

Record of Discussion of Online Session on ‘Capacity Building for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing’ held on 14.10.2024 at 10:00 AM.

1. The Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education held an online session on 14.10.2024, at 10:00 AM for nominated faculty members of selected Centrally Funded Institutions (CFIs). This session focused on ‘Capacity Building for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing’.

2. This initiative is part of a broader Integrated Approach aimed at enhancing mental health, resilience, and wellbeing in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), which launched on 01.05.2024. The Capacity Building programme is designed to continuously raise awareness among faculty regarding mental health issues and wellbeing. It encourages the adoption and dissemination of effective practices that foster positive mental health and wellbeing for students on campus.

3. The modality of the online capacity building program includes 2 sessions per month with 10 participants for each session from the identified set of CFIs starting from the month of May 2024. For the month of October 2024, two sessions have been planned of which the first one was held on 14.10.2024. A total of 82 participants (74 nominated faculty members) attended the session. **The list of participants is attached in the annexure.**

4. The session commenced with a welcome address by the Director, Higher Education, who introduced the aims and objectives of this programme to the participants. He also discussed the various components of the programme such as Exemplar Visits to institutions that have dynamic counselling programmes, the upcoming National Wellbeing Conclave 2024, as well as the online capacity building sessions. The goal is to incrementally build awareness and capacity to deal with issues of mental health in HEIs. The Director then introduced the resource partners and invited them to take the session forward.

5. The resource partners for this session were:

- a) Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist & Program Director, Expressions India
- b) Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi
- c) Dr. Aparajita Dixit, Senior Psychologist, Expressions India and Master Trainer, University & School Mental Health
- d) Prof. Naved Iqbal, Jamia Millia Islamia

6. The session was taken forward by Dr. Nagpal who pointed out the series of recent alarming incidents related to declining youth mental health in the country. Incidents of suicide in HEIs, he said, are grave causes for concern and require widespread awareness and sensitivity building among stakeholders involved. Dr. Nagpal then introduced Prof. Namita Ranganathan and invited her to take the session forward.

7. Prof. Ranganathan spoke about Indian society being a collectivist culture where community interaction, group activities etc are generally preferred over individualistic endeavours. This collectivism she said provides essential scaffolding for individuals who are most in need of support, especially in terms of keeping one’s mental wellbeing in check. The collectivist nature of Indian society is in contrast with the culture promoted in HEI campuses. Here, students are expected to ‘figure it out’ on their own. Prof. Ranganathan said that HEIs ought to create more

participative environments on campuses to enable students to engage openly with each other and with their teachers. There need to be spaces that foster dialogue and discussion.

8. Prof. Ranganathan also warned against losing one's human intelligence in the wake of an emerging Artificial Intelligence enabled era. Human intelligence, she said, is irreplaceable and must be given space and primacy even in technologically advanced settings. Greater human interaction, more specifically among students and faculty in HEIs will foster nuanced understandings of each others' concerns and promote a positive mental wellbeing culture.

9. Prof. Ushwinder Kaur Popli from Jamia Millia Islamia, raised the concern of busy semester scheduling and academic pressures in HEIs that hinder faculty from focusing on students and their distresses. Prof. Ranganathan reiterated that actively intending to create spaces for social exchange and dialogue will also create time for such activities to take place. Prof. Popli then elaborated on Jamia Millia Islamia's (JMI) practice of conducting special sessions for transitioning undergraduate students into higher education, self-awareness etc., during the orientation week. JMI also has a project called GATI as part of which they conduct sessions in gender sensitisation etc., especially for STEM students.

10. The session was then handed over to Dr. Aparajita Dixit. Dr. Dixit pointed out flag-signs of mental unrest, anxiety, panic, and even depression among students. In varying degrees these included; increased presence on social media; sleeplessness, lethargy; lack of interest in class activity; non-existent reading habit; fear of failure/stagnation; lack of a feeling of belongingness etc.

11. Dr. Dixit called for leniency on part of the faculty if students are unable to meet deadlines. She said that lack of time management may be a symptom of underlying mental health issues and penalising students for it may aggravate the situation. What is required instead is to acknowledge the concerns of students and to reflect and validate their feelings. The simplest way of doing this is to listen to students. Taking from Prof. Ranganathan's advice of providing students with spaces to destress, Dr. Dixit said that opportunities for students to freely express themselves and for faculty to listen will arise naturally. Additionally, she stated that there is a need to think of some life-skill sessions which will encourage students to open up to.

12. Professor Naved Iqbal was invited as a resource person to share his insights on Jamia Millia Islamia's University Counselling and Guidance Centre (UCGC) as an exemplar of developing centres of excellence - a scalable practice of wellbeing. In his presentation, he showcased a comprehensive PPT that detailed the history, services and mission of the UCGC, established in 2005 to foster the holistic development of students, enabling them to realize their full potential in both academic and professional spheres, excel in life, and prepare for future challenges. He outlined how, since 2007, the UCGC has expanded its scope to include activities such as remediation, rehabilitation, prevention, and management of psychological issues, alongside personal and career counselling. He explained the centre's structure and activities, emphasizing its core objectives of helping students address personal issues, navigate career decisions, develop crucial life skills, and maintain their mental health and well-being. Additionally, he highlighted the tele-counselling services offered by JMI, which provide accessible mental health support to students remotely. Overall, Professor Iqbal's presentation offered a thorough overview of the UCGC's multifaceted approach to student support, underscoring its commitment to the psychological and professional development of the students.

13. While concluding the session, Dr. Nagpal emphasised that being able to deal with mental health issues should be an essential part of faculty and staff training in HEIs. In this regard, the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing can be a significant step forward. Additionally, the participants from Centrally Funded Institution of this programme can act as pace setting institutions for other HEIs in their vicinity and region. Sustained efforts through this programme will result in a sustainable positive mental wellbeing culture.

14. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks.

List of Attendees

Faculty Members

S. No.	Name of the Institution	Nominated Faculty Members	Attendees	Absentees
1	Central University of Rajasthan	Dr. Narendra Kumar Dr. Surendra Nimesh Dr. Tarun Kumar Bhatt Dr. Jaya Kritika Ojha Dr. Anjali Sharma Mr. Gaurav Meena Prof. Jagdish Ullas Jadhav Dr. Tulsee Giri Goswami Dr. Dhaneswar Prusty Dr. Pritpal Singh Dr. Kanak Sharma	1. Dr. Narendra Kumar 2. Dr. Surendra Nimesh 3. Dr. Tarun Kumar Bhatt 4. Dr. Jaya Kritika Ojha 5. Dr. Anjali Sharma 6. Mr. Gaurav Meena 7. Dr. Tulsee Giri Goswami 8. Dr. Dhaneswar Prusty 9. Dr. Pritpal Singh 10. Dr. Kanak Sharma	1. Dr. Jagdish Ullas Jadhav
2	Jamia Millia Islamia	Prof. Veera Gupta Prof. Sheema Aleem Prof. Neelam Sukhramani Prof. Seemi Farhat Basir Prof. Mehnaz Ansari Prof. Naved Iqbal Prof. Archana Dassi Prof. Ushvinder Kaur Popli Prof. Samina Bano Prof. Nafis Ahmad Khan	1. Veera Gupta 2. Prof. Sheema Aleem 3. Prof. Neelam Sukhramani 4. Prof. Mehnaz Ansari 5. Prof. Naved Iqbal 6. Prof. Archana Dassi 7. Prof. Ushvinder Kaur Popli 8. Prof. Samina Bano	1. Prof. Seemi Farhat Basir 2. Prof. Nafis Ahmad Khan
3	IIIT Una, Himachal Pradesh	Dr. Sanjit Ningthoujam Dr. Nishtha Hooda Dr. Ambigavathi M. Dr. Ashwini Kumar Malviya	1. Dr. Sanjit Ningthoujam 2. Dr. Nishtha Hooda 3. Dr.	1. Dr. Prince Sharma 2. Dr. Gurpreet Kaur 3. Dr. Shonal

S. No.	Name of the Institution	Nominated Faculty Members	Attendees	Absentees
		Dr. Prince Sharma Dr. Neha Sharma Dr. Gurpreet Kaur Dr. Shonal Chouksey Dr. Ankur Thakur Dr. Akhil Walia Dr. Nikunj Goyal	Ambigavathi M. 4. Dr. Ashwini Kumar Malviya 5. Dr. Neha Sharma 6. Dr. Ankur Thakur 7. Dr. Nikunj Goyal	Chouksey 4. Dr. Akhil Walia
4	III Dharwad, Karnataka	Dr. Malay Kumar Dr. Jagdish DN Dr. Pavan Kumar Dr. Rajendra Hegadi Prof. Satish Annigeri Dr. Manjunath K. V. Dr. Aswath Babu II Dr. Prabhu Prasad BM Dr. Prakash Pawar Dr. Sunil Saumya	1. Dr. Malay Kumar 2. Dr. Rajendra Hegadi 3. Dr. Sunil Saumya 4. Dr. Rajesh 5. Dr. Anushree Kini	1. Dr. Jagdish DN 2. Dr. Pavan Kumar 3. Prof. Satish Annigeri 4. Dr. Manjunath K. V. 5. Dr. Aswath Babu II 6. Dr. Prabhu Prasad BM 7. Dr. Prakash Pawar 8. Sunil Saumya
5	Malviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur	Prof. Rohit Bhakar Dr. Ritika Mahajan Dr. Hemant Kumar Meena Muskan Mathur Somen Kumar Bhakat Priyanka Kumari Priyanshu Kumar Jha	1. Dr. Ritika Mahajan 2. Hemant Kumar Meena 3. Muskan Mathur 4. Somen Kumar Bhakar 5. Priyanka Kumari	1. Prof. Rohit Bhakar 2. Priyanshu Kumar Jha
6	National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli	Dr. Sreejith Mohan Mr. Saurabh Kumar Dr. V. Nagajyothi Dr. V. Sunitha Dr. Oswald C Dr. Pinkymol K. P. Dr. R. K. Kavitha Dr. Sri Ram Shankar R. Dr. Sreejith Mohan Dr. A. Muthuchamy Dr. Vasu M.	1. Dr. Sreejith Mohan 2. Mr. Saurabh Kumar 3. Dr. V. Nagajyothi 4. Dr. V. Sunitha 5. Dr. Pinkymol K. P. 6. Dr. R. K. Kavitha 7. Dr. Sri Ram Shankar R. 8. Dr. Sreejith	1. Dr. Oswald C

S. No.	Name of the Institution	Nominated Faculty Members	Attendees	Absentees
			Mohan 9. Dr. A. Muthuchamy 10. Dr. Vasu M.	
7	IIT Bhubaneswar	Dr. Raj Kumar Singh Dr. Mohit Somani Dr. Abhinav Arya Dr. Akshay K Dr. Devashree Tripathy Dr. Manish Punetha Dr. Miral Verma Dr. Avijit Kumar Dr. Ashna Jacob Dr. Palas Roy Dr. Biplab Paul Dr. Sayel Basel Dr. Jiarul Midya	1. Dr. Mohit Somani 2. Dr. Akshay K 3. Dr. Manish Punetha 4. Dr. Miral Verma 5. Dr. Avijit Kumar 6. Dr. Ashna Jacob 7. Dr. Palas Roy 8. Dr. Biplab Paul	1. Dr. Raj Kumar Singh 2. Dr. Abhinav Arya 3. Dr. Devashree Tripathy 4. Dr. Sayel Basel 5. Dr. Jiarul Midya
8	IIT Ropar	Dr. Deepak Kumar Dr. Saifullah Payami Dr. Geeta Dr. Reet Kamal Tiwari Dr. Yashveer Singh Dr. Durba Pal Dr. Santanu Sarkar Dr. Asad H. Sahir Dr. Amritesh Dr. Samir Chandra Roy Dr. Debangsu Roy	1. Dr. Deepak Kumar 2. Dr. Saifullah Payami 3. Dr. Geeta 4. Dr. Reet Kamal Tiwari 5. Dr. Yashveer Singh 6. Dr. Santanu Sarkar 7. Dr. Asad H Sahir 8. Dr. Amritesh 9. Dr. Samir Chandra Roy 10. Dr. Debangsu Roy	1. Dr. Durba Pal
9	IIM Shillong	Rohit Dwivedi Abhishek Vashishth Varnita Shrivastava Vishakha Bansal Ravi Shankar Bhakat Subhadip Mukherjee Sitanshu Shekhar Das Mousumi Bhattacharya Ashutosh Murti	1. Varnita Shrivastava 2. Vishakha Bansal 3. Ravi Shankar Bhakat 4. Mousumi Bhattacharya 5. Sneha Vaidya 6. M. Arvind	1. Rohit Dwivedi 2. Abhishek Vashishth 3. Subhadip Mukherjee 4. Sitanshu Shekhar Das 5. Ashutosh Murti 6. Kailash

S. No.	Name of the Institution	Nominated Faculty Members	Attendees	Absentees
		Kailash Choudhary	7. Akshat Sharma	Choudhary
10	IIM Rohtak	Dr. Koustab Ghosh Dr. S. K. Pandey Dr. Ashwani Kumar Dr. Madhurima Mishta Dr. Agrata Pandey Dr. Peeyush Pandey Dr. Mihir Kushwah Dr. Archit Tapar Dr. Neeraj Singh Dr. Vaneet Bhatia	1. Dr. S. K. Pandey	2. Dr. Koustab Ghosh 3. Dr. Ashwani Kumar 4. Dr. Madhirima Mishra 5. Dr. Agrata Pandey 6. Dr. Peeyush Pandey 7. Dr. Mihir Kushwah 8. Dr. Archit Tapar 9. Dr. Neeraj Singh 10. Dr. Vaneet Bhatia
11	Unidentified Institutional Affiliation		1. Rosilin 2. CJN 3. ID No. 25137980772	

Additional Attendees

Affiliation Details	Name of the Attendees
Ministry Officials, Resource Persons, Officials from UGC & NIEPA	1. Mr.. Devendra Kumar Sharma, Director, Dept. of Higher Education, MoE 2. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist & Program Director, Expressions India 3. Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Professor & Former Dean, Faculty of Education, Delhi University 4. Dr. Aparajita Dixit, Senior Psychologist, Expressions India and Master Trainer 5. Dr. Naved Iqbal, Jamia Millia Islamia 6. Dr. Mona Sedwal, NIEPA 7. Dr. Santwana G. Mishra, NIEPA 8. Ms. Richa Shrivastava, Consultant, MMTTP, MoE