

Record of Discussion of Online Session of Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing, held on 30.07.2025 at 10:00 AM

An online session under the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) was conducted on 30th July 2025 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The session was organised under the guidance of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education for nominated faculty from centrally funded HEIs. A total of 75 participants joined the session, out of which 68 were nominated faculty. This marked the continuation of a sustained national effort to integrate mental wellbeing into the culture of Indian higher education institutions.

The session began with an opening address by Mr. Devendra Kumar Sharma, Director, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education. He highlighted the Ministry's long-term commitment to mental wellness in campuses of higher education. He welcomed the participants and emphasized that fostering a healthy, inclusive educational ecosystem requires both structural measures and empathetic engagement from faculty.

Prof. Kumar Suresh, from National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), in his welcome remarks noted that while the programme currently includes centrally funded HEIs, it will soon extend to state-funded institutions. He affirmed that student mental health is a matter of critical concern for the Ministry of Education and that the collaboration between the Department of Higher Education and Expressions India has been instrumental in advancing this agenda over the past year. He urged faculty to lead institutional change by fostering compassionate learning environments and by building collective ownership for student wellbeing. Professor Suresh welcomed the resource persons:

- ❖ Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
- ❖ Ms. Geeta Mehrotra, Expressions India
- ❖ Prof. R. Sarathi, IIT Madras

The session was then handed over to Dr. Jitendra Nagpal who delivered an insightful address on the systemic and emotional challenges faced by students in higher education. He emphasized that the transition from school to college often results in culture shock, increased peer pressure, loneliness, and mental health issues, especially where institutional focus is heavily skewed towards placements and academic performance.

Dr. Nagpal argued for a holistic approach to education that fosters emotional intelligence, empathy, and communication among faculty and students. Drawing from recent Supreme Court guidelines, he advocated for capacity building that includes structured mentoring systems, confidential counselling mechanisms, and faculty training in empathetic engagement.

He noted that stigmatization continues to prevent students from seeking help and that measures such as anonymity in counselling records, student-led outreach, and alumni mentoring could help break these barriers. Furthermore, he stressed that faculty too need support systems to manage stress and burnout, as their wellbeing directly impacts student support.

Ms. Geeta Mehrotra facilitated an interactive session on life skills, values, and wellbeing in education. She encouraged faculty to draw from their own experiences as mentors, parents, and educators to

reflect on how life skills such as decision-making, empathy, and problem-solving are modelled in both classrooms and homes.

Ms. Mehrotra urged participants to move beyond theoretical understanding and apply values-based life skills in their teaching and engagement with students. She engaged in an extended discussion on the importance of life skills and their application through an example of two film scenes from the film 1970 film *Ghar Ghar ki Kahani*. Building on the idea of shared vulnerability between young adults and grown-ups, she called for emotionally safe campus spaces that nurture trust and openness.

During the discussion, Dr. Rahul Kumar from IIT Bhubaneswar emphasized the importance of communication in parenting and educational relationships. He spoke of the need for parents to let children face challenges rather than shielding them entirely. Dr. Chetna Jaiswal from Central University of South Bihar echoed the view that values and emotional support are often more impactful than academic rigor. Dr. Ravi Dumpala from VNIT Nagpur noted that building a sense of community and mutual respect on campus is essential for wellbeing, and highlighted that faculty need to model such values.

Prof. R. Sarathi from IIT Madras, joined to session and shared successful wellness initiatives implemented on campus. He spoke about the institution's comprehensive wellness centre that provides proactive support, including confidential counselling, yoga and mindfulness sessions, peer support networks, and regular wellbeing surveys.

Prof. R. Sarathi shared insights into the holistic wellness initiatives at IIT Madras. He highlighted the importance of collective responsibility for the happiness of students, faculty, and staff. Prof. Sarathi explained that wellness initiatives at IIT Madras include group activities designed to reduce academic stress, promote faculty-student interactions, and offer recognition awards to encourage a positive environment.

He pointed out that post-pandemic, students had missed the collaborative and conducive campus environment. As a result, IIT Madras focused on strengthening faculty advisor and mentee engagement and the timely implementation of infrastructure modernization projects. Prof. Sarathi also spoke about the importance of leveraging experts, government agencies, and NGOs to address wellness initiatives.

Prof. Sarathi outlined the Khushal Initiative at IIT Madras, which aims to foster close associations between individual students and faculty for their overall wellness. The initiative includes regular wellness surveys, grievance redressal mechanisms, and independent counsellors visiting hostels and departments, ensuring that students have access to mental health support both within and outside the institution.

Prof. Sarathi highlighted the importance of mentor-mentee systems, where faculty and students engage regularly not just for academic guidance but for personal check-ins. He noted that student clubs, community outreach, and collaborative events with alumni and families also enhance a sense of belonging. He encouraged other institutions to document and share their best practices and called for a common platform to exchange ideas.

The session concluded with a reaffirmation of the importance of institutional commitment, faculty engagement, and peer-led models to address mental health in higher education.

**List of Attendees
Faculty Members**

S. No	Name of Institution	Faculty Nominated	Attendees	Absentees
1	Central University of Kerala	No Faculty Nominated	1. Subramanya Pailoor 2. M Bhagiyalakshmi 3. Siddu P Algur 4. Anbazhgi 5. Nagalingam	
2	Central University of South Bihar	1. Abhay Kumar 2. Amrita Srivastava 3. Anil Kumar 4. Arpana Jha 5. Chetna Jaiswal 6. Girish Chandra 7. Hemant Kumar Singh 8. Manglesh Kumar Mangalam 9. Rajni Kant Ojha 10. Sujeet Kumar	1. Arpana Jha 2. Chetna Jaiswal 3. Manglesh Kumar Mangalam 4. Rajni Kant Ojha 5. Sujeet Kumar	1. Abhay Kumar 2. Amrita Srivastava 3. Anil Kumar 4. Girish Chandra 5. Hemant Kumar Singh
3	Central University of Tamil Nadu	1. Biju. K 2. K. Vishnuvardhan Reddy 3. Lekha D Bhat 4. Meenakshi Pahwa 5. N. Boobalakrishna n 6. N. Sivakami 7. P. Udhayakumar 8. Padiri Ruth Angiel 9. Poornima Rajendran 10. Rajakumari S	1. Biju. K 2. K. Vishnuvardhan Reddy 3. Lekha D Bhat 4. Meenakshi Pahwa 5. N. Boobalakrishna n 6. N. Sivakami 7. P. Udhayakumar 8. Poornima Rajendran 9. Rajakumari S	1. Padiri Ruth Angiel 2. S. K. Balashanmugam

		11. S. K. Balashanmugam		
4	IIIT Sonapat, Haryana	No Faculty Nominated		
5	IIIT Senapati, Manipur	1. Akoijam Malemnganbi 2. Chittotosh Ganguly 3. D Neelamegam 4. Kamalesh Kumar 5. Leihaorambam Sarbajit Singh 6. Partha Kumar Deb 7. Prabhat Singh 8. Rajkumari Bidyalakshmi Devi 9. Sanasam Chanu Inunganbi 10. Subasit Borah 11. Sumit Kumar Rano	1. Chittotosh Ganguly 2. D Neelamegam 3. Kamalesh Kumar 4. Leihaorambam Sarbajit Singh 5. Prabhat Singh 6. Subasit Borah 7. Sumit Kumar Rano	1. Akoijam Malemnganbi 2. Partha Kumar Deb 3. Rajkumari Bidyalakshmi Devi 4. Sanasam Chanu Inunganbi
6	IIIT Kota, Rajasthan	1. Ajay Kumar 2. Amit Kumar 3. Ashok Kumar Kherodia 4. Chetna Sharma 5. Isha Pathank Tripathi 6. Khayti Shrivastya 7. Pooja Sharma 8. Priyanka Agarwal 9. Ritu Singh 10. Vinita Tiwari	1. Priyanka Agarwal 2. Vinita Tiwari	1. Ajay Kumar 2. Amit Kumar 3. Ashok Kumar Kherodia 4. Chetna Sharma 5. Isha Pathank Tripathi 6. Khayti Shrivastya 7. Pooja Sharma 8. Ritu Singh
7	Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology, Nagpur	1. Anil S. Mokhade 2. Arvind Kumar 3. Debarati Datta 4. Deepesh Kumar Patel 5. M.S. Ramkarthik 6. Makarand M. Lokhande	1. Anil S. Mokhade 2. Arvind Kumar 3. Deepesh Kumar Patel 4. M.S. Ramkarthik 5. Makarand M. Lokhande	1. Debarati Datta 2. Rakesh Parmar 3. Sumant Mohanto

		7. Rakesh Parmar 8. Ravikumar Dumpala 9. Sukanta Roga 10. Sumant Mohanto 11. Susanta Kumar Nayak 12. Pankaj Dhule 13. Ratnesh Kumar	6. Ravikumar Dumpala 7. Sukanta Roga 8. Susanta Kumar Nayak 9. Pankaj Dhule 10. Ratnesh Kumar	
8	National Institute of Technology, Patna	No Faculty Nominated		
9	IIT Gandhinagar	1. Abhinaya Sampath 2. Dhiraj Bhatia 3. Hari Ganesh 4. Krista Khiangte 5. Leslee Lazar 6. Partha Pratim Roy 7. Sonal Khanolkar 8. Sriharitha Rowthu 9. Subramanian Sankaranarayanan 10. Sushobhan Sen 11. Umashankar Singh	1. Abhinaya Sampath 2. Dhiraj Bhatia 3. Hari Ganesh 4. Krista Khiangte 5. Leslee Lazar 6. Partha Pratim Roy 7. Sonal Khanolkar 8. Sriharitha Rowthu 9. Subramanian Sankaranarayanan 10. Sushobhan Sen 11. Umashankar Singh	None
10	IIT Bhubaneswar	1. Anirban Bhattacharya 2. Atri Mukhopadhyay 3. Chaidul H. Chaudhury 4. Manas Ranjan Pattnayak 5. Pragati Shrivastava 6. Rahul Kumar 7. Raktim Haldar 8. Shreya Ghosh 9. Shubham Arun Kalore 10. Snigdha Ghosh	1. Anirban Bhattacharya 2. Atri Mukhopadhyay 3. Chaidul H. Chaudhury 4. Manas Ranjan Pattnayak 5. Pragati Shrivastava 6. Rahul Kumar 7. Shreya Ghosh 8. Shubham Arun Kalore 9. Snigdha Ghosh 10. Amrit S	1. Raktim Haldar 2. Sudipta Pramanik

		11. Sudipta Pramanik 12. Amrit S		
11	IIM Bangalore	1. Rajluxmi V Murthy 2. Manaswini Bhalla	1. Rajluxmi V Murthy	1. Manaswini Bhalla
12	IISER Thiruvananthapuram	No Faculty Nominated		
13	Unidentified		1. Laxmi 2. Vidula K 3. Bindu T V 4. IIIT Kota 5. Govindaraju K M 6. Rajesh Kumar Rai 7. Partha Kumar Deb 8. Jilly John	

Additional Attendees

Affiliation Details	Name of the Attendees
Ministry Officials, Resource Persons, Officials from NIEPA	1. Mr. D. K. Sharma, Ministry of Education 2. Prof. Kumar Suresh, NIEPA 3. Dr. A. N. Reddy, NIEPA 4. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist & Program Director, Expressions India 5. Ms Geeta Mehrotra, Faculty, University and School Life Skills, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Expressions India 6. Prof. R. Sarathi, IIT Madras 7. Ms. Richa Shrivastava, Consultant, MMTTP, Ministry of Education