Nakul Asthana gained confidence with an online, virtual account before moving on to a real trading account, says

**TEH SHI NING**

**From virtual investing to the real thing**

Nakul Asthana is as passionate about football as he is about finances, but the Arsenal fan knows better than to mix the two, especially when it comes to investing. "Don't mix your personal interests with your investments," he says. The 20-year-old, who has been trading actively for a year-and-a-half now, gained confidence with an online, virtual account before moving on to a real trading account. "Say if Arsenal had an [OVO] initial public offering, I'd want to buy their shares just because I'm an Arsenal fan. But from a strictly investment point of view, that might not be the right decision. I think that's what happened with Facebook for a lot of people - they bought it because they use it but in the end, it didn't turn out to be a really good investment," he says.

A year and a half ago, before he came to Singapore from India to pursue a Bachelor of Business Management degree, he knew nothing about investing. That all changed after he joined an investment club. He delved into technical analysis and started playing around with different technical indicators on a virtual platform that mirrors real-world investing. He has just started his third year at the Singapore Management University's Lee Kong Chian School of Business, and tells the *Young Innovator* Forum more about his experiences so far.

Q: How did you move from learning about technical analysis to actually investing?
A: I thought it was pretty interesting how you could look at a stock price of a company and decide if you want to invest in it or not. So I went on Investopedia and started reading everything I could about it. I read three, four books about technical analysis.

A few months later, I opened an online, virtual trading account in India where you trade with fake money on a platform that mirrors real-world investing. I started playing around with different technical indicators and decided to actually invest in stocks using those indicators.

Q: What was the worst stock you ever bought?
A: SBI, which I bought through SBI Direct. I bought it because it was a well-known company, and I thought it was a safe bet. I invested in SBI because I believed in its fundamentals. I thought it was a good company with good growth prospects.

Q: What is your investment portfolio like at the moment?
A: I invest in equities listed on the National Stock Exchange of India and the Bombay Stock Exchange. Right now, as India is not in a very good position, I'm investing in defensive sectors - FMCGs (fast-moving consumer goods), phar-maceuticals and healthcare, as these are predictable sectors.

Q: What is your investment strategy?
A: I follow a diversified strategy. I invest in different sectors and different companies to reduce risk. I also use technical analysis to identify potential upsides and downsides of stocks. I use indicators like moving averages, relative strength index (RSI), and Bollinger Bands to identify entry and exit points.

Q: How do you keep learning and understanding investments and trading?
A: I read every day, attend webinars and watch videos related to finance and investing. I follow blogs and podcasts related to finance and investing. I also read books on finance and investing, such as "A Random Walk Down Wall Street," by Burton Malkiel.

Q: What advice would you offer to someone considering how to invest?
A: Practice patience and discipline. You should always have a long-term perspective. Don't invest based on short-term price movements. Always do your homework and research before investing. Be cautious and don't take unnecessary risks.

Q: How do you plan to invest in the future?
A: I plan to invest in different sectors and different countries. I also plan to invest in real estate and other assets. I'm looking into the possibility of investing in cryptocurrencies and other alternative assets as well.

Q: What are your goals for your investing journey?
A: I want to build a diversified investment portfolio that will provide me with financial stability in the long term. I also want to invest in education and other areas that will help me grow personally and professionally.

Q: How do you think your investing may change as you get older?
A: As I grow older, I expect my investing strategy to change. I will likely invest more in stable, dividend-paying stocks and less in risky, growth-oriented investments. I will also invest more in my education and personal development to ensure financial stability in the long term.

Q: What advice would you have for those just starting out in investing?
A: The most important thing is to start early and have patience. Don't try to put all your eggs in one basket. Instead, diversify your investments and don't be afraid to make mistakes. Always do your homework and research before investing. And finally, always have a long-term perspective.