (2005). The digital studyhall. Computer Science Department, Princeton University, *Tech. Rep. TR-723-05*.

Sahni, U. (2001). Children appropriating literacy: Empowerment pedagogy from young children's perspective. Negotiating critical literacies in classrooms, 19-35.

Sahni, U. (1999). Postcards from India. Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, *43*(2), 134-141.

Evans, D. R., Rossman, G., & Sahni, U. (1999). Plan for the Use of Findings for Decision-making and Refinement of Program.

Evans, D. R., Rossman, G., & Sahni, U. (1999). Baseline Study-Part III.

Evans, D. R., Rossman, G., & Sahni, U. (1999). Preliminary Program Effects on Girls' Enrollment and Classroom Learning Environments.

Sahni, U. (1998). Teachers Becoming Action-Researchers: Developing a Teacher-Training Module for Increasing Girls' Participation in Primary Schools.

Sahni, U. (1998). Developing a Teacher-Training Module for Increasing Girls' Participation in Primary Schools: Action Research Phase-A Report.

Sahni, U. M. (1994). Building circles of mutuality: A sociocultural analysis of literacy in a rural classroom in India. University of California, Berkeley.

## — Blogs

Gender equality and sustainability: Echidna Global Scholars taking action
(https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2022/03/07/gender-equality-and-sustainability-echidna-global-scholars-taking-action/)

India's National Education Policy 2020: A reformist step forward?
(https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2020/10/02/indias-national-education-policy-2020-a-reformist-step-forward/)

COVID-19 in India: Education disrupted and lessons learned
(https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2020/05/14/covid-19-in-india-education-disrupted-and-lessons-learned/)

Teaching boys to examine gender in patriarchal societies
(https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2019/04/10/teaching-boys-to-examine-gender-in-patriarchal-societies/)

To empower girls in India, make gender education compulsory
(https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2018/12/19/to-empower-girls-in-india-make-gender-education-compulsory/)

**Reframing girls' education in India** (https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2017/09/13/reframing-girls-education-in-india/)

**Improving Girls' Education and Status in India with Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (Save Daughters, Educate Daughters)** (https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2014/08/25/improving-girls-education-and-status-in-india-with-beti-bachao-beti-padhao-save-daughters-educate-daughters/)

**#GirlsEdu: Equality and Education from the Ground Up in India** (https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2014/05/28/girlsedu-equality-and-education-from-the-ground-up-in-india/)

**International Women's Day in India and Around the World: Progress and Strategies for Action** (https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2013/03/08/international-womens-day-in-india-and-around-the-world-progress-and-strategies-for-action/)

**Toward Consensus on a Goal for Education within the Post-2015 Development Agenda: A Tale of Two Regional Consultations** (https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2013/03/07/toward-consensus-on-a-goal-for-education-within-the-post-2015-development-agenda-a-tale-of-two-regional-consultations/)

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## Selected awards and honors

**Tatler Magazine's Asia's Most Influential: The Impact List**
2020

**One of the twelve Social Entrepreneurs of the Year worldwide - by The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, a sister organization of the World Economic Forum**
2018

**The Schwab- Jubilant Bhartiya Social Entrepreneur of the Year India, 2017 award– by The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, in partnership with the Jubilant Bhartia Foundation**
2017

**BBC's List of 100 Inspirational and Innovative Women**
2017

**FCCI – 1st FLO Women Award for outstanding contribution in education.**

2016

**Hindustan Times Award for Professional Excellence.**
2014

**Honorary Membership, Clinton Global Initiative**
2013

**Echidna Scholarship for Girls Education at The Brookings Institution.**
2012

**The Ashoka Fellowship**
2011

**Global Citizen Award – by United Nations Association, USA**
2011

**Best Paper Award – by American Educational Research Association for "Cosmopolitan Imaginings of Self and Other: Girls in India Go Online"**
2010

**Outstanding Women's Achiever Award by Lucknow Management Association**
2009

**Joint Tech Laureate award, with Randy Wang, by Tech Museum of Innovations, San Jose, USA to Digital Study Hall**
2008

**International Haas Award - by University of California at Berkeley, USA**
1999

**David H. Russell Fellowship, University Of California, Berkeley, USA**
1992 – 1993

**Dr. Ned Flanders Scholarship, University Of California, Berkeley, USA**
1992 – 1993

**Myrtle L. Judkins Memorial Scholarship, University Of California, Berkeley, USA**
1991 – 1992