



Department of Higher Education
Ministry of Education
Government of India



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भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान हैदराबाद
Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad

1st National Wellbeing Conclave

Integrated Approach for
Promoting Positive Mental health,
Resilience & Wellbeing

A Compendium of Emerging Practices



Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad
9th & 10th November 2024

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world”

Mahatma Gandhi

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धर्मेन्द्र प्रधान
धर्मोद्धार प्रचारक
Dharmendra Pradhan



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आज़ादी का
अमृत महोत्सव

शिक्षा मंत्री
भारत सरकार
Minister of Education
Government of India



MESSAGE

I am happy to know that the first National Wellbeing Conclave 2024 is being organised at IIT-Hyderabad with the objective to provide avenues to the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to collaboratively explore to build an eco-system for ensuring students' mental wellbeing and on this occasion, 'Compendium of Emerging Practices', a compilation of innovative initiatives being adopted and implemented in the HEIs to ensure physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing of students across institutions, is being released.

Mental wellbeing of the students remains the finest barometer of the success of the HEIs in terms of attaining the academic rigour while managing the attendant pressure and stress level of the students. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 focuses on promoting student wellness centred around their fitness, good health, psycho-social wellbeing, and sound ethical grounding. This is an irreducible minimum to achieve high-quality learning. Professional academic and career counselling and psychological counselling to all students must remain the defining elements in all HEIs to ensure students' physical, psychological and socio-emotional wellbeing.

In line with these guiding principles of NEP 2020, Integrated Approach for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience & Wellbeing in HEIs under Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme has been developed which includes online sessions for capacity building of faculty every fortnight. It is indeed heartening to know that since May 2024, 12 online sessions have been completed, benefitting more than 900 faculty from around 100 Centrally Funded Institutions engaged.

The National Wellbeing Conclave presents an excellent platform to the participating faculty and students to engage actively in the discussions and activities during the event. I am sure, the Conclave will help cultivate a culture of wellness so as to ensure that mental wellbeing becomes an integral part of our educational framework, empowering both students and faculty.

Let us work collaboratively to build a future where every student feels supported, understood, and equipped to face life's many challenges. May this Conclave usher in a culture of positivity and hope in our educational institutions, contributing towards shaping the destinies of our students.

I wish the Conclave a great success.

(Dharmendra Pradhan)

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MESSAGE

NEP 2020 recognises that apart from curriculum, pedagogy and continuous assessment, student support is one of the cornerstone for quality learning. The policy further stipulates that student support has to be construed not only in terms of suitable resources and infrastructure but initiatives to ensure that learning environments are engaging and supportive that enable all students to thrive and succeed.

In line with the guiding philosophy of the NEP, 2020 Integrated Approach for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience & Wellbeing in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) under Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Program (MMTTP) has been developed in collaboration with Expressions India, which includes online sessions for capacity building of faculty every fortnight.

This program which was launched in May 2024 is a timely intervention as is evident from the fact that the issue of mental health and wellbeing scenario has been engaging attention in public discourse so much so that it has been discussed extensively in the Economic Survey 2024 "Minding the Mind: Taking stock of the mental health scenario" with recommendations that paying attention to mental health issues in society is both a health and economic imperative.

In this backdrop 1st National Wellness Conclave 2024 is being organised at IIT Hyderabad and it is heartening that faculty members and students of around 100 Centrally Funded Institutions are participating. This conclave has been envisaged as a platform for stakeholders in higher education to come together and share knowledge and experiences around promoting and sustaining positive mental wellbeing.

Throughout the conclave, participants will have plenty of opportunities to hear from esteemed speakers, partake in enriching hands-on-workshops, and engage in meaningful discussions that will help shape the future of wellness in our education system.

I am hopeful that participants will engage in this two-day conclave actively and take away key learning points which will be made actionable in their own institutions. On this occasion release of 'Compendium of Emerging Practices' of Centrally Funded Institutions will give glimpses of activities being conducted in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and its dissemination will inspire other HEIs to replicate these practices.

I wish all the success to the 1st National Wellbeing Conclave 2024.

November, 5th, 2024


(K. Sanjay Murthy)



MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

We live in a fast-paced world where we have lots of stimuli in the environment that play a key role in affecting us emotionally, physically, and psychologically often leading to experiencing stress. Therefore, promoting mental health, resilience, and overall well-being is more fundamental than ever. NEP 2020 also emphasizes on promoting the welfare of students in all domains. An integrated approach that brings together various educational institutes that face similar situations is essential for creating a supportive environment where individuals can thrive. This was the main objective of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India in conceptualizing and envisioning the “National Wellbeing Conclave”.

This conclave will give an opportunity of 100 institutions to share their good practices with everyone so that all participants are enriched with bright and positive ideas to be implemented in their institutions. A compendium is being brought out during this conclave, which will be a treasure of positive ideas to carry back home. This compendium emphasizes the importance of institutes' engagement in the field of mental health. Being a professor all these years I have learned that education plays a vital role, and by incorporating mental health awareness by launching public campaigns, we can reduce stigma and encourage open conversations.

One of the core components of the National Well-being conclave is resilience building for students and faculty. They come together and highlight the cordial connection with each other. I believe that through this conclave all of us can get equipped and empowered with skills for emotional regulation and stress management.

Let's all obligate to this integrated approach to work towards a future where mental well-being is a shared responsibility and fundamental aspect of life.

Thank you,

Jai Hind!

Prof. BS Murty

National Wellbeing Conclave
Integrated Approach for Promoting Mental Health, Resilience & Wellbeing
Emerging Needs & Challenges of Good Practices
9th & 10th Nov 2024 at Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad

CONCEPT-NOTE

A. Background

Adolescents & youth are the most important assets of any country and a crucial human resource for overall development. They are the future nation-builders. Universities are one of the key settings outside home where adolescents and youth can acquire newer knowledge, attitudes and skills to grow into productive and capable citizens, who can be involved to support and help their communities to grow and prosper.

NEP 2020 focuses on promoting student wellness such as their fitness, good health, psychosocial well-being, and sound ethical grounding, which is non-negotiable for high-quality learning. It further states that professional academic and career counselling should be made available to all students, as well as counsellors to ensure physical, psychological and socio-emotional well-being. HEIs have a strong influence on the long-term development of the cognitive, social, emotional and behavioural domains leading to effective adaptation and adjustment. Health promoting Universities are robust settings where education and wellbeing simultaneously promote resilience with enrichment of life skills for lifelong learning and coping with various challenges in the journey ahead.

Over the years there is enough scientific evidence which strongly propagates the view that there must be a consistent strong linkage between education and mental health paradigm.

B. Strengthening of Support Mechanism

While the above measures by way of guidelines, advisories and orientation programs have been taken, there is a need to develop some strategic intervention in the area of psychosocial wellbeing of the students in the HEIs.

This is a '**life-span**' approach to promote healthy behaviors among youth. Many of the leading causes of disease and disability can be significantly reduced by preventing behaviors that is initiated during youth, through a broad spectrum of health education, understanding and motivation fostered by effective social support and newer policies.

Almost all adolescents & youth who attend HEIs spend around 7-10 hours every day in the learning environment. Incorporating a strong wellbeing domain into the HEIs can have substantial influence on emerging practices of holistic health education. Such integration can best be achieved by recognizing and addressing the specific unmet psychosocial and learning needs of adolescents & youth, by effective and active involvement and collaboration of faculty, students and parents etc. Sustainable service models that integrate promotion, early detection and timely intervention are the need of today.

HEIs can therefore facilitate the health of staff, families and community members along with the wellbeing of adolescents & youth.

UGC Guidelines on 'Promotion of Physical Fitness, Sports, Students' Health, Welfare, Psychological and Emotional Well-Being at HEIs of India' has been issued in April 2023. Also,

MoE Framework Guidelines for Emotional and Mental Wellbeing for CFIs was issued in July 2023.

IIT Delhi, IIT Gandhinagar, IIT Madras and IIT Guwahati organized Workshops on Mental Wellness & Stress Management, on 30th May, 2023, 9-10th June, 2023, 12th May, 2023 and 26th August 2023 respectively. More recently Inter IIT Wellness Meet was organized by IIT Roorkee on 13th-14th February, 2024 to come together and address pressing mental health challenges in academic institutes and ways to resolve them. Also Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IITGN) hosted a two-day workshop on students' mental well-being titled 'Building Scalable Systems for Student Wellbeing in Residential Programs' in its campus on March 4-5, 2024.

IIT Madras has developed Holistic Student Wellness initiatives - KUSHAL, which is an integrated wellness initiative which involving Khushal meetings, regular wellness surveys, time bound grievance redressal, independent set of counsellors visiting every hostel and department with provision to meet outside institute; gatekeeper training for faculty and student volunteers to identify students under stress and suicidal tendencies; YAARI - Mentors from Alumni; listeners network; attendance tracking; parents involvement; special high power committee for SC/ST and OBC to handle caste based discrimination.

Keeping this in view, it is realized that institutions need to regularly and frequently hold workshops and discussions to adopt and disseminate emerging practices in this matter, and examine the systemic gaps in their protocols, so that even a single student does not slip through the gaps.

C. Framework for Mental Health & Wellbeing Programmes

Mind Map for Interventions			
<u>Level</u>	<u>Level of Domain</u>	<u>Stakeholders to be involved</u>	<u>Level of Intervention</u>
I	Mental Wellbeing & Climate Building	Entire Institutional Community	Mental Health & Wellbeing as an Integrated Approach
II	Mental Health Knowledge Attitudes & Behaviors	All Students and Faculty	Mental Wellbeing - Part of General Health Promotion
III	Psychosocial Concerns & Problems	Counselors, Faculty, Peer Mentors, Wardens and Citizens	Extending Additional Help to Students in Need
IV	Severe Problems/Disorders	Counselors, Institution Doctors and Other Experts	Professional Management

Objective Levels: I and II - Primary prevention and health promotion, target the causes of healthy and unhealthy conditions with interventions to promote healthy behaviours and prevent a disorder from developing.

Objective Level: III – *Secondary prevention* targets the population at risk to protect them against the onset of disorders.

Objective Level: IV – Targets the people who have developed the disorders and aims at helping in the management, reducing the impairment and preventing relapse.

Mental health and wellbeing programmes are effective in improving learning, psychosocial competency and facilitating good management of mental health conditions, are most appropriate when:

- (i) It is part of the general educational system.
- (ii) Implemented through routine health care in the CFIs.
- (iii) Supported and developed by faculty student and family partnerships.
- (iv) Facilitated through the support of institution faculty, who recognize that socio-emotional functioning enriches learning capacity and resilience of students.

At this stage, it is proposed to organize the following programmes in an integrated manner to achieve objectives corresponding to Intervention Level I & II of the 'Framework for Mental Health & Wellbeing Programmes'.

D. Implementation Plan

D.1. Capacity Building on Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience & Wellbeing

A program has been designed for sustained capacity building of faculty in Centrally Funded HEIs, providing a platform for sharing of emerging practices and collaborating with panel of experts with each institution to focus on objective levels I and II of the frameworks for mental health & wellbeing program. 'Expressions India' an organisation with expertise in this matter is the resource partner for this capacity building program and NIEPA is coordinating.

In this program, fortnightly 2 online sessions are organized with 10 faculty members nominated from around each of 10-12 identified educational institutions every month starting from the month of May 2024. So far 940 faculty members have participated in 12 sessions organised for 100 HEIs from Month of May to October 2024.

The program has sustained capacity building of faculty in HEIs by providing a platform for sharing of emerging practices and collaborating with panel of experts to focus on issue of mental health & wellbeing of the students in HEIs. Some of the emerging practices adopted by the CFIs based on the sessions conducted in promoting positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Well-being in higher education institutions (HEIs) were as follows:

- (a) **Leveraging AI Technology for Proactive Mental Health Monitoring:** Implementing AI tools like chatbots to monitor and analyze student responses, enabling early identification of mental health concerns and timely intervention. IIT Allahabad is implementing AI-driven chatbots for real-time detection of student needs and timely intervention. It provides a sophisticated, data-driven approach to recognizing and addressing mental health issues early, facilitating targeted support.
- (b) **Cultivating a Supportive Campus Environment through Diverse Initiatives:**

Developing and maintaining a range of initiatives such as "Let's Talk" sessions, designated anger-free zones, buddy benches, wellness cafes, and cultural events will foster open dialogue, promote emotional well-being, and encourage a cohesive community. It will encourage a culture of openness and mutual support, reducing stigma and creating a nurturing environment for all students.

(c) Engaging Families and New Students with Orientation Programs: Organizing orientation sessions specifically for parents and first-year undergraduate students to familiarize them with available mental health resources and support systems. For this, parent orientations at the counseling center may be organized to educate families about the mental health services and support mechanisms in place. It will ensure that both students and their families are well-informed and prepared to access and utilize mental health resources effectively.

D.2. In-person Capacity Building on Mental Health and Wellbeing for Early Identification and Intervention

NEP 2020 emphasizes creation of motivated, energized, and capable faculty. Capacity building of teachers at all levels has been one of the major thrust areas in the field of higher education. Continuous Professional Development of faculty in all disciplines is required in light of new and updated methods of pedagogy.

As central sector scheme, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching (PMMMNTT) was launched in year 2014, under which existing HEIs in CUs, IITs, State Universities, NITTTR, IISERs, NITs, Deemed Universities, and Centrally Funded HEI have been provided funds for carrying out Capacity Building training of faculty members of HEIs, by utilizing and leveraging existing resources. Since faculty members have crucial role in promoting positive mental health, resilience & wellbeing of students in HEI, one / half day sessions on 'Mental Health and Wellbeing for Early Identification and Intervention' will be included in the in-person Capacity Building Programme by MMPTCs. Expressions India will provide Resource Persons for the sessions at 116 MMPTCs.

MMPTCs have started inclusion of this component in the in-person capacity building program and MMPTC like Aligarh Muslim University has arranged one dedicated in-person session on the subject.

D.3. Exemplar Visit to Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Many educational institutions have already evolved systems to address mental health and wellbeing of students in HEIs. Availability of institutional support services within the HEIs facilitated by the wellbeing centres on the campus that effectively take care of mental health and wellbeing. Such institutions may be viewed as Model Institutions for their evolved systems to promote positive mental health, resilience and wellbeing among students.

In this regard, 'Exemplar Visits' by designated team will be scheduled for the purpose of learning adopted by them in addressing mental health and wellbeing of the students for other HEIs to learn from these institutions and adopt such practices. The objective of the visit will be to consolidate such emerging practices for wider dissemination and replication in

other educational institutions. A team comprising officials of MoE, faculty members of HEIs and Senior Resource Persons from Expressions India, will carry out visit to the identified 'Model Institutions for Promotion & Sustainable Support of Mental Health and Wellbeing' engage in consolidation of emerging practices for dissemination and replication to other HEIs.

Following CFIs have been identified as first cohort of institutions in which 'Exemplar Visits' by the designated team may take place:

- a) Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur
- b) Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee
- c) Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh
- d) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
- e) IIT, Madras
- f) BHU, Varanasi

Exemplar visit of the Malviya National Institute of Technology (MNIT) Jaipur was done on 04.08.2024 and visit to Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh is scheduled on 13.09.2024.

[D.4 National Wellbeing Conclave](#)

Under the Integrated Approach, a 'National Wellbeing Conclave' has been conceptualized for the students and faculty members. The conclave will create an avenue for the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) to collaboratively explore to build an ecosystem where students' as well as faculty members' mental health and wellbeing will be given due importance.

The conclave will allow students and faculty members to come together on a common platform to:

- a) exchange ideas related to promotion of mental health, resilience and wellbeing on campus,
- b) showcase initiatives undertaken by different HEIs w.r.t mental health and wellbeing,
- c) share emerging practices instituted by the HEIs,
- d) hold an exhibition on the subject matter &
- e) engage attendees in fun-filled activities/exercises during the conclave.

The conclave will give the HEIs an opportunity to appraise the importance of cordial relation between students and faculty. This initiative is aimed at fostering stronger ties between faculty and students keeping in view the mental health and wellbeing needs of individuals within the professional realm. The successful organization of the conclave will lay down a foundation for replicating it in other regions of the country involving more HEIs.

For this purpose, IIT Hyderabad has been identified as the 'Host Institution' to commit infrastructural, administrative and logistic support needed in organizing 'National Wellbeing Conclave' in their campus where the participating CFIs will send their representation (including students and faculty members) to make this program a big success. The conclave is planned to be organized on 9th -10th November, 2024.

E. Conclusion

In the midst of planning and implementing the Integrated Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing, the Government of India released the Economic Survey 2023-24 which also stresses the significance of focused strides towards promoting positive mental health. The National Wellness Conclave 2024 is a vital initiative aimed at addressing the pressing mental health challenges faced by students and faculty within higher educational institutions. As highlighted in the Economic Survey 2023-24, in order to combat issues of mental health, it is essential to “nurture peer support networks, self-help groups, and community-based rehabilitation programmes, which can play a vital role in destigmatising mental disorders and fostering a sense of belonging”. By prioritising mental health and wellbeing, HEIs can create a supportive environment that not only enhances individual resilience but also contributes to the overall health of the community, and the National Wellness Conclave 2024 is an essential step towards this goal.

Capacity Building for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing

A component of the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme

Introduction

The mental health landscape among students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in India has become increasingly alarming, with rising incidents of stress, anxiety, and other psychological disorders; occasionally culminating in suicide. Recognising an urgent need for attention to this matter, the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, under the 'Integrated Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing in HEIs,' has initiated a series of fortnightly online capacity-building sessions for faculty of HEIs. These sessions are aimed at equipping faculty with the skills and knowledge to foster a supportive educational environment.

Objectives of the Programme

The Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience, and Wellbeing was launched on 1st May 2024, with several key objectives that guide its implementation:

1. **Enhancing Faculty Capacity:** A core aim is to develop the skills of faculty members, empowering them to adapt effective practices that promote mental health and wellbeing among students. By equipping educators with the right tools and knowledge, the programme aims to create an environment where mental health is prioritised alongside academic success.
2. **Creating a Supportive Environment:** The programme seeks to establish a nurturing learning atmosphere that integrates psychological support within academic frameworks. This includes strategies to help faculty identify and address mental health issues early, thereby preventing more severe consequences for students. Also, incorporating pedagogy that is sensitive to the psychological needs of students.
3. **Fostering Community Engagement:** Collaboration among faculty, students, and the broader community is essential for effectively tackling mental health challenges. The initiative encourages a shared responsibility model where all stakeholders actively contribute to fostering a supportive ecosystem.

Session Structure and Participation

The capacity building programme for promoting mental health, resilience and wellbeing consists of two online sessions per month (details of the sessions so far are placed in annexure 1 & 2). The sessions are designed to facilitate continuous learning and engagement among faculty from various universities across the country. This diverse participation enriches discussions and provides a platform for sharing a variety of perspectives on mental health issues, ensuring that faculty are equipped to deal with any issues that come their way.

First Online Session on 10.05.2024

Following an orientation session on 01.05.2024, the first online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was

held on the 10.05.2024. The session was attended by 92 faculty members from 10 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Ms. Ritu Sharma, Psychologist
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity
4. Prof. Naved Iqbal, Professor, Department of Psychology, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI)

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- Collaboration between academia and mental health experts is essential.
- Safe, inclusive environments are vital for student success.
- COVID-19 has significantly impacted student mental health.
- Holistic development and peer support systems must be advocated in HEIs.
- Early identification and intervention in mental health issues is vital.
- Importance of inclusivity and addressing discrimination within HEIs.
- Alumni can play an essential role in supporting students at HEIs.
- Faculty must strive to foster open communication and reassurance among students.
- An overview of JMI's Counselling and Guidance Centre and its student support services was shared.
- Participants shared innovative strategies, including AI technology for monitoring student wellbeing.
- Participants discussed enhancing student engagement through peer mentorship and community initiatives.
- Participants discussed barriers to students utilizing counselling services.
- There is a need for documenting emerging practices and advocating for wellness centres across HEIs.

[Second Online Session on 24.05.2024](#)

The second online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 24.05.2024. The session was attended by 70 faculty members from 10 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Dr. Ameeta Mulla Wattal, Chairperson and Exec. Director, DLF Foundation Schools
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity
4. Prof. Naved Iqbal, Professor, Department of Psychology, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI)

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- Youth mental health statistics in the country are alarming, highlighting the need for early intervention.
- Given India's 'demographic bonus' it is important to healthy mentoring relationships.

- There need to be a holistic approach to education, even higher education, beyond academic success.
- Young people in an evolving socio-cultural era face unique challenges that directly affect their mental health.
- Standardised education models are failing to meet individual needs.
- There can be personalised orientation programmes to support student transition to university life.
- There is need to create a supportive atmosphere for students to express themselves.
- Faculty must recognise warning signs and convey reassurance effectively.
- Need to tailored mental health frameworks within HEIs to meet specific student needs.
- An overview of JMI's Counselling and Guidance Centre was shared along with its comprehensive student support services including tele-counselling and a holistic development focus.
- Collaboration among educators, policymakers, families, and communities will be beneficial for students.
- Documentation and sharing of successful implementation of mental health strategies in HEIs will work for the greater good.

[Third Online Session on 12.06.2024](#)

The third online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 12.06.2024. The session was attended by 81 faculty members from 12 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Professor, University of Delhi
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity
4. Prof. Naved Iqbal, Professor, Department of Psychology, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI)

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- Faculty can be a pivotal role in promoting a positive mental health culture in HEIs.
- Faculty must pay attention to and understand students' needs and create conducive learning environments.
- Faculty should be encouraged to engage in self-training to enhance student support without compromising professional boundaries.
- Need for teachers to recognise and validate students' identities and challenges in higher education.
- Stigma preventing students from seeking help when it comes to mental health.
- Necessity for an enabling environment in HEIs.
- Common mental health challenges plaguing young people include academic competitiveness, body image issues, adjustment issues, peer pressure, belongingness, future anxieties, etc.

- An overview of JMI's Counselling and Guidance Centre was shared along with its comprehensive student support services including tele-counselling and a holistic development focus.

Fourth Online Session on 26.06.2024

The fourth online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 26.06.2024. The session was attended by 76 faculty members from 12 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Dr. Sudha Acharya, National Resource Faculty, Life Skills & Wellbeing, NEP Facilitator and Adolescent & Youth Researcher
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity
4. Dr. Shantanu Misra, Faculty Support, Counselling Centre, IIT Kanpur

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- There is an urgent need for mental health support as 1 in 10 young people in India requires it.
- Government initiatives like mental health Olympiads are a step forward.
- Mental health must be viewed from a 'lifespan' perspective and fostering resilience is vital.
- Strategies for promoting wellbeing include workshops, counselling services, and peer support networks.
- Issues of family disconnect and social media's impact on students' mental health.
- Parental involvement in student lives is essential.
- Need for early identification of mental health concerns.
- Faculty must listen actively to students, as many feel more comfortable sharing with them than with counsellors.
- Insights from IIT Kanpur's Wellness and Counselling Centre were shared emphasizing the 'Recognise, Respond, Refer' policy.
- Student feeling and concerns must be validated. Faculty must also be able to distinguish genuine mental health issues from excuses.

Fifth Online Session on 10.07.2024

The fifth online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 10.07.2024. The session was attended by 101 faculty members from 10 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India

2. Prof. Rushi, Professor & Head, Department of Clinical Psychology, AIISH, Mysore
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity
4. Prof. Naved Iqbal, Professor, Department of Psychology, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI)

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- Need to advocate for transformative education that goes beyond academic excellence.
- Need for faculty to listen to students and support them through personal challenges.
- Issues of self-doubt and identity crises among youth must be dealt with sensitively.
- Faculty may conduct personality assessments during student induction to tailor support.
- It is essential to identify warning signs and foster positive faculty-student relationships.
- Early intervention of emotional challenges is very important.
- Involving parents in wellbeing initiatives for better student support can be beneficial.
- An overview of JMI's Counselling and Guidance Centre and its comprehensive student support services including tele-counselling and a holistic development focus were shared.
- HEIs can implement mentor-mentee programmes to support new students.
- There is need for continuous observation of students and creating supportive environments in hostels and student accommodations.

[Sixth Online Session on 26.07.2024](#)

The sixth online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 26.07.2024. The session was attended by 82 faculty members from 10 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Professor, University of Delhi
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity
4. Dr. Shantanu Misra, Faculty Support, Counselling Centre, IIT Kanpur

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- Capacity building session of HE faculty play a critical role amid rising mental health issues among students.
- There is a lack of transition support from structured school environments to unstructured college life.
- 1 in 10 young people in India need professional mental health support.
- It is important to understand the developmental needs of young adults (in the age group of 18-30).
- Essential to focus on individual growth alongside academic success.

- Integration on humanities and extracurricular activities into education is vital.
- Stigma is a major barrier to seeking help, particularly among high-achieving students.
- Overwhelming academic pressure in top institutions contributes to mental health issues.
- There is a lack of adequate resources and structured mental health programmes in HEIs.
- Absence of a sense of belonging among students, leads to unhealthy coping mechanisms.
- Feelings of hopelessness and unworthiness significantly impact the mental wellbeing of students.
- Insights from IIT Kanpur's Wellness and Counselling Centre emphasizing the 'Recognise, Respond, Refer' policy were shared. These outlined features of the centre, including 24/7 support, diverse counselling modes, and financial assistance through the Student Benevolence Fund.
- Potential in introducing health cards to track student mental health.

Seventh Online Session on 20.08.2024

The seventh online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 20.08.2024. The session was attended by 89 faculty members from 12 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Professor, University of Delhi
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity
4. Dr. Shantanu Misra, Faculty Support, Counselling Centre, IIT Kanpur

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- Faculty play a critical role in addressing mental health challenges among students and therefore there must be open dialogue and support for them.
- There is need for a balanced psycho-social climate for students, as it is important to have a safe environment for emotional expression and discussion.
- There is necessity for open forums for discussions as it is important to allow students to distress as they transition to adulthood.
- Signs of mental distress among students can look like social media overuse, lethargy and lack of engagement.
- There is need for understanding and leniency from faculty regarding deadlines as time management issues may stem from underlying mental health concerns.
- Insights from IIT Kanpur's Wellness and Counselling Centre emphasizing the 'Recognise, Respond, Refer' policy were shared. These outlined features of the centre,

including 24/7 support, diverse counselling modes, and financial assistance through the Student Benevolence Fund.

- Faculty in HEIs must familiarise themselves with the Mental Health Care Act 2017 for better implementation of support systems.

[Eighth Online Session on 27.08.2024](#)

The eighth online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 27.08.2024. The session was attended by 70 faculty members from 9 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Dr. Ameeta Mulla Wattal, Chairperson and Exec. Director, DLF Foundation Schools
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- There is need for creating supportive environments for both students and faculty in HEIs.
- Students face great challenges while transitioning from a highly structured school environment to the pressures and relatively unstructured environments of higher education.
- It is essential to prepare students for the realities of higher education to avoid feelings of disappointment and emotional unrest.
- There is often stigma surrounding issues of mental health and lack of appropriate resources in institutions.
- Policies and supportive measures need to be frequently updated.
- Students from rural backgrounds facing family pressures need additional support.
- Student in HEIs face loneliness and alienation, particularly in technical institutions.
- Need to create gender sensitive environments and better safety measures in HEIs.
- Open dialogue between students and faculty is important.
- Increasing student numbers in HEIs can hinder direct faculty engagement with students but one must strive to overcome this issue.
- Role of faculty in recognising signs of mental distress among students is essential and they must deal with it in a supportive and empathetic manner.
- Faculty must be vigilant regarding self-harm and suicidal tendencies among students.

[Ninth Online Session on 17.09.2024](#)

The ninth online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 17.09.2024. The session was attended by 71

faculty members from 11 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Professor, University of Delhi
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- It is important to recognise the students as whole persons with unique realities and identities.
- HIEs must find a balance between the students' professional and personal development.
- Practices like inclusion of mentorship slots in timetables, specific learning outcomes addressing socio-emotional growth, and periodic inter-institutional knowledge sharing can help HEIs move in the direction of creating supportive environments for students.
- It is essential to listen to distressed students and recognise the difference between reacting and responding to their concerns and needs.
- Excessive social media usage and lack of interest in academic activities among students can be signs of concern and may require timely intervention.
- Inter and intra-institutional forums can facilitate better communication on mental health issues among faculty.

[Tenth Online Session on 27.09.2024](#)

The tenth online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 27.09.2024. The session was attended by 84 faculty members from 9 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Professor, University of Delhi
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity
4. Dr. Shantanu Misra, Faculty Support, Counselling Centre, IIT Kanpur

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- Faculty ought to incorporate interactive dialogue over lectures to students.
- Faculty in HEIs play the role of first responders when it comes to the mental health of students.
- Students must be recognised as individuals and therefore their personal and professional growth must be balanced in HEIs.

- Frequent mentorship slots in the academic schedule along with integration of academic and cultural activities on campus can play an important role in alleviating mental distress.
- Common mental health challenges plaguing young people include academic competitiveness, body image issues, adjustment issues, peer pressure, belongingness, future anxieties, etc.
- There is need for understanding and leniency from faculty regarding deadlines as time management issues may stem from underlying mental health concerns.
- Insights from IIT Kanpur's Wellness and Counselling Centre were shared. These emphasizing the 'Recognise, Respond, Refer' policy and outlined features of the centre, including 24/7 support, diverse counselling modes, and financial assistance through the Student Benevolence Fund.

[Eleventh Online Session on 14.10.2024](#)

The eleventh online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 14.10.2024. The session was attended by 74 faculty members from 10 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Professor, University of Delhi
3. Ms. Aparajita Dixit, Clinical Psychologist, Moolchand Medcity
4. Prof. Naved Iqbal, Professor, Jamia Millia Islamia

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- There is a pressing need to address the mental health issues in HEIs with a rise in alarming incidents related to students wellbeing.
- Importance of cultural support systems: Emphasis was drawn on leveraging India's collectivist culture, which naturally fosters support, and the need for more interactive and supportive campus environments.
- Concerns were raised on the over-reliance on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in HEIs, with a call to preserve human intelligence and personal interaction to support student mental health.
- Challenges posed by heavy academic demands for both the students and the faculty were acknowledged. Suggestions were made to allocate time for faculty-student interactions that support mental wellbeing.
- Signs of mental distress among students can look like social media overuse and academic disengagement.
- Students need empathetic responses from faculty.
- Jamia Millia Islamia's University Counselling and Guidance Centre (UCGC) was shared as a model for student support, covering services like tele-counselling and life-skills training.

- The importance of training faculty and staff in mental health awareness as a foundation for a positive wellbeing culture across was highlighted.

Twelfth Online Session on 29.10.2024

The twelfth online session of the Capacity Building Programme for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing was held on the 29.10.2024. The session was attended by 62 faculty members from 9 institutions.

The following key note speakers were part of this session:

1. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist and Programme Director, Expressions India
2. Ms. Geeta Mehrotra, Faculty, University and School Life Skills, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Expressions India
3. Prof. Santanau Misra, Faculty Support, Counselling Center, IIT Kanpur

The following were the key takeaways from the discussion:

- Life stressors and mental health issues: The impact of academic pressure, body image issues, and feelings of inadequacy on students' mental health was discussed, with attention to underlying causes such as fear of failure and low self-esteem.
- There are stigmas that prevent students from seeking help. Fostering supportive environments and empathy in HEIs can work towards stigma reduction.
- There is a heightened need for faculty and peer support, along with advocacy for mental wellbeing at institutional levels.
- Insights from IIT Kanpur's Wellness and Counselling Centre emphasizing the 'Recognise, Respond, Refer' policy were shared. These outlined features of the centre, including 24/7 support, diverse counselling modes, and financial assistance through the Student Benevolence Fund.

Capacity Building for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing

Participation Details

S. No.	Session	Date	Number of Participating CFIs	Number of Beneficiaries
1	Online Session 1	10 May 2024	10	161
2	Online Session 2	24 May 2024		
3	Online Session 3	12 June 2024	12	81
4	Online Session 4	26 June 2024		76
5	Online Session 5	10 July 2024	10	91
6	Online Session 6	26 July 2024	10	82
7	Online Session 7	20 August 2024	12	89
8	Online Session 8	27 August 2024	9	70
9	Online Session 9	17 September 2024	11	71
10	Online Session 10	27 September 2024	9	84
11	Online Session 11	14 October 2024	10	74
12	Online Session 12	29 October 2024	9	62
Total			102	941
1	Follow-up Session 1	5 July 2024	10	76
2	Follow-up Session 2	15 July 2024		

S. No.	Participant Institutions	S. No.	Participant Institutions
1	Assam University	2	Atal Bihari Vajpayee Indian Institute of Information Technology & Management (ABV-IIIT&M), Gwalior
3	Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow	4	Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi
5	Central Sanskrit University	6	Central University of Haryana
7	Central University of Jammu	8	Central University of Karnataka
9	Central University of Kerala	10	Central University of Punjab
11	Central University of Rajasthan	12	Central University of South Bihar
13	Central University of Tamil Nadu	14	Central University Orissa
15	CIT, Kokrajhar	16	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar National Institute of Technology, Jalandhar
17	Ghani Khan Choudhury Institute of Engineering and Technology (GKCIET), Malda	18	Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University
19	IGNTU, Amarkantak	20	IIIT Dharwad, Karnataka
21	IIIT Kota, Rajasthan	22	IIIT Kottayam, Kerala
23	IIIT Senapati, Manipur	24	IIIT Sri City Chittoor
25	IIIT Una, Himachal Pradesh	26	IIIT Vadodara, Gujarat
27	IIIT, Allahbad	28	IIIT, Guwahati
29	IIITDM, Jabalpur	30	IIITDM, Kancheepuram
31	IIITDM, Kurnool	32	IIM Bangalore
33	IIM Lucknow	34	IIM Raipur
35	IIM Shillong	36	IIM, Bodh Gaya
37	IIM, Kashipur	38	IIM, Kozhikode
39	IIM, Nagpur	40	IIM, Ranchi
41	IIM, Udaipur	42	IIM, Vishakhapatnam
43	IISER Tirupati	44	IISER, Berhampur
45	IISER, Bhopal	46	IISER, Kolkata
47	IISER, Mohali	48	IISER, Pune
49	IISER, Thiruvananthapuram	50	IISER, Tirupati
51	IIT Bhubaneswar	52	IIT Gandhinagar

S. No.	Participant Institutions	S. No.	Participant Institutions
53	IIT Indore	54	IIT Ropar
55	IIT, Bhilai	56	IIT, Bombay
57	IIT, Delhi	58	IIT, Dharwad
59	IIT, Hyderabad	60	IIT, Jodhpur
61	IIT, Kanpur	62	IIT, Kharagpur
63	IIT, Madras	64	IIT, Mandi
65	IIT, Palakkad	66	IIT, Roorkee
67	IIT(BHU), Varanasi	68	IIT(ISM) Dhanbad
69	Jamia Millia Islamia	70	Jawaharlal Nehru University
71	Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur	72	Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology, Bhopal
73	MNNIT, Allahbad	74	National Institute of Advanced Manufacturing Technology (NIAMT), Ranchi
75	National Institute of Technology, Arunachal Pradesh	76	National Institute of Technology, Calicut
77	National Institute of Technology, Durgapur	78	National Institute of Technology, Meghalaya
79	National Institute of Technology, Patna	80	National Institute of Technology, Puducherry
81	National Institute of Technology, Srinagar	82	National Institute of Technology, Suratkhal
83	National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli	84	National Institute of Technology, Warangal
85	NERIST	86	NIT, Agartala
87	NIT, Hamirpur	88	NIT, Rourkela
89	NIT, Uttarakhand	90	NITTTR, Chandigarh
91	NITTTR, Chennai	92	NITTTR, Kolkata
93	Sant Longowal Institute of Engineering & Technology (SLIET)	94	School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal
95	School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi	96	School of Planning and Architecture, Vijayawada
97	Tripura University	98	University of Delhi
99	University of Hyderabad	100	Visva Bharati

“There is no health without mental health”

World Health Organization

EMERGING PRACTICES

“My message, especially to young people, is to have courage to think differently, courage to invent, to travel the unexplored path, courage to discover the impossible and to conquer the problems and succeed. These are great qualities that they must work towards.”

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

1. Introduction

Mental wellbeing is crucial in the overall development and success of students, particularly in a rigorous academic environment like National Institute of Technology (NIT) Agartala. Recognizing the growing need for mental health support among students, NIT Agartala has undertaken significant steps to promote a healthy mental and emotional environment on campus. This report will detail the various initiatives, programs, and structural support systems in place to ensure the mental wellbeing of students. From establishing dedicated counselling services and grievance redressal mechanisms to organizing workshops, yoga, meditation, and other stress-relief activities, NIT Agartala has been committed to nurturing not just academic excellence, but also the emotional and mental health of its students.

2. Mental Wellbeing Programs at NIT Agartala

2.1 Dedicated Counsellor for Students

NIT Agartala recognizes the importance of mental health and provides a dedicated counsellor to assist students with their psychological and emotional challenges. This counsellor offers one-on-one sessions to students facing stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. Students can confidentially seek guidance on personal, academic, and social concerns. The counsellor is available at scheduled times, and students are encouraged to take advantage of this resource whenever they feel the need to talk to a professional. The counsellor also conducts group therapy sessions and workshops aimed at teaching stress-management techniques, handling academic pressure, and coping with personal life challenges. In the last academic year 221 students received counselling regarding different mental health challenges.

2.2 Student Grievance Cell

NIT Agartala's Student Grievance Cell is another vital component in supporting the mental wellbeing of students. The Grievance Cell is designed to address a wide variety of student issues, ranging from academic concerns to social and emotional well-being. The cell ensures that students have a formal avenue to raise their concerns and have them addressed by the appropriate authorities.

2.3 Gymkhana Body and Students' Welfare Section

The Gymkhana Body of NIT Agartala along with Students' welfare section takes responsibility of student welfare and play an active role in organizing events that promote physical and mental health. These two bodies ensure that wellbeing of students is an integral part of campus life through regular events, both in-person and virtual, aimed at fostering happiness, emotional stability, and community engagement.

Some of the significant mental health programs organized include:

- **Art of Living Workshops:** These workshops introduce students to ancient practices and breathing techniques that reduce stress and enhance mindfulness. The Art of Living sessions are designed to help students relax, refocus, and rejuvenate their mental energy. These sessions have proven highly effective in reducing anxiety and building emotional resilience among participants.
- **Happiness Program:** This program focuses on boosting mental positivity and teaching students how to manage negative emotions in healthy ways. The Happiness Program provides tools for personal growth, offering techniques to handle emotional fluctuations, strengthen interpersonal relationships, and maintain a positive outlook on life.
- **Regular Sessions and Virtual Classes:** In addition to major events, NIT Agartala organizes regular mental health check-ins and virtual classes aimed at improving students' mental health. These include mindfulness sessions, stress-relief exercises, and motivational talks by professionals in the field of psychology and mental health.
- **Cultural Events:** Cultural events are conducted on regular basis to promote the harmony among the students. These events help in understanding the different cultures across the country, strengthen community bonds and most importantly relieves students' academic pressure.



5. Yoga and Meditation by the Sports Section

Apart from the above mentioned activities, sports section also encourages students to participate in sports activities. For this purpose NIT Agartala has one of the best indoor and outdoor sports facilities in the country. Besides these regular Yoga and Meditation sessions are conducted on daily basis. The Sports Section ensures that these sessions are open to all students, regardless of their prior experience with yoga or meditation. Students are encouraged to take part in these activities as a way to de-stress and develop a balanced lifestyle.

6. Workshops and Seminars on Mental Health Awareness

NIT Agartala regularly conducts workshops and seminars focused on mental health awareness. These events often feature mental health professionals, counsellors,

psychologists, and motivational speakers who provide insights into mental health issues, coping mechanisms, and the importance of seeking help when needed.



7. Virtual Mental Health Resources

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the virtual mental wellbeing program became a lifeline for many students struggling with isolation, uncertainty, and academic pressure. The virtual sessions, which ranged from mindfulness exercises to motivational talks, helped students stay connected and mentally grounded during challenging times.

8. Faculty support for the student wellbeing:

As a part of curriculum, each faculty is assigned with a group of students to mentor and support them academically and personally from their first day through to the completion of their course. Faculty take care of students overall wellbeing through interacting with them on regular basis.

9. Conclusion:

NIT Agartala has shown a deep commitment to ensuring the mental wellbeing of its students through a variety of initiatives, programs, and support systems. Through its continuous efforts, the institute aims to foster a healthy, supportive, and inclusive campus environment where students can thrive both academically and emotionally. The institute's commitment to mental health will undoubtedly play a key role in shaping well-rounded graduates who are equipped to face the challenges of the modern world with mental clarity and emotional strength.

IIM AMRITSAR

1. About Synergy:

Synergy Cell was the brainchild of Mr. Pratik Sanjay Avasarmol (MBA07 batch) and was established in the institute on July 2022 with a vision to provide a space dedicated to the mental health and psychological wellbeing of the students. This student-driven cell empowers students to reach their full potential by fostering a deep mind-body-soul connection. In July 2024, it collaborated with the Rekhi Centre of Excellence for the Science of Happiness, incorporating "happiness" into its vision and now serves as the centre's student arm.

2. Vision and Mission Statements:

Vision - Equip students with knowledge and awareness about importance of interconnectedness between mind, body and soul for happiness and wellbeing. This is to strengthen wellness and navigate various professional challenges, relationships, and personal wellbeing.

Mission - The cell promotes mental health awareness and overall well-being, advocating for happiness through a balanced mind, body, and soul. It seeks to emphasize key factors in daily life that enhance well-being and to establish a strong platform for happiness advocacy across campus, society, and the broader community.

3. Objectives:

- (i) To spread awareness about mental health and wellbeing through good balance between mind, body and soul.
- (ii) Promote happiness and its incorporation in life through linkage with good physical health, positive mindset and productivity.
- (iii) To celebrate official days as declared by the Indian government and other international bodies like WHO, UNICEF and others.
- (iv) Conduct various activities, trainings, guest lectures, research, student projects, community outreach initiatives and workshops for better outreach and as a medium to spread awareness.



4. Cell Mentor/Faculty Anchor:

Prof. Ananya Syal, Assistant Professor - Organizational Behaviour and Human Resources,

Members of the cell:

There are 6 members (3 seniors and 3 juniors) who are rigorously selected for their competence and potential to effectively achieve the cell's objectives.

5. Events conducted:

- (i) **World Mental Health Day (10/10/2023)** – Two events were conducted.
 - a. Paint your heart – Students were provided with chart paper, colours, sketch pens, and paints, and were encouraged to express their thoughts and emotions through writing or drawing, reflecting on their personal experiences and perspectives on life.
 - b. Pop the balloon - Students were provided with balloons of various colours, each representing a specific emotion, and were invited to select and burst the balloon that resonated with their current emotional state.

- (ii) **Online mental health awareness session (25/11/2023)** - The institute's psychologist, Dr. Ruhani Sohal, was invited to deliver a mental health awareness session and address the issues and challenges faced by students.

- (iii) **End-of-year Epistles (15 – 24, December, 2023)** - In light of the year's end, students were invited to write letters to individuals they wished to express emotions such as apology, joy, appreciation, and gratitude. To ensure comfort and authenticity in their reflections, they were also given the option to remain anonymous.

- (iv) **World Mental Health Day (10/10/2024)** – Two events were conducted.
 - a. Paint your heart – Students were provided with chart paper, colours, sketch pens, and paints, and were encouraged to express their thoughts and emotions through writing or drawing, reflecting on their personal experiences and perspectives on life.
 - b. A stress relief program for the teaching and non-teaching staffs of the institute – Various fun activities and events were conducted for the working staffs at the institute to relieve their stress.

- (v) **Make Your Campus Healthy Campaign by National institute of Ayurveda (19/10/2024)** – A brief session was organized to the students on the theme as notified by the National institute of Ayurveda.

- (vi) **Movie Night (27,28 October, 2024)** – Two movies (1 Bollywood, 1 Hollywood) were screened both having their plots around mental health and wellbeing and happiness in life at the hostel blocks.

Problems that students face:

- "God forbid if anyone ever found out. I was supposed to be strong – a winner. Winners don't see psychiatrists or admit that they're depressed. I felt like a complete failure."

- *Why students don't come out to seek help?* - People often imbibe a dangerous and detrimental narrative that seeking out help is a sign of weakness and that we must deal with our problems ourselves. Students in a highly competitive environment such as an MBA programme are susceptible to feeling stressed, anxious, and pressured in an environment that challenges them. Students are generally ambitious high achievers, so the idea of seeking out help for a debilitating mental health issue is difficult to accept.

Other common problems that students face:

- Lower marks in exams
- Placements
- Friendship issues
- Relationship issues
- Introversion and difficulty to adapt to a newer environment
- Staying away from family Etc.

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF ANDHRA PRADESH

Institutional Measures

1. The Department of Psychology at University regularly organizes talks and seminars to promote well-being among students by inviting eminent faculty members and mental health professionals.
2. The University has class mentors/coordinators (Faculty) to understand and address the issues (personal, academic & financial) faced by students.
3. Every class has two student representatives to represent the concerns of the students.
4. The University provides platform for students for holistic development. The university has NSS cell, sports facilities, skill development cell and conducts various student centric activities such as elocution & competitions, field visits, cultural activities to ensure overall development of students.
5. The Hon'ble Vice Chancellor often addresses the students to understand the various issues faced by them. And the university organizes various events and talks on different occasions to create awareness among students community.
6. The University have anti-ragging committee, anti-drug hostel committee, disciplinary committee to provide unbiased and inclusive environment.
7. The University invites Medical professionals for addressing students regarding importance of physical health (hygiene, fitness, nutrition) and well-being.

At faculty level

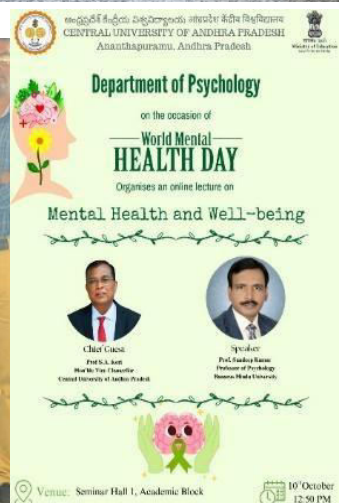
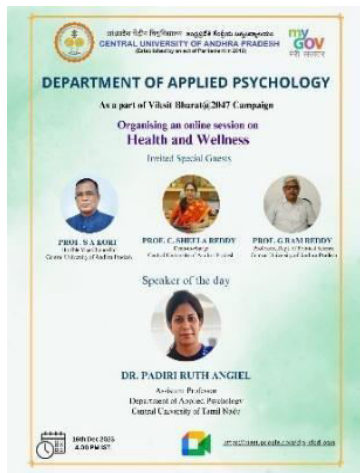
1. The faculty members help the students to cope up with their various (personal & academic) challenges and support them in the times of emotionally difficult situations by providing guidance. This provides an inclusive environment which encourages students to approach faculty and the university regarding their needs and concerns. The University will soon initiate the counselling center for the benefit of students as well as employees.
2. The five faculty from University have attended Capacity Building on Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs) organized by Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education as part of the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Program (MMTTP) at NIEPA, New Delhi. This programme gave an insight into SLDs and with the help of change ink foundation the faculty members look forward to identifying the students with SLDs and providing necessary help and support as part of inclusive education.

Supportive Measures

1. The University conducts orientation programs at University on how to conduct oneself in

Institution, how to co-exist with diversified social system that exists in Institution and how to involve in social connect and sustain it harmoniously; and at Department level for the freshers.

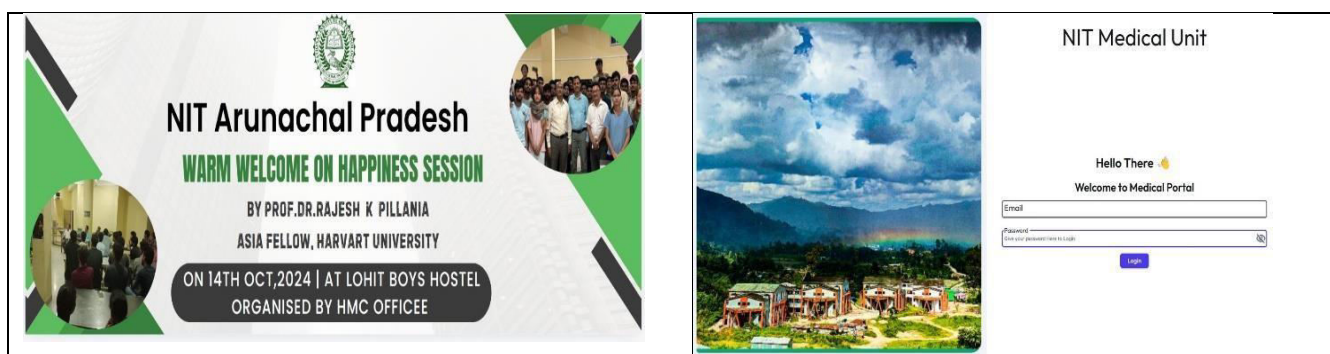
Challenges	Plans to Combat
<p>Counselling centre</p> <p>Stigma surrounding mental health and seeking professional help</p> <p>Students' participation in various co-curricular activities</p>	<p>The University is planning to establish the counselling center by utilizing the services of qualified faculty and hiring the experts as and when required before going for appointing of the counselor in future.</p> <p>Creating awareness among the students by conducting talks regarding the importance of mental health for fostering overall well-being like observing world mental health day.</p> <p>Ensuring student participation in co-curricular activities in fostering overall well-being.</p>



NIT ARUNACHAL PRADESH

1. To focus on **early stage identification and intervention** involving counsellor/MOs to flag any potential issues among all incoming students during admission through counselling and health check-up as compulsory.
2. To foster supportive environment, **mentor-mentee program** initiated starting during the admission process and mentor will submit the report every month. Max. of 10 students will be assigned to the faculty member belonging to the department.
3. **Kushal meeting and Health talk** to all students residing at every hostel once in a month by counsellor and MOs respectively through proactive outreach approach.
4. **Induction Program** by in-house faculty/resource person from repute for a week may be inducted for all the new B.Tech/M.Tech/Ph.D students.
5. Teaching and non-teaching staff play a significant role in students wellbeing through **informal interactions** and are well positioned to observed students behaviours and report any concerning patterns (repeated failing, not appearing exam, not submitting assignment & projects etc).
6. **Student should be encouraging for participating extra-curricular activities** including inter NITs events, Inter hostel sports, coordinated by clubs, NCC, NSS, sports cell etc.
7. **Self-screening program** to encourages students to proactively seek help. Mobile app is under developed by CSE students.
8. **Every HoDs should report the students** whose grades/attendance drops drastically and any concerning pattern specific to any students to the office of the Dean SW for needful monitoring and counselling.
9. **Student-Mentorship Program (SMP)** may be established where 8-10 fresher students would be assigned to a senior (2nd & 3rd Year UG) who would act as student mentor. Student mentor will report for wellbeing of his mentee every month to a faculty-in-charge of SMP.

Some of the initiatives taken by NIT Arunachal Pradesh:-



Organizing happiness session where experts took session at Hostel Mess hall on 14 Oct. 2024 and Prof.Mohan Aware Director NIT Arunachal Pradesh delivering a motivational speech.

Medical Unit NIT Arunachal Pradesh is under process of developing medical app for the benefits of all students where MOs/Counsellor will be at the fingertips of students.



Prof.Mohan Aware Director NIT Arunachal Pradesh interacting students during 12-18 August 2024 during anti Ragging week as part of proactive outreach approach

Prof.Mohan Aware Director NIT Arunachal Pradesh interacting students during 12-18 August 2024 during anti Ragging week as part of proactive outreach approach



Induction Program from 15-31 August 2024



Health camp for all the newly admitted students done with the help of Medical Units by 3 MOs/7Nurses

1. Introduction

“Mano-vimarsh University Counseling Centre” is a specialized facility at Rajiv Gandhi University, Central University, Arunachal Pradesh dedicated to supporting the mental health, emotional well-being, and personal development of students and employees of our varsity. The centers provide a variety of services designed to help students manage the challenges of academic life, personal issues, and mental health concerns.

The University has put conscious efforts by devising a dedicated helpline for counselling and guidance. The departments of Psychology and Social Work regularly monitor the functioning of the helpline for distress counselling and support. Further, multiple online capacity building and counselling programmes have been organized, inviting renowned psychiatrists and other experts to help and assist needy students and employees during COVID-19.

2. Activities and Emerging Practices

Individual Counseling: One-on-one sessions help students address a wide range of issues, including anxiety, depression, stress, relationship concerns, and academic pressures.

Group Counseling: Group sessions provide a supportive environment where students facing similar challenges can connect and share experiences, often focused on specific issues like grief, anxiety, or identity development.

Crisis Intervention: Many centers offer urgent, walk-in crisis counseling to help students in immediate distress, such as those experiencing suicidal thoughts or facing a personal crisis.

Workshops and Seminars: Topics often include stress management, mindfulness, resilience, time management, and other life skills that are essential for navigating university life.

Outreach/Community Programs: These include wellness campaigns, mental health awareness events, nukkad natak and support for marginalized communities to create a more inclusive campus.

Support for Academic and Career Challenges of learners

- Many counseling centers collaborate with academic and career services to provide holistic support, helping students manage academic stress, career anxiety, and life planning.
- Workshops and one-on-one sessions can focus on skill-building in areas like test anxiety, time management, goal setting, and adapting to new learning environments.

Ongoing Evaluation and Improvement

- University counseling centers frequently collect feedback from students to improve their services, adapt to new challenges, and better meet the evolving needs of the campus community.
- Regular assessment helps ensure that the center remains an essential, supportive resource that students can rely on throughout their university journey.

Referral and Community Resources

- For needs beyond the scope of the counseling center, such as long-term therapy or specialized mental health treatment, university counseling centers offer referrals to external mental health providers.
- Centers may also work with community organizations to provide additional support, especially in cases that require more intensive or specific care.

Major Achievements of RGU Towards Psycho-Social Well-being of learners

- Every year Observance of World Mental Health Day, on 10th October is coordinated through Department of Psychology and “मनोविमर्श” University Counseling Centre. The organizing committee aimed to observe this imperative global event so that everyone can learn about their human rights and access the quality mental health care they need not only in the vicinity of RGU but to the whole community at large. The program was conducted through offline mode in the Four location to perform the awareness Skit and Prize distribution ceremony was conducted at the AITS, Seminar hall of the University.
 - One Day Art of Mind Control organized by Department of Psychology & Social Work on 8th March, 2024 at Mini Auditorium Hall Shri Chaitanya Dasa (Ex-DRDO Scientist) oriented all participants towards importance of art of mind control and how to achieve mental wellness.
 - Online Digital Mental Health Awareness Program in Collaboration with Solh Wellness organized on 6th Feb, 2024. The programme was organized to assess the day-to-day challenges faced by our learners and help them through a mobile based application.
 - Awareness and Counselling Session on Examination Stress , 10th February, 2019, JNV, Gumto, AP; Number of Participants - 100. The session aimed at reaching out the unreached vulnerable population.
 - World Mental Health Day-2024 was celebrated with focus on mental health camp on 10th October, 2024 organized by the Department of Psychology in Rajiv Gandhi University campus at various locations.

3. Challenges and Future Plan

Students and employees initially expresses reluctance to attend the counselling session. However, it is effectively overcome by close counselling. Maintaining mental health in today's competitive world is always a challenge. The University addressed this issue by establishing a mental health counselling cell headed by a faculty member. Majority of our learners being first generation students adds to overall challenges in this regard. Other major **Challenges of ensuring psychological well-being at RGU include:**

- High Demand and Limited Resources

- Stigma and Cultural Barriers
- Diverse Student Needs
- Academic Pressures and Systemic Factors
- Remote and Online Counseling Challenges

Overcoming these challenges often requires collaboration between the counseling centers, university administration, and faculty to develop sustainable support models, increase resources, reduce stigma, and create a culture that prioritizes mental well-being across campus.

RGU has been striving to ensure holistic well-being of our learners not just through direct counselling but major research projects supported by ICMR and other prestigious institutions facilitating innovations and experiments together with experiential learnings in this regard.



IIM BANGALORE

Introduction

IIM Bangalore's vision is to be a global, renowned academic institution fostering excellence in management, innovation and entrepreneurship for business, government and society. The institute which is accorded the status of national importance by Government of India has taken several steps to meet the institute's vision. These include hiring high quality faculty, enhancing the quality of research, emphasizing internationalization, expanding our activities in the field of entrepreneurship, in both research and mentoring, scaling up in terms of student intake in all programmes, deepening our engagement with the alumni, improving infrastructure, and improving administration and governance. IIM Bangalore (IIMB) encourages a holistic and nurturing environment for students with transformative learning experiences.



Activities and Emerging Practices

A priority for educational institutions globally is well-being of students across all age groups as they face diverse challenges during their academic life. To make this path smoother to navigate at IIMB, we have a proactive mindset to setup academic and non-academic support systems. The fluid and subjective lens of well-being keeps our efforts agile and practical.

Our emerging practices:

- (i) In the IIMB ecosystem of holistic health, we have created a new layer of support for students with non-academic concerns in the form of a dedicated **Student Welfare Office (SWO)**, headed by a faculty member as the Chairperson from the current academic year. The office is equipped to understand concerns of any nature, create a mutually respectful, compassionate bond with the student, and collaborate with various offices/counselling service providers for appropriately formulating a resolution. In case of need, confidentiality is also safeguarded. The SWO takes holistic approach to understand all aspects of academic life, including the intersectionality of various offices and services. Helping students navigate difficulties, lending an active listening ear, and a validation stance fosters a positive experience. The SWO team includes the Chairperson, the Student Welfare Secretary (elected from Student Affairs Council) and the Student Welfare Manager. Within a few months of SWO in place, we found an added advantage -- this initiative has **eased the bandwidth of the program offices** as they now focus on academic queries/concerns. Our team is committed to build an engaging and

nurturing connection with a positive attitude as young adults today are open to the idea of seeking help for mental health concerns, which creates a unique advantage for supporting their journey. The goals we envision are:

- Provide a safe space and supportive environment for students to express and discuss their challenges and concerns, and to help address them.
- Facilitate activities and workshops that can help our students become more self-aware, confident and resilient and be better equipped to handle the ups and downs in life with equanimity at IIMB and beyond.
- Develop a sense of community and fraternity among students.
- Promote a healthy and safe environment on the campus, free of any form of bullying and discrimination.
- Build strong support systems that students can reach out to in times of need.
- Provide adequate wellness and mental health awareness and facilities.

Student Welfare Committee - Along with the SWO a student welfare committee was formed, constituting of two permanent faculty members other than the Chairperson SWO, the student welfare secretary, the student hostel and mess secretary, Chairperson PGP, and Chairperson Diversity and Inclusion, to deliberate on student welfare related issues as and when required.

- (ii) **Two prominent wellness/mental health service providers** render professional support for students and staff. Previously, we had counsellors/psychologists as staff members, tie-ups through alumni network, and visiting experts/consultants. Since professional counselling services commenced on our campus from the previous decade, it buffered the COVID-19 pandemic fallout on mental health to a considerable degree. Currently, an online interface is provided for seamlessly booking therapy sessions, psychiatrist consultations with a panel of professionals. Face-face interaction, online chat, audio, or video session can be opted as per preference of the client. Confidentiality and other aspects of the service are strictly adhered to. Walk-in option is utilized in case of emergency. The response to this model is favorable as appointments are completely booked regularly. A feedback loop is created with the providers to understand the overarching gaps and institutional interventions that can improve well-being of our students. Data is also generated for dominant issues shared by students.

(iii) Initiatives support for PGP (MBA) students:

- Orientation includes activities for building: skills/techniques to manage stress, introspection skills, solid bonds with peers and seniors
- Classes are scheduled mostly in the morning hours. This frees up student's time and energy for various other activities. The academic calendar is planned in such a way that they do not have classes on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Cultural, business, and sports festivals are organized in a balanced fashion with the academic calendar.

- Any conflict or concern is not resolved/acted upon until the student's side of story is

heard completely with a non-judgmental approach.

- Academic support in terms of mentors is available to students in all terms

(iv) Student-led initiatives for wellness:

MITR Society at IIMB serves as the official **Student Support Society**, providing comprehensive emotional and mental health support to the student community. As the **first point of contact** for students facing academic, personal, or mental health challenges, MITR's primary goal is to ensure that students have a smooth and fulfilling experience during their time at IIMB. The MITR team consists of 25 trained and approachable senior students who are committed to support their junior peers. With a strong emphasis on creating a supportive and resilient student community, MITR plays a crucial role in addressing mental health concerns, reducing stress, and enhancing well-being. The society operates on four main principles:

- **Confidentiality:** Students can openly discuss their concerns—whether it's about academics, careers, relationships, or mental health—knowing that everything they share will remain confidential. This privacy fosters a safe environment for students to seek help.
- **Emotional support:** The MITR team offers compassionate, non-judgmental support during emotionally challenging times, helping students deal with stress, anxiety, or any other emotional issues they may face.
- **Companionship:** MITR strives to be a dependable "friend in need." The team members are always available to listen, offering companionship and support when students feel alone or overwhelmed. Regular check-in's, informal chats are common.
- **Guidance:** The society helps students navigate their concerns by providing practical guidance. Whether students are dealing with academic stress, personal issues, or any other challenges, MITR ensures that they get the attention and care they need.

Student welfare secretary- Students Affairs Council (SAC) which is the apex student body of IIMB includes post of Student Welfare Secretary. The responsibility of the secretary is to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, sustainability and positive environment initiatives on campus with an overall focus on student wellbeing. The secretary works closely with other SAC members and the administrative offices to achieve this goal.

Animal welfare society- Animals like dogs and cats are huge stress busters and contribute to the overall well-being of our campus residents. **People for Animal Welfare Society (PAWS)** is a student run society that takes care of animals on campus. We believe in peaceful co-existence with them.

(v) Building cohesive knowledge and skills for key mental health facets among IIMB stakeholders. Snapshot of activities conducted:

- Exclusive training session for MITR members in September 2024. Topics covered were: mental health awareness, understanding signs of stress, anxiety, and panic issues, effective communication, active listening skills
- Mental health ambassador session for staff and faculty in October 2024

- Celebration of World Mental Health Day, focusing on activity-based learning
- Yoga class, nature walks, tree walks within campus
- Mindfulness sessions for students, meditation classes
- Upcoming mental health awareness session for security personnel

IV. Challenges

1. Low self-regulation skills leading to unhealthy lifestyle, technology overuse, and poor sleep hygiene. This impacts self-efficacy of students, including academic engagement.
2. Low inclination in subset of students to seek professional help during early stages of distress. The ability to connect, get support, and build personal competencies can equip them with proactive coping skills.
3. Individualistic mindset, prevalent in society, is seen on campus too. The I-ME - MYSELF frame of reference is evident in interactions and group dynamics. In addition, an unhealthy comparison mindset can diffuse one's confidence levels, socialization skills, and self-esteem. A collaborative mindset, if habituated, will work well in all spheres of life.
4. World Health Organization (WHO) identifies "social isolation and loneliness as a priority public health problem and policy issue across all age groups". Students are hyper connected through social media and seek validation of their online identity.

We aim and hope to build a healthy and thriving student community at IIMB by using a multi-faceted approach to promote student well-being.

MAULANA AZAD NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, BHOPAL






INTRODUCTION

The Wellness Club at MANIT, Bhopal aims to promote the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of students. With dedicated faculty members at the helm, the club seeks to support students through the challenges of university life.

Led by an esteemed advisory committee consisting of Dr. Meena Agrawal, Associate Professor, Energy Centre, Dr. Alka Bharat, Dean FW & Chairperson, ICC and Dr. Jyoti Lahari, Medical Officer, Dr. Anjali Dhengle as the coordinator, and Dr. Ashish Pradhan as the convener from Humanities Department. The club benefits strong leadership and expertise under Dr. Shailendra Jain, Prof. EE & Dean of Student Welfare. Their collective wisdom shapes club's initiatives and the club's focus on a holistic approach to student success, recognizing that it extends beyond academics.

The Wellness Club addresses various student life challenges, including mental health, personal issues, time management, and career guidance. Its primary objective is to destigmatize mental health discussions and create a supportive environment for seeking help. The club organizes workshops, counseling sessions, and awareness campaigns to encourage students to prioritize their mental well-being. Additionally, it provides resources to help students overcome personal and academic obstacles, fostering resilience and personal growth amidst the pressures of university life.

The Wellness Club aims to enhance student well-being through activities that:

-  Promote Mental Health Awareness,
-  Reduce Stress, Increase Joy
-  Enhance Holistic Development
-  Imbibe Integrity and
-  Foster Community.

It provides resources and referrals, hosts wellness events, creates a positive campus culture, and conducts research to tailor programs that meet students' health and wellness needs effectively.

EMERGING PRACTICES AND THE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED

- **Youth and Mental Health - 13TH October, 2023**

On October 13, 2023, Dr. Snehil Gupta, Associate Professor of Psychiatry at AIIMS Bhopal, led an interactive session on youth and mental health during Mental Health

Week. It was organized by MANIT and AIIMS Bhopal, the program aimed to raise awareness about mental health issues among students. Dr. Gupta addressed common concerns such as anxiety, depression, and the impact of social media.



- **Awareness campaign in the college campus-**

In the first week of January, the college launched a Mental Health Awareness Campaign, coordinated by the wellness club, featuring bold, eye-catching posters promoting personal counseling sessions. Placed in high-traffic areas like cafeterias and dormitories, the posters carried messages such as “What you say in here, stays in here” and included a 24/7 helpline number (18008194416). The campaign aimed to educate students, reduce stigma, and foster open discussions about mental health. The initiative successfully increased engagement with counseling services and contributed to a noticeable shift toward a more supportive campus culture, encouraging students to prioritize their mental well-being.

- **Mindful Engineering: Responding to “The Behaviors of Concern” Challenges in Youth-** This workshop was organized between 19th - 23rd February, 2024; focusing on various themes that students see in day-to-day life and in college. Coordinators for the workshop include- Dr. Savita Dixit, Dr. Meena Agrawal and Dr. Anjali Dhengle.

- **Workshop on Mental Health and Stress Management - 9TH- 12TH September, 2024**
Speaker- Dr. Kamlesh Tiwari, Counsellor psychologist, Motilal Nehru National Institute of Technology, Prayagraj, U.P.

The Wellness Club at MANIT, Bhopal, organized a session on "Mental Health and Stress Management" to provide students with practical strategies for handling stress. Led by a licensed counselor with over 25 years of experience, the session covered the physiological and psychological effects of stress, common stressors in academic settings, and coping strategies such as yoga, meditation, and music. The event included a Q&A session, resource materials on mental health, and a questionnaire to assess students' concerns.

Dr. Kamlesh was available at DSW office for one-on-one sessions with the students during working hours. On every Saturday, he is available from 4-6 pm on Zoom, apart from that he is available 24*7 on call and mail.

Along with this, Addressing Neuropsychiatric Challenges in Youth, Art of Living, One to one interaction Regular lecture series.

CHALLENGES FACED

1. Stigma and Lack of Awareness: Students don't realize the importance of counselling and mental well-being. Their conduct with each other may sometimes be harsh. There is a lack of sensitivity among the students and they are not sensitized about well-being.
2. Limited Participation: Engaging students consistently can be difficult, especially amidst academic pressures and busy schedules. Sustaining Engagement and maintaining long-term interest in wellness activities is crucial problem.
3. Diverse Needs: Addressing the varied mental health and wellness needs of a diverse student body can be challenging
4. Identifying Target-students: Some students need only a generalized idea of mental health, but few students need actual help. This makes it difficult to identify the actual problem of the students. One such target group can be academically weaker students who find it difficult to adjust and find balance.

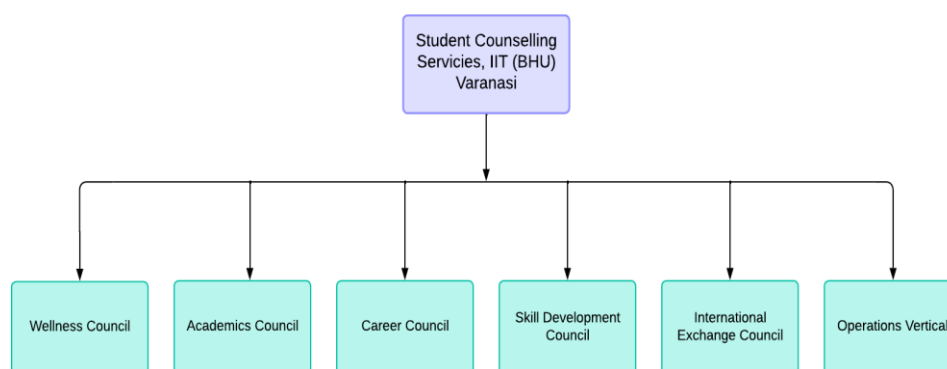
CONCLUSION - The Wellness Club's activity schedule for the 2024-25 academic year includes Stress Management, Time Management, mindfulness and meditation sessions, confidential counseling to address personal and academic challenges, and interpersonal Holistic development workshops to enhance soft skills, communication skills, Mental and deeper spiritual health awareness. Physical activities like Aerobics, Dancing, Singing and self-care workshops are being planned, For Mental Strength Ancient Yogic Pranayaam, Subconscious mind programming Practices and for Spiritual Wellbeing Chakra healing, Reiki Healing are being planned. This will promote overall well-being, empowering students to prioritize their mental, emotional, and physical health effectively.

IIT BHU, VARANASI

Introduction

The Student Counselling Services, IIT(BHU), was constituted on **2nd April 2019** as an institute-level faculty-student body dedicated to the holistic development of students. It comprises a team of 10 faculty members and 140+ students who act as SAKHA. The Student Counselling Services is also known as **SAKHA, “Your Friend in Campus”**, the acronym for **“Seek, Aspire, Know Holistic Advancement”**.

The services focus on wellness, academics, career, skills, and research through guest talks, activities, and counselling sessions. It has conducted 400+ sessions and 5000+ counselling sessions, benefitting over 9000 students on campus. The services are structured into five councils and one operation vertical, each with a unique specialization.



Wellness

Council: It aims to ensure the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being of students. It works in collaboration with the on-campus counsellor, Dr Laxman Yadav, Ms Soumya Srivastava, and the online institute wellness partner, YourDost (probationary).

Contact: wellness.sakha@iitbhu.ac.in

Academics Council: It aims to help students perform well academically by providing them assistance through study tips, accessible study materials, and guidance from seniors through remedial classes. It also aims to spread awareness regarding different research programs in India and exams such as CAT, GATE, TOEFL, etc.

Contact: academics.sakha@iitbhu.ac.in

Career Council: It aims to spread awareness regarding different career paths and facilitate students with career selection, preparation tips, resources and mock interviews. It leads flagship initiatives like Encore, Acing Internships and Acing Placements, promoting neutral and open guidance to every student. **Contact:** career.sakha@iitbhu.ac.in

Skill Development Council: It aims to help students develop their personality by enabling them to explore their hobbies and interests. It aims to equip students with the necessary soft and hard skills that are required for different career opportunities.

Contact: skills.sakha@iitbhu.ac.in

International Exchange Council: It aims to provide comprehensive assistance and support to students pursuing international opportunities, including internships, research, academic

programs, exchanges, and foreign students visiting our campus.

Contact: ie.sakha@iitbhu.ac.in

Operations Vertical: The Student Counselling Services manages all the operations through **Operations Verticals**, which has its own domain expertise. It looks after the publicity and coverage of different council events to enable SAKHA to reach out to more students and help them. It also manages SCS's official [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#) accounts.

Contact: media.sakha@iitbhu.ac.in

Activities conducted and Emerging Practices for Counselling Support System

- (i) **Interaction with Counsellor:** Our on-campus counsellor conducts interactive sessions for new entrants, creating a safe and supportive space to discuss personal challenges, whether academic or emotional.
- (ii) **Induction Mentorship Programme:** It is an initiative for new entrants to help them transition smoothly into campus life.
- (iii) **Mental Wellness Week:** Celebrated during World Mental Health Day, this week-long event is dedicated to promoting student well-being through educational sessions, mindfulness workshops, and open discussions about mental health.
- (iv) **Life's Tiny Wins:** A WhatsApp community of students, faculty and staff members that's designed to infuse mornings with motivation, inspiration, and positivity by sharing insightful content every day.
- (v) **Remedial Classes:** These remedial classes provide targeted support to new students preparing for their first college exams, focusing on enhancing conceptual clarity and problem-solving skills. Sophomore Academic Mentors, who excel in these courses, lead the sessions, simplifying complex topics and guiding students through challenging problems.
- (vi) **Acing Placement and Acing Internships:** Preparing for internships and placements can be a source of considerable stress for final-year and pre-final-year students. This series of guidance sessions is structured to ease that pressure by offering tailored advice on critical areas such as Software Development Engineering (SDE), Data Analytics (DA), Data Science (DS), Core Engineering fields, and Product Management.

Other Initiative

1. **21-Day Habit Challenge:** A program designed to help students adopt new habits and create positive and lasting change like Digital Detox, Book Reading, Yoga and Meditation, Physical Activity:
2. **Heart Out:** The one-stop platform to share feelings, emotions, and experiences! We also conduct activities like Thank You Day, Forgiveness Day, etc., where students can express their emotions and treasured moments with the community.
3. **Open Elective / Language Management Courses Repository:** A comprehensive data repository designed to assist students in selecting OE and LM courses, offering valuable insights, learnings, and experiences from seniors who have already experienced these

courses.

4. **Placement and Internship Diary:** A compilation of students' experiences containing details about the tests and interviews conducted by various companies.
5. **Career Compass:** An initiative designed to guide new entrants in exploring diverse career paths and equipping them with the tools to make informed decisions about their professional futures.
6. **Speak Up! By SCS:** "Speak up!" by SCS is a community platform where like-minded individuals engage in group activities, including mock group discussions, to enhance and develop their soft skills. It improves collaborative learning and personal growth.
7. **Exhort Series:** A series of workshops designed to help students master the essential soft skills required to succeed in today's world.
8. **Commando Talks:** A series of talks by Special Forces veterans of the Indian Armed Forces, where students will learn essential skills from the battlefield that are valuable for excelling in life.
9. **Skills Winter Bootcamp:** An array of 101-level workshops and sessions on diverse skills aimed to expose students to different skills and help them get acquainted with them. It offers a hands-on learning experience, allowing participants to explore new interests and build foundational knowledge in various skill areas.
10. **Foreign & Indian Internship Database:** A database that compiles comprehensive information for applying to research internship opportunities at national and international levels. It serves as a valuable resource for streamlining the application process and connecting with potential opportunities at national and international levels.
11. **Branch-wise Research Areas:** It provides detailed documentation on specific research areas across various fields, helping students easily identify projects that align with their academic interests and career aspirations. Additionally, it includes the names of professors working in each area, allowing students to connect with experts in their desired fields.
12. **Tech Symposium:** It is a series that showcases expert talks and panel discussions on emerging fields such as AI/ML, Robotics, and Electric Vehicles. The series aims to equip students with valuable insights, introductions, and guidance as they navigate and explore these dynamic domains.

1. Introduction

The mental wellness of an individual depends on oneself as well as others. Hence, one must consider the wellness of all constituents of an institution, namely - students, faculty, non-teaching staff, their families and even animals/birds, simultaneously. An institute administration that understands this principle and is responsive as well as efficient is essential for the mental health and performance of everyone.

2. Objectives

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः। सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत्।

Meaning: May all sentient beings be at peace, may no one suffer from illness; May all see what is auspicious, may no one suffer.

The activities and practices at IIT Bhubaneswar (BBS) strive to attain the above ideal within the limits of our institution. They ensure that all individuals remain connected with each other, and all the above constituents of the institute feel happy about themselves as well as each other. This happiness is expected to raise the performance and diffuse automatically to the outside world building perception about the institute.

3. Emerging Practices of the Administration

Simple and transparent processes, and collective and scientific decision making based on the data generated using feedback from and consultation with all stakeholders.

4. Emerging Practices for Faculty and staff

A new faculty / staff can stay in the guest house for upto three months prior to moving into a permanent residence. She is introduced to the entire campus via an email which provides personal information such as photograph, home town, school education and hobbies, as well as the professional background and achievements. This helps him / her to connect with like-minded people for friendship and/or professional collaboration.

All faculty are trained in research based teaching and research mentorship practices. Sessions on communication and interpersonal skills are organized for the staff. Assessment criteria for promotion and pay level movement are made transparent. Written feedback is given to those who need to improve.

Eight centres / clubs provide platform to **families** and other to express themselves, realize their potential, and support each other. These include: Day care centre, Children's activity centre, Ladies club, Senior citizen's club, Health club, Gardening club, Animal-Human peaceful co-existence club, Spiritual and religious society.

IIT BBS strives to create a **women friendly environment**. Seven of the above clubs are run by **women**. Female students (UG, PG or research) working towards a project / thesis with an advisor are entitled to work from home for two consecutive days during their **menstrual cycles**. A **workshop on learning cycling** is held at the beginning of the academic year.

Workshops on work-life balance and other women related issues are arranged periodically.

TABLE: The details of students needing special attention in a “Teaching Portfolio.” The names have been modified to maintain the confidentiality of the students.

Student name	Roll no.	Manner of identification	Nature of attention provided
Datta Nene	22EP01065	They were very irregular during the first 3-4 weeks.	They were emailed, called via friends, asked to explain their absence, & counselled suitably. Thereafter, they attended classes regularly.
Prashant K	22EP01014		
Monojit Bagh	22CS01059		
Niharika M	21EE01002	These backlog students faced difficulty in attending classes due to an overlap in the timetable.	TAs took extra sessions to help them understand various topics.

5. Emerging Practices for Students

TEACHING PORTFOLIO: It documents all key aspects of the teacher’s activity just as a Research Paper does for a research activity. **Every faculty** member has to prepare this portfolio for each course taught, and produce it as evidence of teaching effectiveness to get promoted. One of the entries in this portfolio is the details of **students needing special attention** as shown above (name and roll no. are fictitious). Depending upon the level and kind of attention required, the teacher may refer such students to their faculty advisors.

COUNSELLING SERVICES TEAM (CST): There are 24 (B.Tech) + 4 (ITEP) + 10 (M.Tech) + 5 (MSc) = **43 Faculty Advisors / per year**, each of whom is paired with a **Student Advisor**. About 20 students are attached to each Faculty-Student Advisor pair. An advisor refers an advisee she cannot handle even with the help of the student advisor to the professional **Counsellor (Dean)** for psychological (academic) problems. The Counsellor (s) holds regular one-on-one sessions with the students and follow-ups as needed. She critical cases being managed by her with the **Director** with a view to help the student without violating confidentiality. A **Professor-in-Charge (PIC) of Counselling** selects the Student Advisors, helps them as well as faculty advisors with their responsibilities, and organizes mental wellness events for students / advisors. The PIC Counselling leads the CST comprising of Faculty / Student Advisors, Vice-President Gymkhana and Ph.D. representative.

STUDENT PORTFOLIO: It documents the advisee’s contact details, mother tongue, home town, rank & score in the board and entrance exams, prior educational details, hobbies, motivation for joining IIT and goals, professional and contact details of family members, **name of a buddy having a different mother tongue, and special medical / psychological history if any**. Each Faculty Advisor prepares this portfolio for each advisee during an informal interaction, and ascertains the latter sensitive aspect **over a phone call to the students' parent(s)**, within two weeks of the students' joining the program.

ORIENTATION OF ADVISEES: The Student Advisors contact the candidates selected for admission to IIT BBS after their announcement from the JEE / JAM / GATE offices. They create a WhatsApp group of their advisees to provide guidance and answer queries. They help the incoming students and their parents reach the campus comfortably, and complete all formalities. The **Director and Deans interact with the students and parents** in separate sessions to familiarize them with the facilities, societies, clubs and counselling services. Psychological orientation sessions involving interactions with the seniors and discussions on personality development are organized. A **Treasure Hunt** helps familiarization with new surroundings, and **Freshers' Got Talent night** helps showcase talents and make friends.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES: Group Sessions, workshops and Nukkad Natak are organized on self-awareness, emotional quotient, examination stress, prevention of depression and suicide, career development, bridging the gap between faculty and students, and inspiring the students from the life journey of faculty, and the management of discontent/frustration due to the lack of job/internship opportunities.

A popular informal platform is **Youth Adda**, which is co-hosted in hostels by 2-3 faculty and the Student Advisor. This platform encourages open discussions among students on academic and non-academic issues in a safe and supportive environment without fear of judgment. It fosters a sense of community and the realization that they are not alone in their struggles.

Every year institute releases its mental health magazine **Udaan** on 10th October. The cover page of this magazine and a **poster** put up on hostel notice boards are shown below. The gymkhana's numerous clubs and societies covering culture, science and technology, sports, dance, drama etc. assist students in reducing stress and pursuing hobbies.

6. Challenges and methods envisaged to overcome them

Early identification of students needing special attention via effective implementation of Teaching portfolio and Student portfolio concepts.

Stress reduction via training in core mental practices – relaxation, meditation, rejuvenation, & inner-connect, covering the underlying science, non-violent communication and power of pause.

Assessment of CST performance: Metrics could be surveys of mental health of the cohort at the beginning and the end of a semester (results shared with the advisor), or the number of meetings held during a semester with the cohort and the attendance percentage of the cohort in them. This could boost leadership and team skills within the CST, and increase its attraction among students as an avenue of work.

Space management: A new master plan of the institute and the new hostels is considering creative organization of space around a person. Whether the hostel rooms are single/multiple occupancy, or where the common spaces are can influence how isolated a person feels, who he/she talks to and what kind of culture develops on campus.

COUNSELLING SERVICE TEAM

EMOTIONAL PAIN IS NOT VISIBLE

MOOD CHANGES

Experiencing emotions like sadness, unease, anxiety, or melancholy.

SLEEP DISTURBANCE

Changes in sleep patterns, difficulty falling asleep and poor sleep quality.

CHANGE IN APPETITE

Loss of appetite or increased eating without effort.

SELF-HARM THOUGHTS

Feeling worthless, disconnecting from social media and preparing farewell messages.

SOCIAL WITHDRAWAL

Avoiding social or pleasurable activities.


DECREASED PERSONAL HYGIENE

Neglecting personal care and hygiene.

If you observe any or some of these signs recently, then contact

Dr. Gagandeep Kaur Makkar

E-mail - gagandeep@iitbbs.ac.in WhatsApp - 9330926013




UDAAN

"The winds may shift, but the soul that dares to fly will always find its course"

A collection of articles.
Thoughts, posters, and more.
Made by students with love

FIFTH EDITION

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MAGAZINE



1.1. Introduction

The Student Wellness Centre (SWC) at IIT Bombay has served as a cornerstone in fostering the holistic development and psychological well-being of students for years. Recognizing the complex challenges students face in a residential campus environment, including academic pressure, career anxieties, self-perception struggles, and diverse relationship dynamics, SWC empowers them to navigate these challenges and thrive.

Organizational Structure and Personnel

Leadership

Professor Meera Raghunandan serves as the Chairperson, overseeing the Centre's operations and strategic direction. Ms. Amita Tagare plays a vital role as a Special Officer on Duty.

Counselling Team

SWC has five permanent and five part-time counsellors from various psychological backgrounds, including clinical, counselling, and social psychology. They provide individual and group counselling, addressing issues like anxiety, depression, academic stress, and relationship difficulties.

Support Staff

A psychometrician assists in diagnosis and treatment planning, while two administrative staff members ensure smooth logistical operations and timely responses to student needs.

Collaborative Network

SWC actively collaborates with IIT Hospital, Gender Cell, SC/ST Cell, academic departments, faculty to promote comprehensive mental health support and address the specific needs of diverse student communities.

2. Objective

To facilitate psychological well-being through counselling, awareness building, training programs for various skill building, early identification, and prevention of psycho-social stressors amongst the student community.

Mission and Vision

SWC is dedicated to promoting mental health as an integral component of overall student well-being. Guided by this commitment, the Centre strives to provide:

- (i). Accessible: Ensure equal access to mental health support and resources for all students, regardless of background or circumstance.
- (ii). Inclusive: Cultivate a welcoming and non-judgmental environment that embraces diversity and respects individual needs.
- (iii). Effective: Deliver evidence-based interventions and support mechanisms that empower students to build resilience and overcome challenges.

3. Activities and Emerging Practices

To address the issue related to mental health and developing helaty life skills, the emerging practices followed by IIT Bombay Student Wellness Centre are mentioned below:

Counselling

- i. *In-person*: Face-to-face counselling is provided within the campus.
- ii. *Online*: Video and audio-based counselling within/ outside campus that can be accessed from their comfortable spaces.
- iii. *External*: Face-to-face counselling outside the campus.

Promoting Early Detection and Intervention

- i. Early Identification of Students in Distress: A Well Being Questionnaire - Screening of Undergraduate first and second-year students through specialized questionnaires for early identification of their emotional challenges.
- ii. Online and Offline Psychometric Assessments (Jan 2021 onwards): Provided a comprehensive diagnosis and treatment planning approach through standardized psychological assessments.

Enhancing Outreach and Awareness:

- i. Student Orientation- Sensitized students on mental health issues and equip them with tools to support structures available on campus which they can avail to.
- ii. Parent Orientation- Sensitized parents on mental health issues and equip them with tools to support their children.
- iii. Vartalap Talk Series (2021 onwards): Renowned experts shared insights and fostered mental health literacy and various aspects of life among students through talk.
- iv. Harmony Hangouts (2022 onwards): Informal group sessions for awareness building, teaching life skills for students, and building better relationships in hostel settings.
- v. Fun Fest: Peer bonding sessions for first-year students and mentors highlighting physical activities e.g. Rope Climbing, Zorbing, Team building activities, etc.
- vi. Life@IITB: Annual program to facilitate a smooth transition of first-year students to the institute's resources and support systems.
- vii. Suicide Prevention Events (Street Play: to identify signs of distress amongst students and create awareness within the community).
- viii. Every year celebration of World Mental Health Week (Oct 2021 onwards): Raised awareness and promoted well-being through diverse activities. This year during Mental Health Week - A week-long exposure to various modalities of therapy that can be used for mental wellness examples include Art therapy, Animal Assisted Therapy, Drum Circle, Dance Movement Therapy .
- ix. On World Mental Health Day 10th October 2024, IIT Bombay hosted a thought-provoking event titled "Mind Matters for Well-Bring" featuring US Surgeon Dr. Vivek Murthy. He

emphasized the importance of mental health and the need to address the growing issue of loneliness, especially among students.

- x. **Recharge Zone: Innovative Approach to Stress Management (Dec 2023):** Recognizing the unique challenges faced during the intense placement season, SWC introduced the "Recharge Zone." This initiative goes beyond traditional counseling, offering stress-relief options like foot spa sessions, art therapy, asanas and mudra sessions, and pet therapy. The positive response from students highlights the effectiveness of this approach in promoting relaxation and well-being during a high-pressure period.

Expanding Access and Inclusivity

- i. **24/7 Online Counselling (Dec 2021 onwards):** Partnered with an external agency to provide round-the-clock support beyond physical consultation hours.
- ii. **Department Orientation Focused on Mental Health Awareness (2022 onwards):** Integrated mental health education into departmental onboarding processes.
- iii. **Special Mental Health Support Initiatives for SC/ST Students (2022 onwards):** Tailored interventions addressed specific needs and challenges faced by marginalized communities.
- iv. **Annual Mentor Training Programs:** Continuously hone student mentors' skills in providing peer support.
- v. **Gatekeeper Training - Faculty/ Staff (Early intervention and prevention of suicide).**

Challenges

- i. **Space and Infrastructure Expansion:** Actively work towards securing increased resources and infrastructure to accommodate the growing number of students and counsellors, meeting the recommended counsellor-to-student ratio of 1:1000.
- ii. **Mental Health Workforce Development:** Advocate for increased funding and training opportunities to attract and retain qualified mental health professionals dedicated to working with students.
- iii. **Addressing Stigma:** Implement targeted awareness campaigns and normalize discussions around mental health to remove stigma and encourage help-seeking behavior.
- iv. **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Forge stronger partnerships with academic departments, hospitals, external mental health organizations, and government agencies to expand access to diverse support options.

Long-Term Vision

SWC envisions a future where:

- i. **Mental health is fully integrated into campus culture:** Open dialogue, proactive education, and destigmatization ensure help-seeking is normalized and celebrated.

- ii. Prevention and early intervention are prioritized: Early identification and support empower students to build resilience and navigate challenges before they escalate.
- iii. Data-driven innovation guides service delivery: Continuous research and feedback inform interventions, ensuring maximum effectiveness and responsiveness to students' needs.
- iv. Inclusive support fosters student success: Tailored interventions and equitable access to resources cater to the diverse needs of all students, promoting holistic well-being and academic achievement.

JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA, NEW DELHI

Mental well-being is a crucial aspect of student life, influencing academic performance, social interactions, and overall quality of life. Jamia Millia Islamia has, since its inception looked at the overall personality development and support to all students by creating a favorable environment for their wellbeing. One of the important areas of improving their well-being is through their engagement in extra and co-curricular activities through various activity clubs under the supervision of senior faculty members. Students are also encouraged to respond to various emergencies or disasters like blood donation, flood and earthquake relief, etc. During COVID-19, the University formed a high-level committee with a dedicated helpline to help students struggling with mental issues. The office of the Dean, of Student Welfare also regularly addresses the needs of such students by tying up with different agencies like the Health Centre, Department of Psychology, the University Counseling & Guidance Centre (UCGC), etc.

To support mental well-being, counseling services are provided to university students by the University Counseling and Guidance Center (UCGC) as well as the Department of Psychology. The UCGC regularly organizes lectures and interactions with experts in the field of mental health and also offers counseling and referral services. Faculty members of the Department of Psychology have also been providing counseling to university students. Both institutions play a vital role in supporting students' mental health.

EMERGING PRACTICES IN SUPPORTING MENTAL WELLBEING

1. Comprehensive Assessment and Tailored Interventions

Effective counseling begins with a thorough assessment of students' mental health needs. The counsellors at Jamia use standardized screening tools to identify common issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress. Interventions are then tailored, based on these assessments that allow counselors to create personalized treatment plans that address individual needs.

2. Holistic Approach

Jamia Millia Islamia adopts a holistic approach that considers all aspects and integrates services such as physical health support, academic advising, and peer mentoring to create a more comprehensive support system for students.

3. Promoting Awareness and Reducing Stigma

Jamia Millia Islamia regularly organizes workshops, seminars, lectures, social media campaigns, and mental health awareness marches to encourage students to seek help without fear of judgment. Normalizing discussions about mental health fosters an environment where students feel safe to share their struggles.

4. Peer Support Programs

Peer support can be incredibly effective in promoting mental well-being. Jamia Millia Islamia trains student volunteers to serve as peer mentors to create a sense of community and provide students with relatable resources. Peer programs help students feel less isolated and more connected, which is essential for mental health.

5. Accessible Resources and Services

Jamia Millia Islamia makes its services as accessible as possible. This includes offering a range of service options such as individual counseling, group counseling, career counseling, and self-help resources. Extended hours and drop-in services also help accommodate students' diverse schedules.

6. Collaboration with Academic Departments

Jamia Millia Islamia Counseling Center collaborates with academic departments to identify students who may be struggling. Faculty play a key role in recognizing signs of distress and directing students to appropriate resources. This collaboration creates a more supportive academic environment.

7. Workshops and Skill-Building Activities

Jamia Millia Islamia regularly organizes workshops on stress management, time management, resilience, and life skills training to empower students with the skills needed to navigate university life. These proactive measures help students develop coping strategies before they encounter significant mental health issues.

8. Regular Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms

Jamia Millia Islamia's counseling services continuously evaluate their effectiveness through student feedback and outcome assessments. Regularly assessing the needs and satisfaction of students ensures that the services provided are relevant and effective.

9. Cultural Competence

Jamia Millia Islamia has a diverse student population. Therefore, counselors are encouraged to understand and respect the varied backgrounds and experiences of students to enhance trust and effectiveness in counseling. Providing training for staff on cultural sensitivity is essential for fostering an inclusive environment.

Challenges Faced by our institution

1. Stigma Around Mental Health

Despite increasing awareness, the stigma surrounding mental health remains a significant barrier. Many students feel ashamed or embarrassed to seek help, which can delay treatment and exacerbate issues. Overcoming this stigma requires sustained efforts at the institutional level.

2. Limited Resources

We often face constraints in terms of staffing, funding, and facilities. The UCGC is

inappropriately funded and the Department of Psychology does not have sufficient resources to offer a variety of services.

3. Cultural and Language Barriers

Since holding entrance tests at several locations in the country and now the CUET, our campus has become more diverse. One of the challenges before us is to address the needs of students from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Providing culturally relevant services and materials, as well as translation services, are resource-intensive but necessary for effective support.

And challenges like balancing academic and emotional needs, faculty training and support, sustaining engagement and follow up with the students.

Conclusion

The mental well-being of the students of Jamia Millia Islamia is paramount for their academic success and personal development. University Counseling & Guidance Centre and the Department of Psychology play a crucial role in providing support, yet they face various challenges in delivering effective services. By implementing emerging practices such as comprehensive assessments, holistic approaches, and peer support programs, counseling services provided at Jamia Millia Islamia enhance their impact on student mental health. However, addressing challenges such as stigma, resource limitations, and the need for cultural competence is essential for creating an environment where all students can thrive.



IIT (ISM) DHANBAD

Introduction

I. Activities and Emerging Practices

- (i) **Holistic Approach to Mental Health:** IIT (ISM) Dhanbad understands that mental well-being is integral to a student's overall success. Therefore, the institute follows a holistic approach to mental health that addresses academic pressures, emotional well-being, and social integration. This multi-faceted approach creates a supportive and nurturing environment where students can thrive academically and personally.
- (ii) **Proactive Support and Early Intervention:** The Institute strongly emphasizes early detection and intervention in addressing mental health issues. Regular mental health screenings, surveys, and one-on-one interactions allow identifying at-risk students. This proactive approach helps prevent problems from escalating and ensures that students receive timely help before their mental health deteriorates. The counsellors work closely with faculty to ensure that students facing academic or personal challenges are given the necessary support.
- (iii) **Integration of Mental Health in Academic Life:** Mental health support at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad is not viewed as an isolated service. Instead, it is integrated into the academic life of students. Workshops on stress management, time management, and handling academic pressure are regularly conducted. The faculty is trained to recognize the signs of stress and burnout, and students are encouraged to communicate openly about their mental well-being. Academic flexibility, in the form of reduced workload or extended deadlines, is provided for students going through tough times.
- (iv) **Continuous Feedback and Program Enhancement:** The mental health support system at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad is constantly evolving based on feedback from students and professionals. Annual reviews and surveys are conducted to assess the effectiveness of the counselling services and mental health programs. Based on the feedback, new initiatives are introduced or existing ones are refined to ensure they meet the changing needs of the student population.
- (v) **Collaboration with External Mental Health Experts:** In addition to the in-house counsellors, the institute collaborates with external mental health professionals and organizations to provide specialized services. This includes workshops on advanced psychological topics, guest lectures from mental health experts, and tie-ups with hospitals for students needing intensive care. By expanding its network of mental health professionals, IIT (ISM) Dhanbad ensures that students have access to a broad range of services and expertise.



- (vi) **Digital Mental Health Resources:** Recognizing that many students are more comfortable seeking help online, IIT (ISM) Dhanbad has integrated digital resources into its mental health program. The institute has launched online counselling platforms where students can book virtual appointments with counsellors. In addition, mental health apps, self-help tools, and resources are available to students for stress relief, mindfulness, and coping strategies. These digital initiatives provide a flexible, on-demand mental health support system that caters to the needs of tech-savvy students.
- (vii) **Peer Advocacy and Mental Health Ambassadors:** To further reduce the stigma associated with mental health, IIT (ISM) Dhanbad has launched a peer advocacy program. Selected students are trained as “Mental Health Ambassadors” who actively promote mental health awareness on campus. This peer-to-peer advocacy is vital to the institute’s strategy to normalize conversations around mental well-being and create a more open, supportive campus culture.

Challenges and Future Directions:

- **Increasing Demand:** The rising demand for mental health services is one of the challenges the institute faces. As more students become aware of mental health, the counselling center often has to handle an increased caseload, making it essential to expand the team of counsellors and resources available.
- **Balancing Academic Rigor and Mental Health:** The high academic rigor at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad can sometimes conflict with the need for mental health breaks. The institute is working to introduce more flexible academic policies and stress-management resources explicitly tailored to students who struggle with mental health issues.
- **Cultural Barriers:** Despite ongoing awareness campaigns, some students, particularly those from rural or traditional backgrounds, may still face cultural barriers in acknowledging mental health challenges and seeking help. The institute continues to focus on creating a culturally sensitive mental health program that respects diverse

backgrounds while promoting open dialogue and acceptance.

Conclusion:

IIT (ISM) Dhanbad is committed to fostering a culture of mental well-being on campus through a comprehensive support system that spans mentorship, professional counselling, and community-building initiatives. By addressing students' emotional and academic needs, the institute ensures that every individual can thrive in a balanced and supportive environment. As we advance, the focus will remain on expanding these services, introducing new initiatives, and continuously adapting mental health programs to cater to the evolving needs of the student community.

Some of the recent activities at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad for the mental well-being of students

YOUR DOST: Online Counselling Platform YOUR DOST for students of IIT(ISM) Dhanbad

The image displays three promotional posters for IIT(ISM) Dhanbad. The left poster is for an Orientation Session for New Entrants 2024, featuring MS. MADHVI MISHRA, IAS as the Guest Speaker. The session is scheduled for 06:30 p.m. on Thursday, 01-08-2024, at the Penman Auditorium. The middle poster is for a seminar titled 'Science and Spirituality' presented by the Scolomin Club, IIT (ISM) Dhanbad, on 27th October, 2024, at 5:30 PM in the Penman Auditorium. The seminar is inspired by the philosophy of Sree Sree Thakur Anukulchandra. The right poster is for another Orientation Session for New Entrants 2024, featuring DR. DEBI PRASAD MISHRA as the Guest Speaker. The session is scheduled for 06:30 p.m. on Friday, 02-08-2024, at the Penman Auditorium.

GANDHIGRAM RURAL INSTITUTE (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), GANDHIGRAM, TAMIL NADU

1. Introduction

The Gandhigram Rural Institute (GRI), dedicated to rural development and holistic education, promotes student mental well-being through a blend of traditional systems like the *Gurukula* and *Shanti Sena* and structured mechanisms such as the *Internal Complaints Committee*. These platforms enable students to voice concerns, participate in decision-making, and foster a supportive and inclusive campus environment.

2. Activities and Emerging Practices

2.1 Gurukula System

The Institute has a student support and mentoring system known as the gurukula system. Each student is attached to a guru who is a faculty and the Guru-Sishya ratio depends on the number of faculty available in the department and the students' strength. A separate slot is allotted in the timetable for Gurukula meetings. This ensures regular meetings of the mentors with their students. The *Gurukula* system, which emphasizes close student-teacher relationships and the holistic development of individuals, is an integral part of GRI's academic and social framework. Serving as a cornerstone of our student support, the Gurukula system connects each student with a faculty mentor (guru) for holistic guidance. Since its inception in 1956, this initiative has strengthened teacher-student relationships, ensuring regular meetings that deliver both academic and psycho-social support, particularly to those from vulnerable backgrounds.

Personalized Attention: The *Gurukula* system encourages close interactions between students and teachers. This enables the identification of mental health challenges early on, as educators are more attuned to the emotional and psychological state of their students. Weekly meetings with their Guru provide each student with academic guidance, personal development, and holistic support. This system guarantees that slow learners receive extra assistance through remedial coaching and peer tutoring, enhancing their academic performance and confidence. Regular discussions and teachings about life balance help students manage academic pressure effectively.

Values of Simplicity and Mindfulness: The system systematically assesses students' needs post-admission, offering personalized support tailored to their challenges. This proactive approach addresses academic, emotional, and personal struggles, fostering an inclusive environment that promotes both intellectual growth and emotional well-being. This individualized care reduces stress and ensures students feel supported beyond traditional education.

2.2 Shanti Sena (Peace Brigade)

The *Shanti Sena*, originally inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence and peace, plays a crucial role in maintaining harmony and mental peace within the institution. The *Shanti Sena* at GRI contributes to mental well-being in the following ways:

Conflict Resolution: The *Shanti Sena* engages in resolving disputes non-violently and constructively, fostering a peaceful campus environment. This contributes to a stress-free atmosphere where students can focus on personal growth and learning without the burden of unresolved conflicts.



Orientation Programme organized for the Shanti Sena Volunteers



First-aid Training Programme Organized for Shanti Sena Volunteers

Promotion of Non-violence and Compassion: Through various initiatives, the *Shanti Sena* encourages the adoption of Gandhian values like compassion, non-violence, and empathy. This nurtures a positive and inclusive environment where students are less likely to experience bullying, discrimination, or harassment, all of which can negatively impact mental health.

Leadership in Mental Health Initiatives: The *Shanti Sena* often takes the lead in organizing mental health awareness programs, first-aid training programmes, workshops on stress management, and peer support initiatives. Through these initiatives, the Shanti Sena not only supports individual well-being but also encourages students to develop social responsibility and empathy, contributing to their holistic personal growth.



Participation of Shanti Sena volunteers in winter school organized by Sevagram Ashram Pratishthan, Sevagram, Maharashtra to insist for a meaningful life with greater social responsibility.

3. Challenges in Ensuring Mental Well-being

Despite these strong cultural and structural frameworks, GRI faces several challenges in addressing the mental health needs of its students:

- **Limited Mental Health Resources:** While GRI has strong traditional frameworks, there may be a lack of professional mental health services like counselors or psychologists readily available on campus. This can hinder the institution's ability to address more serious mental health concerns that require specialized care.
- **Cultural Expectations and Academic Stress:** Many students at GRI come from rural backgrounds, where cultural expectations regarding success and family responsibilities can add to their stress. The pressure to perform academically while adhering to these expectations can exacerbate mental health struggles, especially for those who lack strong coping mechanisms.
- **Awareness and Education:** Although the *Shanti Sena* and other initiatives promote peace and mindfulness, there is a need for more comprehensive mental health education that covers issues such as depression, anxiety, and suicide prevention. Increasing awareness about these issues and offering practical tools for self-care can significantly improve the mental health outcomes of students.

Conclusion

The Gandhigram Rural Institute employs a comprehensive approach to student mental well-being, leveraging its traditional *Gurukula* system, the *Shanti Sena*, and modern mechanisms like the Student Grievance Redressal Committee, Departmental committee and Internal Complaints Committee. These platforms not only provide emotional support but also empower students by giving them a voice in their academic and social environment. The personalized attention, and focus on peace and non-violence are essential to fostering a supportive environment. By addressing the challenges and enhancing existing practices, GRI can further strengthen its mental health framework and ensure the well-being of its students in a holistic and sustainable manner.

Introduction

At IIT Gandhinagar (IITGN), mental health and well-being are recognized as critical components of student success. The institution is committed to fostering a supportive environment that ensures the holistic development of its students.

The IITGN Counseling Centre, Student Social Network and CHARMS (Committee for Holistic Association and Relationship Management among Students) have been established to offer comprehensive support through prevention, early detection, intervention, and personalized approaches to mental health.

Objective

CHARMS (Committee for Holistic Association and Relationship Management among Students) is an initiative designed to promote emotional and social well-being among students. This program focuses on building strong, meaningful relationships within the campus community, with a particular emphasis on interpersonal relationships, emotional intelligence, and communication skills.

The CHARMS initiative incorporates: - Interpersonal Skills Training Workshops that teach students how to build and maintain healthy relationships with peers, mentors, and faculty members. Emotional Intelligence Development: Sessions designed to help students recognize and manage their own emotions, as well as those of others. Conflict Resolution Workshops: Interactive sessions that provide strategies for managing conflicts and navigating difficult conversations. It works in tandem with the Counseling Center to ensure that students have a support system in place not only for academic challenges but also for personal and social concerns.

The Counseling Center operates under the Student Affairs Division and is designed to provide a holistic range of mental health services for students.

It encompasses:

Confidential Counseling Services: Professional counselors provide one-on-one sessions that cover a variety of concerns including academic stress, anxiety, depression, and interpersonal issues. These sessions are completely confidential and freely available to students.

24/7 Helpline and Virtual Counseling: Recognizing the need for accessible care, the center offers round-the-clock virtual counseling services, ensuring students can seek help regardless of time or location.

Preventive and Early Detection Initiatives: To address mental health concerns before they escalate, the center encourages healthy lifestyle habits such as physical activity, proper sleep,

reduced screen time, and social engagement. The centre also carries a comprehensive viva voce for all B. Tech student once every semester to know about their well-being. This is a compulsory activity which is a part of the B.Tech curriculum.

The Student Social Network at IIT Gandhinagar is a vital resource designed to ensure that every student feels supported, connected, and empowered. Through a combination of mentorship, group discussions, and access to well-being resources, it aims to create an environment where students can thrive not just academically, but personally and socially as well.

The Student Social Network supports the professional counseling team and is structured as follows:

Student Well-being Coordinator: Oversees the network and ensures that well-being concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.

Faculty Mentors: Faculty mentors from every department offer guidance and emotional support on various student concerns.

Student guides: Senior students are selected through a rigorous interview process to provide peer mentoring and support to junior students.

Workshops and Awareness Campaigns: Regular workshops and awareness campaigns on mental health topics are conducted in collaboration with organizations which specializes in stress, anxiety, depression, and resilience-building . The student well-being network helps students with any required academic support. This also carries out weekly student group discussion sessions lead by resident facilitators for enabling social communication and connectivity among the students.

Activities and Emerging Practices

IITGN organized a two-day workshop titled “Building Scalable Systems for Student Wellbeing” was held in March 2024, gathering 75 participants from various IITs, NITs, and IISERs. Focus areas included diagnosing mental health problems, developing scalable well-being systems, and leadership-driven policy change. This year IITGN also introduced a Happiness Course in the foundation program for first-year students. The course focused on Positive psychology principles to promote emotional well-being. Teaching life skills such as resilience, self-awareness, and emotional regulation. Providing strategies to manage the pressures of academic life. The course is planned to be delivered every year and will serve as a foundational mental health tool for incoming students. Students report increased confidence in navigating social and emotional challenges, contributing to an overall improvement in campus culture. Conclusion: The IIT Gandhinagar Counseling Center and its associated programs, including Student Social Network and the CHARMS initiative, have made significant strides in promoting mental health and well-being. Through a comprehensive range of services—counseling sessions, workshops, peer mentoring, and relationship- building activities—the center has created a nurturing environment where

students can thrive.

Future Plan

Looking ahead, IITGN aims to expand its mental health services further, continue collaborations with mental health organizations, and integrate new technologies to improve early detection and prevention of mental health concerns.

1: Students engaging in group discussions facilitated by a resident



2. Happiness Course Session : First-year students participating in an interactive session as part of the "Habits, Happiness, and Success" course.



IIT GOA

(i) **Online Counseling (24/7):** In today's digital age, accessibility to mental health resources is paramount. The Online Counseling service, branded as "Your Dost," offers 24/7 support for students, allowing them to seek help in a manner that suits their comfort levels. After logging in with student email id they can access the website.

a. **Access Methods:**

- **Texting:** Students can reach out via text for quick, discreet conversations about their mental health concerns.
- **Calling:** For those who prefer a more personal touch, phone calls offer a direct line to trained counselors.
- **Google Meet:** This video conferencing option provides a face-to-face interaction, making it easier for students to communicate their feelings and concerns in a supportive environment.

The flexibility of these options ensures that students can access help whenever they need it.

(ii) **In-Person Counseling:** While online resources are valuable, face-to-face interaction remains an essential component of effective counseling. Our In-Person Counseling initiative is led by a dedicated student counselor who is available to provide personalized support. The in-person sessions provide a safe space for students to discuss their issues, ranging from academic stress to personal challenges. The counselor employs various therapeutic techniques to help students cope with their struggles, offering tailored guidance to meet individual needs.

(iii) **Student Wellness Council:** To further enhance mental health support, our institution has established a Student Wellness Council. This council plays a pivotal role in promoting mental wellness initiatives across the campus.

a. **Members:**

- **Student Counselor:** Trained professional who understand the unique challenges faced by students.
- **Faculty Coordinator:** A faculty member who helps bridge the gap between students and administrative resources.
- **Student volunteers:** Certain students are interviewed and selected, provided with bare foot counseling.

The council's main objective is to foster a supportive community that prioritizes mental health, it aims to create a culture of openness and acceptance around mental health issues.

b. Objectives of the Council: The Student Wellness Council is driven by several key objectives:

- **Increase Mental Health Awareness:** The council organizes workshops and informational sessions aimed at educating students about mental health. Topics may include recognizing the signs of mental distress, understanding stress management techniques, and promoting self-care practices.
- **Monitor Student Well-Being:** Regular check-ins with students who may be struggling is essential. The council encourages faculty and peers to be vigilant and supportive, creating a network of care around individuals who may need additional help.
- **Engagement Activities:** To involve students in positive, community-building experiences, the council organizes various activities. These initiatives not only provide an outlet for stress relief but also promote social connections among students.

(iv) **Initiatives by Various Clubs:** The collaborative efforts of various student clubs enhance the effectiveness of the Mental Health Support Program. These clubs bring unique perspectives and initiatives to the table, fostering a holistic approach to mental wellness.



(v) **YourDost Workshops:** One of the standout initiatives is the **YourDost Workshops**, which focus on specific mental health topics.

- **Stress Management:** These workshops teach students effective techniques for managing stress, such as mindfulness practices, time management skills, and relaxation techniques. Participants engage in activities designed to help them identify stressors and develop coping strategies.

These workshops not only provide valuable information but also create a sense of community among participants who may be experiencing similar challenges.

(vi) **One-on-One Meetup Sessions:** In addition to distributing literature, there is a one-on-one session where new students can ask questions and express concerns about

transitioning to campus life. This personalized approach helps students feel more connected and supported from the outset. These information sessions are crucial for destigmatizing mental health discussions and encouraging students to seek help early.

- (vii) **Special Course:** To further support students' personal development, the institution had offered a special course focused on life skills and mental wellness.

Life Arts Expression: This course covered essential topics such as emotional intelligence, resilience building, and effective communication. By equipping students with these skills, we empower them to navigate challenges more effectively and foster their mental health. Some of the students even remarked that they were not so comfortable expressing themselves in the start of the course, but by the end they were able to express themselves clearly. This course also includes activities like nature walks designed to promote relaxation and mindfulness. Such activities not only promote physical health but also serve as a reminder of the importance of taking breaks and prioritizing self-care. Courses like these complement counseling services by providing students with practical tools to manage their lives.

- (viii) **TeleMANAS is an online mental health platform:** TeleMANAS is an online mental health platform that provides remote counseling services to students. It has a toll-free, 24*7 helpline number (14416), or 1800-891-4416 that has been set up to cater to and deliver health care services to the last mile free of cost. TeleMANAS can offer convenient and accessible mental health support to the students.

- (ix) **Internal Complaints Committee (ICC):** The establishment of an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) within the institution is a critical measure to ensure a safe, respectful, and equitable environment for all students. The ICC serves as a platform for addressing grievances related to harassment, discrimination, or any misconduct.

- (x) **SC/ST/PWD and OBC Welfare:** A Cell consisting of the professors and student representatives is established to look after matters of concern, if any, from students/employees belonging to the OBC/SC/ST/PWD category.

IIT HYDERABAD

Sunshine as a Counselling Cell was established in 2012 and has grown to extend its support to everyone in the IITH community. We help the students to address, deal and cope up with their personal, academic and other challenges, support students during emotionally difficult moments by providing safe and confidential counselling.

Sunshine Team-

Faculty Incharge: Dr. Somnath Maji	Psychological Counsellors: Ms. Maria Morris Mrs. Yukti Rastogi Mr. Phani Bhushan	<u>Student Team Strength</u> Student Heads - 11 UG Mentors - 68 PG Mentors - 17 PG Buddies - 25 PhD Wellbeing Representatives- 04 Student Management Team - 28
Faculty Representatives - 19		

Emerging Practices we follow:

STUDENT PROGRAMS:

Mentorship Program: (For Freshers)

- Mentors are seniors across all depts who will guide, help, support the UG/PG/PhD Freshers/ Incoming Students
- Responsibility of a mentor is to facilitate a fresher to adjust and adapt to IITH.
- Usually each UG/PG/PhD mentor is assigned 10-15 1st year students as mentees.
- Each UG/PG/PhD mentor will be assigned the UG/PG/PhD freshers from their respective departments.

Buddy Program: (For Classmates)

- A group of students across all batches and branches who have volunteered to be a point of contact for Social, Mental and Academic help.
- Coordinate Departmental Catch-up sessions, intra & inter batches and help sunshine to reach out to your peers.
- Sharing insights on departmental group sessions and activities.

<u>UG Activities</u>	<u>PG/PhD Activities</u>	<u>Community Events</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orientations & Ice Breaker sessions for - UG Freshers by Mentors and Counsellors. - UG Mentor-Mentee Meetings - UG Buddy Departmental Catch Ups - Sunshine Reality Show Funshine Event Painting without brushes Clay Therapy/ Art therapy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orientation Ice Breaker sessions for PG/PhD Freshers - PG/PhD Mentor Mentee Meetings - Stress Buster Event Thrice The Bliss/ Gestalt workshop - Mental Health Ideathon and Shark Tank Contest - Sunshine Happy Hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-Internship & Pre-Placement Talk by Alumni's Mental Health Week Events - Annual Sunshine Newsletter Edition- Pulse - Happiness Carnival for World's Happiness Day - Sunshine Suicide Prevention Day Event - Workshops & Weekend Series by Counsellors

- Creating awareness among the students and their parents on the first day of the freshers (UG, PG, PhD) by distributing a welcome kit which has a poster consisting signs of mental health (APA); a bookmark and a character strengths badge; all of them have counsellors contact information. Also, an orientation from the counsellors on the topics like- Introduction to emotions, self-concept & communication skills
- 5 days Training by Counsellors on Communication Skills, Suicide Prevention, Boundaries etc., to UG/PG/PhD Mentors & Buddies and 2-day Quarterly Training by Counsellors for UG Mentors & Buddies on various student related topics.
- Introducing more group therapeutic activities like- clay therapy, art therapy, gestalt therapy for the students to build rapport and various talks on topics.
- Posters of red flags and self-help techniques are shared for awareness.
- Mental Health Activities are inclusive for all in the IITH community.

<u>Challenges:</u>	<u>Plans to combat:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student- Counsellor ratio ● Creating a holistic bridge between the department, the student and Family. ● Stigma Surrounding Mental Health and Counselling ● Constraints for the involvement of students in the Mental Health Activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Psychological Counsellor recruitment order has been released. ● Meeting with the Concerned Faculty Representatives and Students. ● Doing community events related to Mental health to destigmatize. ● Providing multiple channels and opportunities for them to be involved.

Sunshine Team Activities:

- Team Birthday Celebrations
- Awarding Star Performers who excelled in the team
- Sunshine Talent Night
- Regular Team meetings
- Team bonding activities like Gratitude Letters etc.



Faculty of Psychology has been organizing *various activities* since 2011 on a regular basis for the prevention of mental health related issues and promotion of mental health and well-being among the employees and students of the University. The mental well-being of students is also catered to through the *curriculum* of various interdisciplinary and skill-based courses related to Psychology.

(A) Practices followed for Fostering Mental Well-being among Employees and Students

(1) Course Curriculum

The University offers Psychology courses at the undergraduate level to students pursuing programmes from diverse fields like Science, Commerce, Tourism Studies, Humanities, and so forth. The courses are interdisciplinary, helping in combining knowledge from diverse disciplines to solve problems; and also skill-based that help gain a better understanding of self and others, improving one's mental health and wellbeing. Both the types of courses encourage critical thinking, problem-solving, and developing decision making skills. The interdisciplinary courses offered by the University are *Psychology for Health and Well-being* and *Psychology for Living*. Both the courses highlight the importance of understanding human behavior and encourage appreciation of individual differences. The Skill-based courses offered by the University are *Emotional Intelligence*, *Developing Emotional Competence*, and *Managing Stress*. The learning outcomes of these courses include enhancing interpersonal and communication skills, building positive attitude, and facilitating conflict resolution.

(2) Activities

- A Wellness Initiative “**Aao Baat Karen: Let's Talk**” is organized by the faculty of psychology around every 3-4 months to create and provide a space to employees where they can talk, express, share and interact. The objective of this Wellness Initiative is to help create awareness and understanding about various aspects that can enhance our functioning and well-being.

The sessions include the following:

- Food for thought (relevant and pertinent topics for wellness)
- Sharing experiences (personal experiences, stories of courage, resilience etc.)
- Activities (individual and/or group activities involving the participants)
- Surprises (getting the 'Wow' experience)
- Creativities (drawing, singing, poem, any other skills etc.)
- Tips for Wellness
- **Mental Health Lecture Series on Well-Being, Inclusion and Sustainability** is organized by the faculty of Psychology on a regular basis to promote mental well-being. The focus of the Series is on sustainable mental health and well-being which requires a holistic approach to development and an inclusive perspective.
- The Discipline of Psychology also celebrates the **World Mental Health Day** to

create awareness about mental health related issues and aspects, and to foster mental well-being of employees and students.

Details of specific activities are given below:

(i) Conference/Seminar

- Two Days National Conference on Mental health and Well-being: Issues, Challenges and Strategies for the Future – 7-8th February 2013
- Seminar on Issues related to Mental Health (10.10.2014)
(Sessions on Living with Schizophrenia by Dr. Achal Bhagat, Psychiatrist; Strengthening Our Relationships by Dr. Pearl Drego, Psychotherapist; New Frontiers in Child mental Health by Prof. SPK Jena, Faculty of Psychology, University of Delhi)
- National Webinar on Reboot and Rebuild: Implications for Mental Health post Covid 19 – 10.10.2020 (Talks delivered by Prof Urmi Nanda Biswas, Professor of Psychology, M.S. University, Baroda on ‘Psycho-social Dynamics: Implications for Investing in Mental Health’; and Dr. Shilpa Pandit, Professor of Psychology, Chinmaya Viswavidyapeeth, Kerala on ‘Mental Health: Policy Imperatives’)

(ii) Workshops

- Understanding and Managing Stress by the faculty of Psychology IGNOU on 9th October 2014
- Workshop on Living with Mindfulness on 9th October 2015 (sessions on Being Mindful about our Relationships by Dr. Pearl Drego, Psychotherapist; Mindfulness: Applications and Activities by Dr. Swati Patra, Faculty of Psychology; and Mindfulness, Self-awareness and Self-Growth by Dr. Pulkit Sharma, Clinical Psychologist)
- Workshop on Enhancing Quality of Work Life on 9th October 2018 (Sessions on Being aware of our quality of work life, Role of emotions in our work life, Effective communication in the work place, and Role of resilience in enhancing quality of work life taken by the Faculty of Psychology, IGNOU)
- Workshop on Palliative Care: Enhancing Quality of Life was organized by the CanSupport organization, a leading home-based palliative care provider in New Delhi on 11th October 2022.

(iii) Community/Extension activities

Various activities/interactive sessions on Understanding mental health and its importance, Mental health management, Prioritizing mental health at the workplace, Emotional Intelligence: The key to mental well-being, Mental health and importance of stress management, Promoting mental health: Self-care and coping strategies, It’s time to prioritize mental health at workplace organized by Regional Centres all over India such as Shillong, Nagaland, Saharsa Bihar, Noida, Chennai, Delhi, Vijayawada, to create awareness and sensitization with regard to issues related to mental health in October 2024

(iv) Expressive Arts based activities

- Skit on Saathi Haath Badhana (Let's talk and support each other) on mental health awareness – 10.10.2019
- Slogan competition on Suicide Prevention (both in Hindi and English) – 10.10.2019
- Poster and painting competitions on mental health
- Poetry competition – Awaaz: The voice of mental Health on 10.10.2020
- Movie and documentary screening on mental health

Various Resource persons from academia, professionals, practitioners in the field of mental health, along with the faculty of Psychology of IGNOU have contributed to these activities.

Future Planned Activities

- E-magazine on mental health to create awareness at a larger level across all the Regional centres covering all employees and students of the University.
- Mental health camp for screening mental health related issues, identification and referral
- Intervention based workshop for fostering mental well-being

(B) Challenges faced in Mental Well-being Programmes

- Acceptance of mental health problems
- Stigma relating to mental health issues prevent people from sharing and seeking help and support.
- Access and availability of professional support related to mental health



IIT INDORE

1. Objective

Taking a multidisciplinary approach to deal with the mental health related concerns and red flag cases.

The LIVE Committee comprises heads of various departments, including Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, the Counseling Cell, the Health Center, the Minority Cell, and an external member. This committee addresses mental health and student safety issues from multiple perspectives. They regularly discuss red flag cases and develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to ensure student safety.

Student Counseling Coordinators (SCC): The SCC comprises 68 members, including 6 core members from each course (UG, PG, PhD) and branch representatives from each department. They provide peer support and act as a bridge between students and the counseling services, helping to identify students who may need assistance and ensuring prompt action during emergencies.

Faculty Counseling Coordinators (FCC): Professors from all departments serve as FCCs, acting as points of contact for students in need. They also help identify students who are missing classes or whose grades have dropped significantly, signaling potential issues.

2. Activities and Emerging Practices

2.1 An easy accessibility and approachability of counselling cell services and round the clock availability

Objective of the practice- Students get timely help for their concerns

Need addressed by the practice and the context – Stress may surface at any given point of time. Student feels the need to approach the counselor at the spur of the moment. The walk in counseling sessions has allowed the students feel helped as and when required in many instances.

The practice (brief description) - Having the counselor's office in the close vicinity of classrooms, other faculty and administrative offices, has helped in students approach the counselor without much hesitation or barriers. Also, the ease of accessibility helps students attend the counseling sessions without making any special provision in their regular schedule. This has further enabled to have regular follow-ups.

In-house counselors are available 24/7 to provide support, particularly in emergency cases. Handling the crisis in the wee hours of the night is of the utmost importance. Most red flag cases emerge in the midnight hours, so having counselors and emergency support team on campus 24/7 is really crucial and has proved to be an efficient practice.

2.2 Proactive informal interaction with students

Objective of the practice- This practice has been found to facilitate rapport building and breaking-of-ice situations with the larger student community, besides overcoming the stigma associated with seeking help in matters related to psychological well-being.

Need addressed by the practice and the context – It may so happen that the student is in need of counselling services or may be under stress, but hesitates in seeking help. This approach helps reach out to such students.

The practice (brief description) – This practice involves the counselor observing students in different settings and environments like classrooms, hall of residence, eating-joints, play-grounds etc. where the students are more at ease. The counselor also attends the academic and non-academic activities organized by various departments and student gymkhana, allowing further interaction with students.

2.3 A close co-ordination with health center of IIT Indore

Objective of the practice- Early identification of mental health concerns and effective crises intervention

The practice (brief description) The close co-ordination with institute medical officers as well as psychiatrist from empaneled hospitals has allowed us to identify the psychosomatic concerns, possible mental health and emotional concerns in students. Psychometric assessments are also conducted as and when required through the empaneled hospitals for a better diagnosis and treatment. Concerns like deficiency of vitamin D and vitamin B, hypothyroidism, etc are closely assessed and managed as per the need by both medical practitioners and counselors. Individually tailored treatment plans are also planned and implemented. Handling crises concerns are also done jointly by both health center officials and counseling cell members as per the requirement. This mutual co-operation and co-ordination among health center and counseling cell has facilitated effective handling of crises concerns.

2.4 Mental Health First Aid Training Program:

This program trains first responders at the institute to identify at-risk students and provide support during emergencies. The training is extended to Student Counseling Coordinators (SCC), Faculty Counseling Coordinators (FCC), hostel staff members, and health center staff.

2.5 Student Mentorship Program:

First-year students are assigned mentors to help them transition smoothly into campus life and adjust to the new environment.

3. Student Wellness Related Challenges

(i) Socio-Emotional Impact of Poor Academic Performance:

The fear of failure, along with managing expectations from family, peers, and themselves, can lead to anxiety, depression, or even burnout. Poor performance creates a cycle where students avoid addressing academic challenges due to stress, leading to further decline in grades. Time management plays a critical role – many students find it hard to balance study schedules with extracurriculars, social life, and self-care, exacerbating mental health issues.

(ii) Addiction Issues – Substance Abuse, Internet Addiction, Gaming Addiction:

With the stressful academic environment and increased pressure, some students turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms like substance abuse or addictions (internet, gaming, etc.) to escape reality. Internet and gaming addiction, especially in a tech-savvy environment, leads to procrastination, social withdrawal, and deteriorating physical and mental health. Identifying these issues early is crucial but challenging, as these behaviors often develop unnoticed.

(iii) Resistance/Denial to Address Mental Health Concerns:

Many students at may hesitate to acknowledge or address their mental health struggles, either due to stigma, fear of judgment, or the misconception that they can "push through" the challenges. Cultural factors and societal pressure to appear strong or successful also contribute to denial, leading students to avoid seeking help. This resistance can delay necessary interventions, resulting in prolonged suffering and potentially more severe mental health outcomes such as chronic anxiety or depression.

(iv) Peer Pressure:

Students often feel pressured to match the achievements of their peers, whether in academics, internships, extracurricular activities, or even social circles. This pressure manifests in unhealthy comparisons, leading to feelings of inadequacy, low self-esteem, or heightened anxiety.

(v) Social Isolation/Loneliness:

Loneliness stems from several factors, including academic pressures, language barriers, or simply the struggle of adjusting to a new environment. Loneliness can lead to feelings of despair, exacerbate anxiety or depression, and hinder academic performance. Students in such situations struggle silently, feeling that they don't fit in or have a support network.

(vi) Relationship Issues:

Many students face relationship issues – whether romantic, familial, or friendships – that impact their mental well-being. Conflicts with romantic partners, misunderstandings with friends, or pressure from family regarding academic performance or life decisions can cause emotional turmoil. The emotional energy required to navigate these relationships takes a

toll on a student's mental health, often leading to distractions, anxiety, and a lack of focus on academic or personal growth.

(vii) Job Market Stress and Career Expectations:

The uncertainty of securing a job or the desire to land a prestigious role adds immense stress. Students may also feel pressured to pursue certain career paths due to societal expectations or peer influence, even if their interests lie elsewhere. This creates internal conflict, stress, and anxiety, which can detract from their ability to focus on current academic responsibilities or make well-informed career decisions.

IIM JAMMU

The Ānandam Center aims to create a nurturing environment that promotes joy, fulfilment, and balanced growth for all members of the IIM Jammu community. It is the brainchild of our Honourable Director of IIM Jammu Prof. B S Sahay.

Ānandam Logo Meaning: The logo features a lotus, symbolizing purity, rebirth, and strength in Indian tradition. Its four petals represent the four dimensions of existence: physical (*annamaya*), vitality (*prāṇa*), mind (*manas*), and rationality (*vijñāna*).

- The circle at the top of the logo represents the rising sun, signifying new possibilities and beginnings for graduates and alumni.
- Lotus, symbolizes purity, rebirth, and strength in Indian tradition. Its four petals represent the four dimensions of existence: physical (*annamaya*), vitality (*prāṇa*), mind (*manas*), and rationality (*vijñāna*).

1. Significance of Ānandam: The Center for Happiness

- **Focus on Well-being:** It emphasizes the importance of mental and emotional well-being among students, faculty, and staff, fostering a holistic approach to education.
- **Research and Learning:** The center engages in research related to happiness, mindfulness, and emotional intelligence, contributing to academic knowledge and practices in these areas.
- **Workshops and Programs:** Ānandam offers various workshops, seminars, and programs aimed at enhancing personal development, resilience, work-life balance.
- **Community Building:** It fosters a sense of community and support among students, encouraging peer interactions and collaborations focused on well-being.
- **Cultural Integration:** The center integrates traditional Indian philosophies of happiness and well-being, providing a unique perspective in a modern educational context.
- Under the valuable guidance of Sri M and Swami Swatmananda ji the institute successfully conducted the sessions on “Science of Happiness” and “**Cultivating Optimism**” enabling students to practise gratitude and mindfulness as well as maintain a forward- looking, positive mindset that fosters success.

2. Team Members:

- (i) Hon. Prof. B S Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu
- (ii) Dr. Mamta Tripathi, (Chairperson, Ānandam)
- (iii) Dr. Eshika Aggarwal, (Co-Chairperson, Ānandam)
- (iv) A Team of 12 Students

3. Emerging Practices Related to Mental Well-being Followed by the Institute

IIM Jammu prioritizes mental well-being through a positive campus culture, open communication, and accessible support, centred around Ānandam—the institute's hub for happiness and holistic well-being.

(i) Yoga and Mindfulness Activities

Yoga sessions take place annually, normally in a batch orientation module. In these sessions, the instructors teach stress management skills while encouraging students to keep balanced lifestyles despite many pressures mounted by academics.



(ii) Activities for Mental & Spiritual Awareness

Every year on October 10, World Mental Health Day is celebrated by screening movies, conducting workshops, and holding open discussion sessions on mental health-related subjects. This creates awareness in the society about anxiety, depression, and stress by creating an atmosphere of non-discrimination and acceptance.

(iii) Gratitude Initiatives

Celebrations such as World Gratitude Day (21 September) include activities that encourage the expression of gratitude by children. It promotes emotional well-being of the community by making people more connected and respectful to one another. Activities such as the "Gratitude Wall" help the students reflect on the positive features of their lives.

(iv) Community Building Activities

IIM Jammu conducts some informal activities such as icebreaking between faculties and students. Some of the activities like 'Parichay' and special events during Teachers' Day are scheduled so that the student spends quality time with his/her mentor beyond classroom, where the trust is established, and understanding builds between both the Guru and Shishya.

(v) Mindful Solutions and Workshops

Problem-solving, decision-making, and leadership skills sessions are structured as mindfulness sessions. Workshops are non-evaluative and are designed to be creative to maintain an excellent balance between academic excellence and social accountability.

(vi) Mental Health Awareness and 1-1 Counselling Sessions

An insightful session with clinical psychologist Dr. Piyali Arora on August 30, 2024, addressed student mental health challenges and effective coping strategies, followed by one-on-one counselling sessions with valuable feedback.

4. Challenges Faced in Mental Well-being Initiatives

(i) Academic Rigour:

Students have pressures from high academic expectations, courses, and competition. Balancing well-being with the effort of achieving academic excellence proves very challenging and may end in burnout.

(ii) Diverse Needs:

The students at IIM Jammu belong to different backgrounds and have different experiences. It can be challenging to address the specific mental well-being requirements of each group, hence require customized solutions.

(iii) Communication Gaps:

Communication between students, faculty, and counsellors is a challenge. Some students might not open about their mental health issues, and this can lead to undiagnosed problems at an early stage.

Preventive and Intervention Approaches

(iv) Early Detection Efforts:

The counselling centre encourages the early detection of mental health issues through regular check-ins and anonymous feedback forms, thus making it easier for counsellors to identify at-risk students.

(v) Workshops and Skill Development

Workshops teach critical life skills involving coping with stress, the management of time, effective communication, and others. Such is to prevent mental illness problems so that the pupil can utilize stress management very well.

(vi) Developing Positive Well-being from Extracurricular

Inclusion of Happiness & mental wellbeing course in curriculum Art workshops, game nights, and interactive sessions are some of the fun activities. They help students relax, socialize, and feel part of a community.

(vii) Peer Support Intervention:

IIM Jammu encourages peer support wherein a senior student guides a junior student through the ups and downs of academic life. This is in addition to professional counselling.

IIT JAMMU

1. Sahaj Yoga Meditation Camp: Event Summary (30th-31st Aug. 2024)

The Sahaj Yoga Meditation Camp provided participants with a peaceful environment to relax and foster a strong sense of community and connection. The event was graced by our honored chief guest, **Dr. Anil Pise**, a senior consultant at Deloitte and a distinguished data scientist with extensive expertise in data engineering, machine learning, and predictive modelling. Dr. Pise shared valuable insights on the role of mindfulness and self-awareness in both personal and professional success, inspiring attendees to integrate Sahaj Yoga techniques into their lives. Participants gained a deeper understanding of Sahaj Yoga practices, sparking interest in incorporating these techniques into their routines. The camp received positive feedback for its serene ambiance and engaging sessions, which effectively promoted mindfulness and self-care. Attendees expressed enthusiasm for future gatherings, eager to continue their journey toward well-being and community connection.



2. World Suicide Prevention Day (10th Sept. 2024)

On **World Suicide Prevention Day**, the Wellbeing Club at IIT Jammu organized the following key activities:

- **Wall of Hope:** A space where students shared encouraging messages and personal experiences related to mental health, fostering hope and breaking stigma.
- **On My Mind:** An open discussion where students expressed their thoughts and emotions, guided by counsellors, encouraging conversation about mental health struggles and support.
- **Light a Candle:** A candle-lighting ceremony symbolizing hope and solidarity with those affected by suicide, promoting awareness and community support.

These events aimed to create a compassionate and supportive environment on campus.

3. Poster-Making Competition (22nd Sept. 2024)

A **Poster-Making Competition** was held, inviting students to express their thoughts

on mental health through visual art. The **themes, including Addiction and You Are Not Alone**, encouraged students to explore mental health topics creatively. Posters were displayed across campus, and the top designs were recognized with prizes on **September 22**, helping to spread awareness and positivity.

4. **Developer of the Month: Wellness Website Initiative** – Manomitra (23rd Sept. 2024)

The Developer of the Month initiative, led by IIT Jammu's **Coding Club** with support from the **Wellbeing Club**, challenged top developers to create **Manomitra**, a dedicated mental health and wellness website. This project aimed to blend technical skill with social responsibility, providing students a lasting digital platform for mental health resources and support.

Manomitra offers a variety of tools, including informative articles, self-care strategies, and direct links to campus counseling services, addressing common mental health concerns like stress and anxiety. The website ensures continuous access to resources that empower students to manage their well-being proactively. By maintaining focus on mental health beyond the month-long campaign, Manomitra reflects IIT Jammu's commitment to creating a supportive, stigma-free campus. This platform not only showcases the developers' skills but also stands as a vital resource, fostering open conversations and a culture of support.

Website link: <https://iit-j-mental-health-project.vercel.app/homepage.html>

5. **Nukkad Natak – "Nashe ki Baat: Zindagi ke Saath?"** (27th Sept. 2024)

On 27th September 2024, IIT Jammu's Wellbeing Club, in collaboration with Dramatizer, Abhivyakt, and Counseling Services, presented a powerful Nukkad Natak titled "Nashe ki Baat: Zindagi ke Saath?" in front of Egret. The street play attracted a large audience of students and faculty, delivering an impactful message on the devastating effects of drug addiction and the importance of mental health.

Through expressive performances and emotive dialogues, the actors highlighted how addiction can break down personal relationships, harm mental well-being, and derail lives. The performance served as a call to action, encouraging students to make conscious, healthier life choices and utilize campus resources like Counselling Services to support mental health. This collaborative event effectively promoted the importance of open conversations around substance abuse and mental well-being on campus. By the end, students were left with thought-provoking insights, making the event a significant addition to IIT Jammu's mental health awareness initiatives.

6. **Awaz-e-Dil: Open Mic** (8th Oct. 2024)

Awaz-e-Dil: Open Mic is an event dedicated to raising awareness about mental health

and suicide prevention. Organized by the Wellbeing Club of IIT Jammu, the event provides a safe space for students to express their thoughts, emotions, and experiences through poetry, Shayari, storytelling, or simply by sharing their personal journeys. It encourages open conversations around mental health, offering support and fostering a sense of community. Participants can either perform or attend as an audience, promoting empathy and understanding. The event will take place on 8th October 2024 at 9:00 PM in the Egret Common Room.

7. Treasure Hunt – Adventure & Well-being Edition (09th Oct. 2024)

The Treasure Hunt – Adventure & Well-being Edition was a collaborative event organized by the Nature and Adventure Club and the Wellbeing Club at IIT Jammu. Held on 9th October 2024, the event aimed to promote teamwork, problem-solving, and mental wellness among students. Participants, in teams, navigated the campus using clues and completed challenges that were themed around nature and well-being.

The event not only encouraged students to explore the campus but also emphasized the importance of mental and physical health through engaging, fun-filled tasks. Designed to create a sense of adventure and foster collaboration, the treasure hunt helped participants develop their critical thinking and communication skills while de-stressing in a dynamic environment.

8. Short Film "In the Silence" (21st Oct. 2024)

IIT Jammu's **PRISM - Student Media Body** proudly premiered its debut short film, **"In the Silence"**, an emotionally compelling project centered on mental health awareness. The film seeks to shed light on the often-overlooked struggles individuals face, capturing the impact of silence and the importance of empathy, understanding, and timely support for those dealing with mental health challenges.

Through its authentic storytelling and thought-provoking narrative, "In the Silence" encourages viewers to recognize the significance of mental health and to foster a culture of support. By portraying relatable experiences, the short film emphasizes that no one should face their struggles alone. With this project, PRISM aims to contribute to the broader conversation on mental well-being, inspiring compassion and encouraging open dialogue across campus. The debut film reflects PRISM's dedication to using media as a platform for social impact, fostering awareness and understanding.

Video link: <https://youtu.be/-KVjpKhdFls?si=uSL0NWIH3pOuOb6L>

IIT Jammu Wraps Up Mental Health Awareness Month with Diverse Activities

IIT Jammu successfully concluded its month-long **Mental Health Awareness Campaign**, organized by the Wellbeing Club in collaboration with Counselling Services and other student organizations. The campaign featured a variety of events aimed at promoting mental well-being, reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness, and fostering a compassionate and supportive campus environment. Students, faculty, and staff participated in activities that encouraged open dialogue about mental health issues and provided valuable resources to support well-being.

1. Inauguration: 22/10/2024

Mental health, Happiness and well-being are closely interconnected that contribute to overall life satisfaction.

Well-being of an individual includes physical, mental, and social health.

The practical strategies for cultivating happiness and well-being in daily life are :-

1. Gratitude Practice
2. Mindfulness and Meditation
3. Physical Activity
4. Nurturing Relationships
5. Acts of Kindness
6. Engaging in Flow Activities
7. Sleep and Rest
8. Setting and Achieving Goals
9. Cultivating Optimism
10. Finding Purpose and Meaning of life

2. Institutes take on Well-being of students.

- (i) Recently the institute has inaugurated happiness and wellness centre. It aims to promote activities like Yoga, meditation, Drama, Music, Dance, etc. This centre will be a platform to cultivate all kinds of hobbies with the aim for betterment of the overall environment of the campus. Few photographs from the inauguration ceremony are provided below.
- (ii) Students' Grievance Redressal Committee has been formed on 3/10/2024 to address the issues raised by students.
- (iii) The procedure for appointment of full-time counsellor for students is in progress.
- (iv) The procedure for appointment of mentors to cultivate several activities for students is in progress.



IIT JODHPUR

The comprehensive wellness structure at IIT Jodhpur includes: -

1. Faculty and Student Guides for new joiners
2. Online counseling service (Yourdost)
3. Student counselor and well-being moderator
4. Board of Career Development: Career guide
5. Sports officers and coaches
6. Diversity Officer (apart from the govt. recommended liaison officers)
7. Batch wise faculty advisors (for academics, are not restricted to counselling team)
8. Student wellness committee (separate from wellbeing committee, at a higher hierarchical level) - headed by the Director and Deputy Director

Activities for new student joiners

1. Virtual Progressive Muscle Relaxation – PMR is a medically proven technique to soothe and calm your nerves. Session duration - 20 minutes
2. Help in answering any queries – admission, course questions- mentorship
3. Individual Counselling – stress management, life skills training etc.
4. Interaction with fresh students to deal with anxiety – Home away from home

Continuing activities: -

☺ **YourDost app** – Talk to someone, anonymously

☺ **Informal events** -

Talks by experts, Counsellor's session, introduction to the students team

☺ **Organizing lectures and trainings on-** Career counseling, Stress management, Time management, Health care and Hygiene and life skills training etc.

☺ **Institute level workshops** on basic counseling skills for students and organizing events for encouraging interaction among students of different years, and staff and faculty members.

☺ **'Recharge zones' for students after exams, during placement sessions, etc**

We strive for...

- ❖ Speed
- ❖ Sensitivity to student's issues
- ❖ De-stigmatizing access to well-being services
- ❖ Sensitization to gender and other social inequalities

Challenges...

- Being a second-generation IIT, campus infrastructure and counselling services are in the process of maturing.
- Distinguishing between mental health and purely academic challenges, when students report or are referred with academic difficulties.
- Determining the extent of liability of the Institute and its counsellors in situations originating from outside, e.g. family issues or financial challenges.
- Sociocultural diversity of students, peer pressures to conform, alienation
- Monitoring of students if they are in campus
- Challenges posed by emerging technologies, such as the rapid spread of misinformation about mental health; attention deficits, and internet addiction.
- Need for counsellors' training and procuring of instruments to keep up with the above technology-posed challenges
- Unhealthy stereotypes and beliefs about friendships and romantic relationships being spread by OTT and social media.
- Lack of availability of trained professionals
- Should we handle mental health for all campus community members?
- Red flag cases shared by online platform

The mental health and well-being of IIT Kanpur students, challenged by high academic standards and fierce competition, have gained attention. To address these issues, the Institute Counseling Service (ICS) has implemented various emerging practices for support. However, significant obstacles remain in delivering these services effectively. This report reviews the challenges faced and the strategies employed by ICS to enhance mental health support for students.

1. Emerging Practices for Promoting Mental Health

1.1. Robust Organizational Structure, Ethical Decision Making and Confidentiality

At IIT Kanpur, the Institute Counseling Service (ICS) has supported students' emotional and psychological well-being for over 50 years, prioritizing mental health in holistic development. Its mentor-mentee system for undergraduates serves as a model for other IITs. Led by a Head and nine counselors, the ICS also relies on 600 student volunteers who manage mentorship and organize key events, enhancing campus well-being.

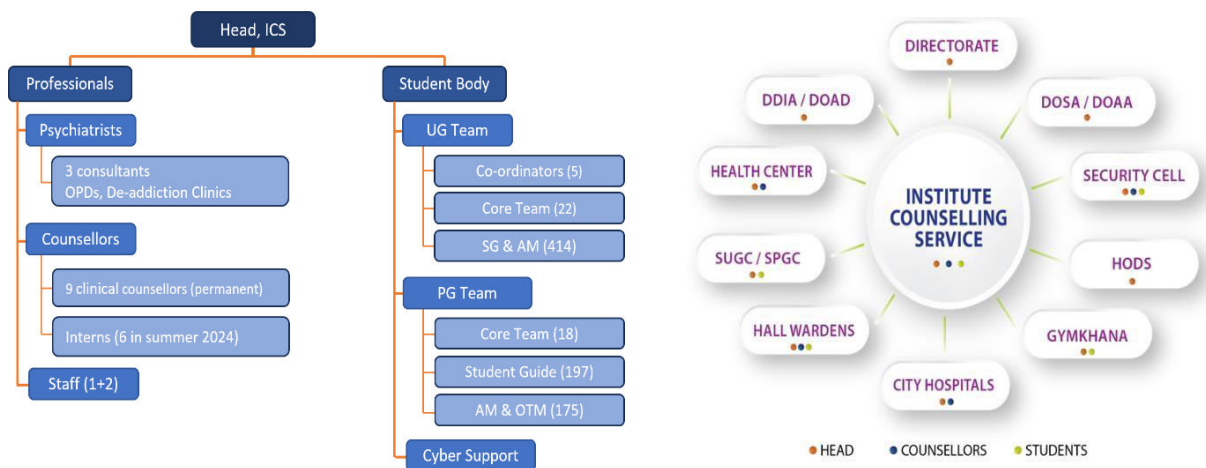


Figure 1: Current organizational structure (left) and the administrative network (right) of the Institute Counselling Service at IIT Kanpur.

ICS serves as a second home for students and it provides a safe, confidential space for students, prioritizing their well-being. By maintaining professional standards, counselors foster trust and create a supportive environment for discussing personal issues.

1.2 Peer Supervision: Every Tuesday from 4 to 7 pm, the ICS hosts case conferences and discussions to support the counseling team's growth and service quality. Peer supervision allows counselors to enhance skills and address complex cases collectively, while strict

confidentiality is maintained to protect students' privacy.

1.3 Standardized Assessments: IIT Kanpur employs standardized psychological assessments to accurately assess students' mental health needs, enabling counselors to create tailored intervention plans. This evidence-based approach ensures that interventions are personalized and progress is effectively tracked.

1.4 Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity: The ICS at IIT Kanpur promotes inclusivity through culturally sensitive counseling for students from diverse backgrounds. It offers group therapy, art therapy, and well-being workshops in a welcoming environment that fosters a bias-free culture, ensuring all students feel valued and supported, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or disability status.

1.5 Continuing Education: RCI-registered psychologists at IIT Kanpur regularly engage in professional development to ensure research-based support for students.

1.6 Peer Support Networks: A peer support network allows students to discuss issues with trained peer counsellors, fostering openness and normalizing help-seeking behaviour.

1.7 Academic Interventions: Counsellors collaborate with academic staff to implement strategies enhancing students' time management, study skills, and coping mechanisms.

1.8 Follow-Up for Severe Cases: Regular follow-up meetings for students facing serious mental health challenges ensure continuous care and progress assessment.

1.9 Evidence-Based Therapy Practices: ICS employs scientifically validated methods, including mindfulness and cognitive-behavioral therapy, to address various mental health issues.

1.10 Crisis Intervention: ICS offers 24/7 emergency support, ensuring immediate assistance for students in crisis situations.

2. Challenges in Addressing Mental Well-being

There are still several issues that affect how well IIT Kanpur's mental health services work, even with the extensive services and procedures put in place.

2.1. Lack of Proper Follow-Up: Although follow-ups are emphasized, the high demand for counseling services often limits their frequency, which can leave students feeling isolated and hinder their progress. To address this issue, increasing funding and expanding the campus team of mental health specialists is essential.

2.2. Lack of Awareness and Stigma Around Mental Health Issues : Stigma surrounding mental health issues continues to deter some students from seeking help, leaving those in need feeling ashamed and isolated. Ongoing awareness campaigns can combat this stigma and encourage more students to access counseling services without fear.

- 2.3. **Limited Information from Parents on Students' Mental Health History:** Poor communication from parents can sometimes prevent the ICS team from obtaining crucial information about a student's mental health history, making it challenging for counselors to tailor interventions effectively. Encouraging open and honest communication between parents and counselors, while respecting privacy, could enhance the quality of care provided.
- 2.4. **Parenting Supervision :** Expectations can occasionally add pressure, striking a balance between the necessity of parental oversight and student independence can be difficult. It's still challenging to find strategies to positively involve parents in their kids' mental health journeys without making things worse.
- 2.5. **Need for Updated Training for ICS Team:** Ongoing training in modern therapy techniques is essential for counselors and peer support volunteers to provide effective, high-quality mental health assistance to students.
- 2.6. **Effects of Social Media and Digital Addiction :** Internet addiction among students causes anxiety and decreased productivity. Awareness campaigns and strategies aim to help them manage online behavior and establish healthier technology boundaries.
- 2.7. **Lack of Intrinsic Motivation in Students:** A lack of intrinsic motivation negatively impacts students' mental and academic well-being, highlighting the need for interventions that help them reconnect with their values and aspirations, fostering purpose and self-motivation.
- 2.8. **Lack of Psychological Tools and Biofeedback Machines:** At ICS, access to cutting-edge psychological tools like biofeedback equipment is restricted. By offering insightful information on students' mental and physical conditions, these tools can allow for more successful interventions.
- 2.9. **Shift of new generation to digital platforms :** Many students of the new generation are accustomed to having everything easily accessible on their smart phones. It is also easier to initiate a request for help digitally than physically because of the exiting stigmas. However, the quality of help might suffer when provided digitally. As a result, there is no current digital platform of ICS that could provide online help to students.

IISER KOLKATA

1. Introduction

IISER Kolkata was founded on 11 July, 2006 have a separate medical unit to cater to the physical wellness aspect of the residents as well as a mental wellness centre called the Mind Care and Wellness Centre (MCWC).

Current Team (psychological counseling, psychiatric consultations at the medical unit)

- (i). Psychiatrist - MD Psychiatry, Weekly visits at Medical Unit.
- (ii). Full-Time Campus Psychologist
 - (a) One Counselor
 - (b) One Clinical Psychologist registered with RCI (CRR No A64671).
- (iii). Online SOS based counseling by Yourdost.com
- (iv). Toll-Free No for suicidal emergency: Telemanas 14416

2. Objective:

The IISER Kolkata Mind Care and Wellness Centre fosters a resilient, barrier-free atmosphere where mental health and wellbeing are prioritized.

3. Activities conducted:

3.1 Counseling Unit: (24*7)

- ❖ RCI Reg professional psychologists and counsellors equipped.
- ❖ Online mental health care providers can use Yourdost services.
- ❖ Visiting a psychiatrist.
- ❖ Collaboration on emergency management with AIIMS Kalyani.
- ❖ Suicide prevention toll-free hotline (Tele Manas: 14416)
- ❖ Community programs, like the self-help group "CARES".
- ❖ Capacity building: For teachers' training initiative of MOE.
- ❖ Community Engagements (Other): LGBTQAI+ Club-IQRAR.

3.2 Students' perspective and the CARES initiative

There have been several formal and informal programs such as mentor-mentee support groups. Recently, a new initiative has been launched called Community Assistance for Resilience and Emotional Support (CARES) network, which includes student volunteers at the UG-PG and PhD levels and faculty members.

Challenges:

- (i). Lack of mental health awareness
- (ii). Gaps in facilities to cater to individual needs
- (iii). Unbiased support system

Future Planning:

- (i). Starting a periodic psychological evaluation as a first step and finishing each semester. workshops for education regarding life skills training for students, staff, and others.
- (ii). Annual Gatekeeper Training,
- (iii). Equipped with biofeedback therapeutic management tools for the counseling centre for evidence-based management and, Using Multi behavior therapy for de-addiction and behavior modification using aversive stimulation (subject to approval). acquiring psychological **evaluation** tools for routine therapy and monitoring.
- (iv). Psychological evaluation for career guidance.
- (v). A holistic approach is an integrated therapy method that includes psychological (cognitive and emotional), physiological (yoga, meditation, etc.), and value education.
- (vi). Club for non-working females residing on campus

IIIT KOTTAYAM

1. Introduction

Established in 2015, IIIT Kottayam is committed to academic excellence and the holistic well-being of its student community. Recognizing the pressures students face, the institute prioritized mental health by launching a dedicated counseling cell in 2018. Since then, the IIIT Counseling Centre has experienced significant growth, expanding its services and resources to meet increasing demand. Enhanced group events, awareness programs, and outreach activities have fostered a supportive environment, while collaborations with student clubs have promoted mental health awareness, leading to greater student engagement with the center's services. To further enhance mental health care quality, the counseling cell collaborates with local hospitals, ensuring students have access to comprehensive support, including referrals for specialized treatment when necessary. This growth underscores IIIT Kottayam's commitment to student well-being. In 2024, the new club "MIND QUEST" was launched to further promote mental well-being on campus, reflecting the ongoing dedication to student mental health.

2. Mind Quest Team

Psychological counsellor & faculty in charge of Mind Quest: Mrs. RENJITHA T R	Student mentor: Mr SARTHAK GUPTA Team Head: Mr SARTHAK YADHAV & Ms URVASI	Student team strength Student representatives :10 Volunteers :19
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3. AIM OF THE CLUB

- (i) Provide support and resources: - Offer workshops, interactive sessions, seminars and resources on mental health topics, stress management and wellness strategies.
- (ii) Foster a supportive community: - create a safe and inclusive environment where students can share their experiences and support one another.
- (iii) Promote awareness: - organize events and campaigns to raise awareness about mental health issues and reduce stigma.

4. ACTIVITIES

- (i) Creating awareness and insights to students and their parents by providing an orientation by counsellor on the topic of campus life, how to deal with home sickness, stress, anxiety, communication problem etc.

- (ii) Providing interactive classes frequently for students from all batches by counsellor. It helps for stigma reduction and breaking barriers to promote help seeking behaviour.
- (iii) And also providing training for communication skill, suicidal ideation, measures to deal with harassment and violation, cope up strategies to deal with stress and traumas.
- (iv) Implementing protective factors such as yoga, deep breathing, regular physical activities and effective communication
- (v) Conducted games and events on freshers' day. Games like Tower of Hanoi, Drawing Relay, who am I, Pictionary.
- (vi) Frequent drug awareness programs for students by trained professionals as part of capacity building programme promoting mental health, initiated by Ministry of Education
- (vii) Happy Hour: every month last Friday Mind Quest will take some initiative to conduct some stress relieving activities.
- (viii) Outreach programs: creating some insight for school students regarding the good practices and mental health awareness. It is a great platform for our students to explore their self and socialize more.



5. CHALLENGES

- (i) **Student – counsellor ratio:** A large number of students seeking help can overwhelm counsellor, leading to longer wait times and reduce individual attention
- (ii) **Stigma:** many students feel hesitant to seek help due to stigma surrounding mental health, making outreach and engagement difficult.
- (iii) **Integration with academic life:** counsellor must find ways to integrate mental health awareness into the academic environment while respecting boundaries.
- (iv) **Ongoing training:** keeping up with the latest developments in mental health care and counselling techniques requires continuous education and training.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, KURUKSHETRA

Following is the list of emerging practices followed at NIT Kurukshetra for Mental Well Being of the Students:

1. Thought Laboratory

A Thought Laboratory (Thought Lab) was inaugurated in the Institute by the Hon'ble Governor of Haryana, Shri Bandaru Dattatraya on May 10, 2022. The primary aim of the Thought Lab is to train individuals in cultivating positive and creative thoughts, empowering them to make meaningful contributions within their homes, organizations and society as a whole. The Thought Lab has been incorporated into the curriculum from the 2022-23 academic session, specifically for B. Tech first-year students. This initiative aims to provide students with relief from stress while also facilitating knowledge acquisition related to meditation and research opportunities in the field. The lab is offered as a compulsory course in the B. Tech 1st Year Program through partnerships with the Rajyoga Education and Research Foundation, Mount Abu and the Heartfulness Education Trust in Hyderabad. The Thought Lab is set to become a foundation of the academic experience, promoting not only academic success but also mental and emotional resilience among students. The Thought Lab aims to enhance the overall personality development of students at the institute through its three key facilities: a Meditation Room, a Library and a Wisdom Hall.

The Meditation Room offers a tranquil environment for stress relief and mental well-being, while the Library provides access to a diverse range of literature, fostering the exploration of valuable ideas. The Wisdom Hall facilitates teaching and discussions, encouraging intellectual exchange and growth. The Thought Lab is equipped with various advanced instruments, including the KARADA scan, VR headset and pulse scanner, all designed to enhance personal well-being and mindfulness of the students. The KARADA scan provides insights into physical and mental health, while the pulse scanner measures stress levels and emotional states. The VR headset offers immersive experiences for guided meditation and relaxation techniques. Together, these instruments support the Lab's objective of fostering positive and creative thinking by helping individuals understand and manage their mental and physical well-being effectively.

2. MoU between NIT Kurukshetra and ISKCON

A MoU has been signed between NIT Kurukshetra and ISKCON Kurukshetra under which a course, "Teaching of Bhagavad Gita" is taught as an compulsory course to B. Tech first year students under the Department of Humanities & Social Sciences of the Institute. In this course, education is being given to enhance social and moral values

and to make students more capable against mental risks like stress, depression, addiction etc. With this, students will be able to become better citizens and leaders who will be able to think about their own interests as well as the interests of the country and society. In this course, students are enlightened about mental control, soul, yoga, karma, meditation etc.

The course objectives include developing a deeper understanding of the Bhagavad Gita, inculcating the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita in real life in order to lead a more meaningful & spiritual life and initiating a culture of contemplation & spirituality for maintaining a balance between material and spiritual needs. The course is designed so that the students are well equipped with practices to overcome problems in life like management of stress, control over mind, ethical decision making, leadership skills and problems of justice etc. The course also sheds light on the concept of Jnana yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga and helps students understand how the practice of meditation along with proper wisdom & knowledge helps us become a better human and lead a dutiful life.

3. Sports & Yoga

NIT Kurukshetra is one among a few institutions in the country to have introduced Sports/NCC/Yoga as a compulsory subject (practical only) for the B. Tech first year students from the Academic Year 2022-23 as an Audit Course. There are two S.A.S. Officers (Student Activity & Sports Officer) and Yoga Instructor in the Physical Education & Sports Section of the Institute. In addition to this, a lot of Games & Sports facilities are also available for students in the Institute's Sports Complex. A lot of Yoga Shivirs are also organized from time to time in the Institute for the faculty, students and staff. We encourage students to take care of their physical health and we believe that by doing so students inculcate a sense of discipline and are also able to cope up with their stress.

4. Centre for Holistic Personality Development (CHPD)

The Institute has set up a Centre for Holistic Personality Development which helps in achieving a holistic growth and development of the students. The role of a teacher is an extremely important one in shaping the students, who are known as the future of the Nation. This center helps the students in polishing their personality which helps them feel more confident about themselves and also improves their self-esteem. A holistic personality development makes the students believe in themselves about taking care of their physical, mental, emotional & spiritual well-being. The center keeps up with the innovative techniques, activities and workshops that foster the development of a balanced personality.

IIT MADRAS

Introduction:

IIT Madras is a premier residential research-oriented academic institute with 18 departments and around 10,500 students, of which about 9,500 students reside on campus. The institute is committed to fostering a holistic environment for student well-being, addressing their academic, health, and hygiene needs. A comprehensive approach involving students, faculty, administration, staff, and experts has been adopted to enhance student wellness.

Initiatives taken in the recent past for the wellness of the students are elaborated below

1. Addressing Academic Stress

IIT Madras has implemented several measures to mitigate academic stress among students:

- Reduced the total number of credits required for graduation. The revised curriculum emphasizes understanding through reading, assignments, and a balanced workload, particularly easing first-year courses to help students to settle to the new environment.
- [Students to explore interests outside their core studies](#) through the recreational courses, which is now part of the curriculum.
- [Enabled students to enroll in online courses](#), especially NPTEL, providing flexibility in learning.
- [Compulsory for all students to develop](#) practical skills through skill-based courses.
- The proposed examination structure is to have two sections: a compulsory part covering basic definitions and a second part assessing analytical abilities.
- Fixed times for students to [review evaluated answer sheets](#) and address concerns are now made compulsory.
- [Established fixed schedules for supplementary exams](#) to ensure timely assessments.
- Faculty now provides courses to backlog students on certain subjects in winter.
- [AI-Based Communication Skill Platform](#) provided to enhance students' communication skills.

2. Strengthening Faculty Advisor and Mentee Engagement

- [Faculty-to-Student mentoring ratio](#) is maintained as 1:10.
- Faculty advisors meet mentees monthly and dine with them. Faculty can report on food quality, resulting in improved student satisfaction and reduced grievances about food quality.

- **Faculty report on mentees'** academic stress and other issues via the BeHappy website (<https://behappy.iitm.ac.in/>). Non-responsive students for two consecutive months are contacted by the wellness counsellor team.

3. **Infrastructure and Modernisation Projects**

One of the major concerns of the research scholars is the unavailability of sophisticated equipment. The institute has addressed the grievances regarding equipment availability by investing ₹187 crores in commonly used sophisticated research equipment, reducing wait times for research scholars.

4. **Counselling support: Utilizing Experts and Agencies**

The wellness survey was conducted by a third-party NGO with questionnaires vetted by experts from the Institute of Mental Health, Chennai.

- A team of six counsellors is available during working hours, on all working days in the wellness centre. At least one member will be available in the wellness centre on government holidays. Also, one counsellor is available 24/7 at the institute hospital. Additionally, counsellors visit hostels and departments at the scheduled time. In addition, online counselling facility is provided.
- **Gatekeeper Training is provided to interested** faculty and students, to identify and support peers under stress or at risk of suicide.
- Established a set of listeners to provide therapeutic support. Alumni mentors were also involved in this initiative to gauge and improve student well-being.

5. **Feedback Mechanisms**

Students can raise grievances with mentors, department heads, deans, or the director. An anonymous grievance box is also available. Most grievances are addressed within 48 hours.

Parents are contacted via WhatsApp to provide feedback on their children's wellbeing.

Student Ombudsman is appointed to handle student issues impartially. The complete details regarding the feedback mechanism, and grievance redressal mechanism can be seen in the behappy website (<https://behappy.iitm.ac.in/>)

Recent Initiatives

1. **DOST-ROPE Program:** Orientation for new MS and PhD scholars, including interactive sessions and opportunities for networking. Over 300 scholars participated.
2. **Outbound Training (OBT) Program:** Engaged new MS/PhD scholars in team-building and recreational activities.

3. **Four Days Freshers' Immersion Program:** Included campus tours, art events, open mic sessions, Zumba, visits to the Center for Innovation, sports activities, classical arts performances, and a DJ night.



Conclusion

IIT Madras recognizes that student well-being is a collective responsibility involving administration, faculty, counsellors, parents, and peer networks. On-going support mechanisms, timely grievance redressal, enhanced communication, and dedicated wellness programs contribute to a supportive and nurturing environment for students.

NIT MEGHALAYA

Introduction

The Counseling Center at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) is dedicated to enhancing the mental health and overall well-being of its diverse student population, faculty, and staff. With a team of experienced psychologists, the center implements a comprehensive program that addresses various student needs through prevention, early detection, intervention, and a variety of counseling approaches. This report highlights the center's activities and proactive measures implemented in response to student feedback regarding academic stress and related challenges.

The Counseling Center's Primary Objectives are:

- **Mental Health Support:** Provide individual and group counseling tailored to the specific needs of students.
- **Awareness Promotion:** Raise awareness about mental health issues and work to reduce stigma within the campus community.
- **Skill Development:** Offer workshops and seminars designed to cultivate coping strategies and resilience among students.
- **Research and Evaluation:** Conduct surveys and studies to gain insights into student needs and the effectiveness of counseling services.

Annual Activities

Throughout the academic year, the Counseling Center organizes various initiatives aimed at promoting mental well-being:

- **Workshops and Seminars:**
 - Topics include stress management, time management, and effective study skills. Workshops are often interactive, utilizing role-plays and group discussions.
- **Mental Health Awareness Campaigns:**
 - Events like "Mental Health Day" aim to destigmatize mental health issues and educate students about available resources.
- **Peer Support Programs:**
 - Training sessions for selected students to become peer mentors, providing support and guidance to their fellow students.
- **Recreational Activities:**
 - Organizing events such as sports, art therapy sessions, and mindfulness retreats to foster

relaxation and a balanced lifestyle.

Semi-Annual Activities-

In addition to annual initiatives, the Counseling Center conducts semi-annual activities that enhance its support offerings:

- Surveys and Feedback Collection:
 - Regular surveys assess student stress levels, academic challenges, and overall well-being. The most recent survey revealed that 25% of students reported academic stress, while 19.9% indicated issues related to studying.
- Follow-Up Sessions:
 - Regular follow-ups with students who have participated in counseling to monitor their progress and adjust strategies as needed.
- Collaboration with Faculty:
 - Meetings with faculty to discuss common student concerns, ensuring a coordinated and holistic approach to student support.

Several strategic initiatives implemented: -

1. Academic Support Programs

2. Fun Activities and Solutions

3. Awareness Programs

- International Day for Tolerance
- Substance Abuse Awareness Lectures
- Self-Love and Acceptance
- International Women's Day
- Yoga and Mental Health Awareness Day
- International Day Against Drug Abuse
- International Yoga Day
- World Suicide Prevention Day
- Health and Wellness Camps (Swachhata Hi Seva Program)



Conclusion

The Counseling Centre at NIT Meghalaya is dedicated to fostering a supportive environment that prioritizes mental health and well-being. Through its comprehensive range of services and activities, the Centre aims to prevent, detect, and intervene in mental health issues, empowering individuals to lead fulfilling lives. As we move forward, the Centre remains committed to evolving its programs to meet the diverse needs of our community, ensuring that everyone has access to the support they deserve.

MIZORAM UNIVERSITY

Introduction: The Mizoram University Counselling Cell (MZUCC) was established in 2020. The MZUCC plays a pivotal role in supporting the mental health and well-being of the students and staff of Mizoram University. The main function of the Cell is to provide Psycho-social Counselling to any member of the MZU Fraternity who is **in need of Counselling**.

Convener of the Cell: Prof. Zoengpari, Head. Dept. of Psychology, MZU
Advisor : The Dean, Students' Welfare, MZU
Ex-Officio Convener: Head, Department of Psychology, MZU

Team members / Counsellors: -

- Prof. H.K. Laldinpuii Dente, Department of Psychology, MZU
- Prof. C. Devendiran, Department of Social Work, MZU
- Prof. Zoengpari, Department of Psychology, MZU
- Dr. Grace Lalhlupuii Sailo, Asst. Professor, Department of Social Work, MZU
- Dr. B. Lalzarliana, Asst. Professor, Department of Sociology, MZU
- Dr. Lalhmingmawii, Asst. Professor, Department of Clinical Psychology, MZU
- Dr. C. Lalfakzuali, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychology, MZU
- Dr. Sabiha Alam Choudhary, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychology, MZU
- Dr. Zothanliana, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Education. MZU
- Dr. Laxmi Narayan Rathore, Associate Professor, Dept. of Clinical Psychology, MZU
- Dr. Sandhya Rani Devi, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Clinical Psychology, MZU

Objectives of the Cell:

The following are the objectives of the MZUCC:-

- To spread Mental Health Awareness
- To spread awareness about the relevance of counselling and its benefits
- To work in close collaboration with Departmental Coordinators
- To identify and assess psychological and mental health problems existing among the University community including students, faculty members and staffs of the University
- To provide counselling services and mental health support to the University community including students, faculty members and other staff of the University
- To facilitate necessary referral for further consultation with mental health professionals

Emerging Practices:

- A list of all counselors, along with their contact numbers and available appointment dates, has been posted at the University website and on all departmental notice boards to enable easy appointment scheduling and access to counseling services.
- It has identified Departmental Coordinators (faculty) as first responders in each of the 39 Departments of the University. We work closely with faculty members to provide training on recognizing signs of distress in students, equipping them with the tools to refer individuals to our services.
- It has identified Hostel Coordinators as well in each of the 13 Halls of Residences. In doing so, it networks and collaborates with different departments and hostels to identify students and other individuals who may be in need of mental health Counselling.
- The MZUCC also have printed and distributed across all departments 1EC materials, such as pamphlets, brochure and posters that included mental health awareness information whereby anyone within the University Fraternity can identify Counsellors and avail the services of the MZUCC.
- The MZUCC offer 24/7 crisis support for students in distress. This includes emergency counselling and referrals to external mental health resources when necessary.

Contributions of the Cell (in quality related aspects of the University):

The MZUCC contributes unobtrusively but liberally to the University in that mental health is of huge concern to all individuals. The promotion of mental health and the prevention of mental illnesses in the University Campus especially that of the students, lies in the hands of the MZUCC. By providing one on one Counselling services, the MZUCC looks into the mental and emotional needs of individual members which are otherwise often taken for granted in academia.

Contributions of the Cell (in academic related aspects of the University):

The MZUCC also contributes to the academic life of the students by providing an environment where students and other members of the MZU fraternity have the knowledge and information of where to get help for their mental health concerns. This serves as a basis where students are able to focus better on their academic life. Also, since the MZUCC also organizes programmes and creates awareness on mental health, this supplements some subject papers such as in the Departments of Clinical Psychology, Social Work and Psychology.

Activities of the Cell (2023-2024)

1. Sensitization Programme for Departmental Coordinators for 39 Departmental Coordinators and 13 hostel Coordinators was held on 25th April 2023. It was attended

by all Counselling Cell Coordinators of Mizoram University.

2. National Workshop on Stress Management was held on 2nd May 2023. Prof. Tony Sam George, Christ University, Bangalore was the resource person. It was attended by students, research scholars and faculty of Mizoram University as well as mental health professionals from different parts of Aizawl.
3. Symposium on Campus Mental Health was held on 12th May 2023. Dr. Lalropuii, Counselling Psychologist and Director, Black Olives Counselling & Research Centre and Dr. K. Robert L. Khawlhiring, Psychiatrist, Dept. of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of Mizoram were the resource person. Department coordinators, student representatives from each academic department, research scholars attended the programme.
4. Distribution of Counselling Cell Posters and Brochures on Mental Health Awareness was done during 16th to 30th July to all Departments of Mizoram University.
5. Commemoration of World Suicide Prevention Day and Workshop on Positive Mental Health - Suicide Prevention held on 10th September, 2024 organised by MZU Counselling Cell and Department of Psychology. Dr. Ashutosh Srivastava, President of the Bharatiya Counselling Psychology Association, was the resource person. Department coordinators, students and research scholars attended the programme.



NIT MIZORAM

We at NIT Mizoram have dedicated Health Care Center, Counselling Centre along with dedicated Counselor. Further, we have Warden, Assistant Warden, Prefect, and Caretaker with 24X7 monitoring of students under the aegis of Dean Students' Welfare. The campus has facilities to cater the need of students' wellness. NIT Mizoram is proud to state that as of to-date we have no such cases related to mental health. Also, we have not had any case of suicide in the campus. With the effective monitoring of the student's wellness in the classrooms and hostels, we have fulfilled the goal of wellness campus.

IISER MOHALI

I. Introduction

IISER Mohali, as one of the institutions of national importance engaged in world class teaching and research in basic sciences and humanities, has been highly sensitive about the mental wellbeing of its students since its inception. Over the years, significant time has been invested in identifying and understanding various sources of mental stress among students on campus. To foster mental peace and wellbeing of the students, a number of services, programs and activities have been introduced.

II. Activities and Emerging Practices

- (i) **Counseling Services:** Two counselors have been employed by the Institute to address issues related to mental well-being. In addition, the institute has also started a 24x7 online counseling service to help the students. Confidentiality on the identity of the students seeking counseling is ensured, which has encouraged students to come forward with their problems. *To support the students who receive termination letters for the first time due to their poor performance in the exams, the Office of Dean Academics mandates that they meet a counselor.*

The Institute has subscribed to the online counseling service provided by YourDost. This unique online counseling programme promotes students to come forward and share their problems keeping their identity confidential. *The services of YourDost are available 24x7, 365 days and can be accessed from the comfort and privacy of the student's room through YourDost Mobile App or YourDost Online Portal.*

Apart from the above, a team of faculty wardens (male and female) is also accessible to the students over phone almost 24x7. To ensure the timely addressal of non-urgent issues faced by the students, the wardens provide office hours in the hostels.

- (ii) **Regular organization of open house:** The Office of Dean Students organizes two open house sessions every semester to understand the difficulties faced by the students. The first one is organized in the beginning while the second one is organized in the middle of the semester.



(iii) Faculty and Peer Group Mentorship: Every UG student who joins the institute is assigned a faculty mentor and personal interaction between mentor and mentee is mandatory. These interactions address both academic and non-academic aspects of a student's life on campus including studies, exams, accommodation, food, health, language issues and administrative issues. *The faculty mentor is kept informed if the mentee is struggling to cope with the academic program of the institute.*

Over the years, it has been our experience that students open up to their peers much more easily and are more comfortable in interacting with them. Acknowledging this, a strong peer group mentorship has been cultivated at IISER Mohali. 4-5 freshmen are grouped with 3-4 seniors who introduce them to the campus culture. The peer group remains active throughout the student's stay on the campus and addresses the day-to-day challenges faced by the juniors. *The peer group has also played a major role in solving personal issues which are very common in student's lives when they are away from their families.* Often the peer group members provide a sympathetic shoulder to cry on during difficult times.

(iv) Sport Facilities and Yoga Classes: The Institute maintains excellent sports facilities in the campus along with Yoga classes. A special attention is paid to the students of first year to encourage and promote a healthy life-style. All of these act as stress busters for students.



(v) Non-Segregated Hostel Spaces: The UG accommodation is a co-ed accommodation with strictly gender segregated spaces. However, there is no segregation on the basis of the academic year of enrollment/academic discipline/academic program. This allows a free and unrestricted exchange of ideas among students of all academic

disciplines and programs. *There is no conventional senior-junior dynamics as found in many other institutes.* This fosters a healthy ragging-free environment where students can actively participate in the community events without feeling homesick. For PhD students, there is also an option to stay in a designated hostel.

The common spaces of the hostels (study and recreational facilities, mess etc) are shared by the students of all genders. This has led to the development of a very responsible and respectful behavior in the student community towards the students of the opposite gender. *The hostels are a safe space for queer students.*

- (vi) **Easy Access to the Campus Facilities:** We acknowledge that different students have different preferences for timings to carry out their work. At IISER Mohali, the students are free to schedule their day-to-activities as per their convenience beyond academic schedule. Several on-campus facilities are therefore accessible even beyond office hours. Facilities like library, lecture and seminar rooms, study and common halls in the hostels can be utilized almost round the clock. Sports facilities like Gym, Courts and Grounds are also accessible to everyone at all times. *The hostels have no restrictions on entry and exit timings as the academic program of the institute is research oriented.*
- (vii) **Club Activities:** The Institute supports 20 clubs that are broadly classified into cultural and academic activities. The cultural clubs include dance, music, drama, photography whereas the academic clubs include Phi@I, Curie, BDF, etc. The clubs are open to the entire student community and there is a Faculty In-Charge of the club activities to oversee their functioning. There are several clubs which partake in activities that are not integrated with the core academic program of the institute, providing hands-on experiences beyond the classroom. *The club activities facilitate friendships and a sense of community and help build leadership, teamwork, and communication skills.* The diversity of clubs allows the students the opportunity to follow their passion and make creative use of their extra time.
- (viii) **Planned Sports and Cultural Activities:** *Cultural and sports activities are meticulously planned and run throughout the year to keep the students engaged meaningfully beyond their studies.* In the first half of the year, the major sports activities include the Intra-IISER sports tournament, whereas cultural activities include cultural evenings and inter-batch dance and music competition. In the second half of the year, the inter-hostel sports tournament takes place, ensuring widespread participation. The sports activities culminate in the Inter-IISER Sports meet. During this period, the cultural activities include the annual fest, where all the clubs participate in organizing various events. The grand finale happens at the end of the year when IISER Mohali participates in the Inter IISER Cultural Meet.
- (ix) **Availability of Emergency & Healthcare services:** The availability of nurses beyond office hours and 24x7 access to ambulance service in the hostel area provides a sense of security among students in case of emergency situations.

(x) **Student Run Mess Facility:** Ensuring good quality food and hygienic practices in a mess run by external contractors has been very challenging in the past, leading to a lot of dissatisfaction among the student community and affecting their health and studies. To ensure that students get nutritious and good-quality food, the student body has established a student run mess. Students take up an active role in decision making of the working of the mess. *The menu is prepared keeping in mind the regional diversity that exists on the campus and the dietary requirements.* Efforts are being made to run a night canteen by the SRM to cater the MS Thesis and PhD students actively engaged in research at affordable prices.

(xi) **Rich Cultural Diversity:** Being a National Institute, the student community at IISER Mohali includes students from all regions and corners of the country. *Students are welcome to follow their faith, celebrate their festivals and rich heritage.* This unique and culturally diverse environment allows all the students to actively participate and take up important roles in organizing various events that inculcate a sense of unity and brings joy into campus.

IISER Mohali is completely ragging-free. *Every year, orientations and awareness programs are held to educate the students about the rules and regulations regarding ragging and to encourage them to build a healthy and supportive student environment.* But more-importantly the campus culture has been developed in such a way that ragging does not occur.

III. Challenges

- a. Social stigma and fear of discrimination about mental health among students.
- b. Ignorance and less appreciation for professional psychotherapists.
- c. Non-availability of male counselors.
- d. Non-availability of social counselors who can be residents of the hostels.

The institute, with the help of the student community, is continuously trying to address some of these challenges. In addition, the possibility of having new facilities on campus like dedicated walking trails, swimming pools etc. will certainly help many in busting their stress in a meaningful manner. The Institute has time-to-time discussed ways of reducing the academic pressure and we are open to learning from other institutions.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, MUMBAI

I. Introduction

The Student Wellness Centre (SWC) at IIM, Mumbai envisions a community where holistic mental health and wellbeing are integral to personal and academic success. Committed to this vision, the center offers counseling and training to all students, aligning with the institute's goal of cultivating transformative leaders who make positive contributions to society. The center is dedicated to providing a safe, supportive, and non-judgmental environment where students can address various life challenges, navigate uncertainties, and discover opportunities for growth.

II. Team Objectives

The objectives of the Student Wellness Centre include:

- (i) Promoting comprehensive mental, emotional, and social wellbeing.
- (ii) Providing a safe space for individuals to engage in self-discovery, address mental health concerns, explore and express feelings, examine beliefs, reflect on behavior patterns, make healthier choices, and adopt a growth mindset.
- (iii) Offering non-judgmental, unconditional, and genuine support to all institution stakeholders.
- (iv) Assisting students in accepting life-changing situations and coping with stress and anxiety.

III. Activities and Emerging Practices

A. Counseling Services Offered at the Center

- (i) **Individual Counseling:** Personalized sessions that focus on each student's specific challenges, providing a safe space for self-exploration, coping techniques, and tailored mental support.
- (ii) **Informal Assessments and Psychiatric Referrals:** Use of screeners, checklists, and consultations with experts to identify mental health issues, offer recommendations, and make referrals to psychiatrists when needed.
- (iii) **Positive Mental Health Workshops:** Interactive sessions promoting mental wellbeing and skills such as resilience, mindfulness, and stress management. These workshops help foster an open environment for discussing mental health.
- (iv) **Group Counseling:** Facilitated discussions among individuals facing similar challenges to encourage shared experiences, learning, and community building.
- (v) **Family Therapy:** Sessions that address family dynamics, improve communication, resolve conflicts, and strengthen relationships within the family unit.

B. Diverse Counseling Approaches

The center employs various therapeutic approaches to cater to individual needs, including:

- Psychotherapy
- Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT)
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)
- Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)
- Art-Based Therapy
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)
- Hypnosis
- Gestalt Therapy

C. Wellness Center Visits

Students frequently visit the Wellness Center with a range of concerns, including stress, anxiety, academic and career pressures, family and relationship issues, and mental health disorders like depression and trauma. This highlights the critical role of thorough emotional and psychological support.

D. Wellness Initiatives at the Student Wellness Center

The center offers regular wellness initiatives, including:

- Early Detection Wellness Inventory**
- Additional Counsellor During Placement Periods**
- Workshops & Trainings** (e.g., Mind Mood Magic, Mind Matters, Mann Ki Baat)
- Regular Outreach** through emails, articles, and reminders
- Campaigns** like Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, International Day of Yoga



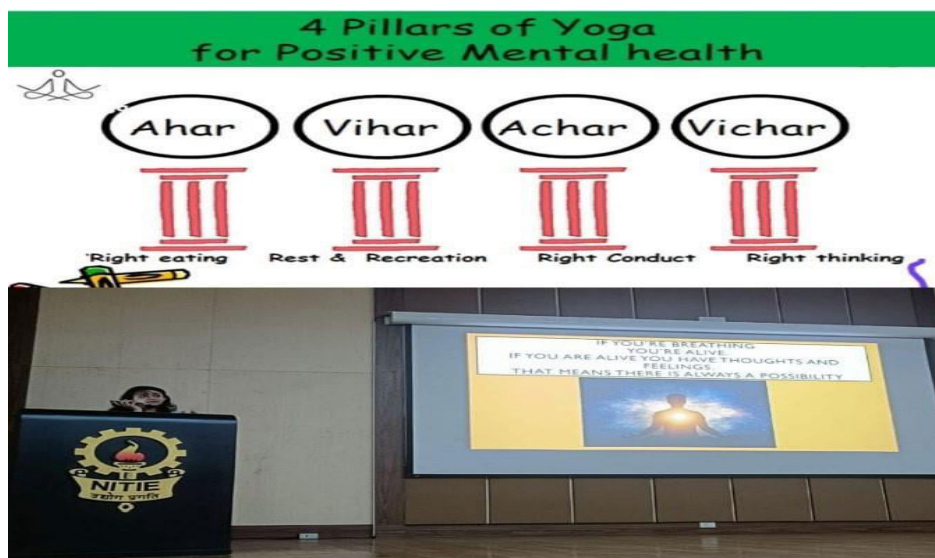
E. Emerging Practices in Student Wellness

- (i) **Awareness & Prevention Workshops** throughout the year, covering topics such as mindfulness, team-building, and leadership skills.
- (ii) **Celebration of Mental Health Month**, featuring posters and positive messages to promote mental fitness.
- (iii) **Well-being Warriors and Mental Health First Aid**, providing students with academic projects on relevant topics (e.g., loneliness and technology).
- (iv) **Collaborative Efforts** between the dispensary, faculty, student groups, and student wellness counsellors.

IV. Challenges

Students at the Wellness Center often seek help with issues such as stress, anxiety, family problems, and transitions, as well as academic and career pressures. Relationship issues and social concerns also impact emotional well-being, often coexisting with disturbed moods, adjustment difficulties, and sleep disorders. In addition, clinical issues like depression, trauma, and other mental health challenges are prevalent, underscoring the need for comprehensive emotional and psychological support. To further improve student well-being, the center plans to focus on:

1. Emphasizing self-care and digital detoxification.
2. Launching programs like Sleep Drive, Self-Care Hour, and mindfulness groups.
3. Implementing the “3 H in Mental Wellness” approach.
4. Conducting Mental Health First Aid workshops and training sessions.



NAGALAND UNIVERSITY

Introduction

Nagaland University is a Central University established in the state of Nagaland by an Act of Parliament by the Government of India in 1989. The headquarter is at Lumami, Zunheboto, and other campuses are spread across the state - at Kohima and Medziphema.

School of Agricultural Sciences (SAS) is located at Medziphema under Chumoukedima district, which is around 25 Km from the Commercial Capital of Nagaland (Dimapur) and 50 Km from the State Capital(Kohima).

Medziphema campus houses 12 departments and caters to around 1000 under graduate, Post-Graduate and Doctoral students/ Research Scholars.

Activities and Emerging Practices

The emerging practices adopted by the School of Agriculture Sciences, Nagaland University (SAS, NU) as a potential 'stress coping strategies' are:

Students Welfare Department.

It has a separate Students Welfare Department headed by the Students Welfare Dean with an aim to address barriers to learning and strengthening the safety net for the students. This department looks after students affairs. It extends academic assistance by giving timely advice and support to excel academically; mental health assistance to manage stress and anxiety; Social integration by organizing events and activities that foster community, helping students connect and build a support network. Thus, all problems and activities related to students community in the campus is reported to the Dean, Student's Welfare.

Advisory Board system for M.Sc and Ph.D students.

An advisory board system for research is constituted for all P.G students. It comprises of 3 members advisory committee for M.Sc along with the major supervisor and 5 members advisory committee for Ph.D along with the major supervisor. This advisory board is constituted with an objective to provide all necessary guidance on academics and research purpose to all individual students so as to help them cope with stress and anxiety resulting from academics and research work and to closely monitor their research works thereby guiding them for successful completion and submission of research thesis which is required for obtaining degree certificate.

Advisory Board for B.Sc Students

All B.Sc (Agri.) Hons. students are allotted advisors. A particular teacher is allotted to each individual student as their personal mentor right from B.Sc 1st year, to provide guidance, support, and encouragement throughout the academic journey. The mentor keeps track of his mentee in and out of the campus by maintaining the leave record of each student.

Students Counseling and Placement Cell.

The students counseling and placement cell is also constituted with an aim to bridge the gap between education and employment. It provides career guidance, job opportunities, and skill development, helping students enhance their employability. The cell organizes workshops (compulsory to all students available in the campus) on resume writing and interview preparation, facilitates internships, and hosts networking events with industry professionals. By offering personalized support and collecting employer feedback, it ensures students are well-equipped for the job market, ultimately boosting both their career prospects and the university's reputation.

Mentor- mentee system.

For new faculty (Mentee), senior faculty is allotted as mentor based on choice and requirement.

Motivational exercises

Besides all the above practices, professional Counseling Program are held in the campus at regular level and motivational talks from distinguished personalities are organized for both faculties and students at regular level.



VISVESVARAYA NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, NAGPUR

Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology Nagpur has below mentioned Programs and Clubs for Students to promote their Mental health and Wellbeing:

- (i) Student Mentor Program (SMP)
- (ii) Prayaas - The Social Outreach club.
- (iii) Vishwa Life Skills Club (VLSC)
- (iv) Sankalp - A club for Holistic Growth of Youth

Social And Student Wellbeing Programs-

Faculty In-charge: Dr. Meera Dhabu. Dr. G N Nimbarte. Dr. G Hemachandra. Dr. R P Vijayakumar. Faculty Representatives - 50+	Psychological Counsellors: Mrs. Sumitra Chatterjee Mrs. Priya Zoting	<u>Student Team Strength</u> Student Heads - 15 UG Mentors - 66 PG/PhD Wellbeing Representatives- 05 Student Management Team - 50+
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Activities and Emerging Practices

A) Student Mentor Program (SMP): (For Freshers)

- (i) Mentors are 3rd year Students across all departments who will guide, help, support the Fresher students for smooth onboarding and Transition in the Institute.
- (ii) Helping newcomers integrate and settle within VNIT Nagpur is the responsibility of a mentor.
- (iii) Usually, each mentor is assigned 10-15 1st year students as mentees.
- (iv) Each mentor will be assigned the freshers from their respective department
- (v) Freshmen attend orientation seminars on emotions and communication skills on the first day, and they receive information about mental health.
- (vi) Through regular workshops, counsellors offer mentors and companions comprehensive instruction on communication techniques, suicide prevention, and limits.
- (vii) To provide inclusive mental health activities for the entire VNIT community, group therapy activities and awareness posters on red flags and self-help approaches are introduced.

B) Department Council: (For Classmates)

- (i) Students from various departments and years have united to form the Council, which offers academic, mental, and social support.

- (ii) Facilitate departmental catch-up sessions and provide insights to ensure effective peer connections and activities.

C) PRAYAAS - The Social Outreach Program of VNIT Nagpur.

- (i) Prayaas is a Social welfare club of VNIT run by Professors and Students for the wellbeing of Underprivileged People of our Society.
- (ii) Prayaas Teaching- Prayaas Volunteers Work for the NGO, footpathshala and Government School students to help them in their academic growth.
- (iii) Blood Donation Camps and Tree plantation Drive in Campus.
- (iv) Daan Utsav- The Joy of Giving Week Celebrated in campus in association With Goonj NGO. Collection of Reusable Cloths, stationary material and Utensils which are sorted cleaned and distributed in villages to Empower them.
- (v) VIGYASA- It is a Science Exhibition Organised for NGO kids. Our Volunteers teach the Science and mathematics concepts to the students and encourage them for making Innovative Models, which are then Showcased in the Exhibition.
- (vi) Wish Tree- Prayaas collects various wishes from NGO kids, Old age home people and During Wish tree Fulfill those wishes and Distribute them to respective kids or people.
- (vii) NGO Visit- Prayaas Organises Yearly NGO Visit to the NGOs to know the Culture and lifestyle of people living in the NGO. It helps our students to know the Societal Diversity present in our Community and Work for them.

D) VLSC- Vishwa Life Skills Club

Features of VISWA Life Skills Club:

- (i) Holistic development alongside academic excellence.
- (ii) 33-hour compulsory audit course for first-year students.
- (iii) Focus on mental and physical fitness.

Activities of VISWA Life Skills Club:

- (i) Structured activities for teamwork, decision-making, leadership, and self-reliance.
- (ii) Enforced digital detox to reduce distractions from mobile devices.
- (iii) Outdoor camping experience with obstacle courses.
- (iv) High rope structure challenges for building confidence and decision-making.
- (v) Mental exercises and team-building activities.

Outcomes of VISWA Life Skills Club:

- (i) Improved mental and physical well-being of students.
- (ii) Enhanced teamwork, collaboration, and communication skills.
- (iii) Development of leadership and self-reliance.
- (iv) Better decision-making skills under pressure.
- (v) Reconnection with self, peers, and the physical world without digital distractions.

E) SANKALP – A club for holistic Growth of Youth.

- (i) Under the direction of first-year hostel wardens, VNIT's "SANKALP" club emphasises holistic development.
- (ii) Second-year BTech students advise in the areas of academics, fitness, yoga, enlightenment, health, and compassion.
- (iii) The heads of academics, self-care, yoga and fitness, spiritual growth, and health and wellness are third-year and MTech students.
- (iv) The President of the Core Team is a final-year BTech student.
- (v) At different ceremonies, students take the NASHA MUKTH Bharat promise.

<p><u>UG/PG/PhD Activities:</u> Induction Program for UG Freshers by Mentors and Counsellors. UG Mentor-Mentee Meetings. Technical, Art, Craft, Literary, Social and Cultural events. Department Gathering (DG) Institute Gathering (IG) VIHANG- Sports and Cultural Gathering for PG/PhD Students. VLSC introduces students to various Adventure Activities which are specially designed for Survival skills and Physical Fitness</p>	<p><u>Community Events:</u> Pre-Internship & Pre-Placement Talk by Alumni's Mental Health Week Events. Daan Utsav- The Joy of Giving in association with Goonj NGO. Blood Donation Camp and Tree plantation Drive. VIGYASA- Science Exhibition for NGO students. Workshops and Awareness sessions by Counsellors. Celebration of Anti ragging day and Week.</p>
<p><u>Challenges:</u> Student- Instructor ratio Promoting Awareness about Emotional as well as Social stability and its importance. Stigma amongst the students regarding Surrounding Mental Health and Counselling. Constraints for the involvement of students in the Mental and Physical Health Activities. Keeping students Away From Social Media and Internet Addiction.</p>	<p><u>Plans to combat:</u> Number of Instructor and Student Volunteers has been increased. Mentors can as a bridge between Counsellor and Students as Students are more friendly towards their mentors. Doing community events related to Mental health to destigmatize. Involving Activities as interesting as Internet and Social media so students will participate and involve in physical events rather than Mobiles.</p>

Some Snapshots and Glimpse of all the Events:



IIT PALAKKAD

Indian Institute of Technology Palakkad, earliest among the 3rd generation of IITs, established under MHRD started functioning in the academic year of 2015-16. The Institute Counselling Services which is an integral part of the Wellness Hub of the Institute aims to promote the psychological wellbeing of the institutional community. It comprises a team of three Clinical Psychologists (2 Female and 1 Male) and dedicated student volunteers. The Counsellors provide one-to-one counselling sessions. They are also available on-call at times of crisis. The Counsellors collaborate closely with the academic section and faculty to identify students facing academic and mental health challenges. Additionally, the team closely connects with the Team of the Hostel-Student Section as well for matters of concern. The Counsellors also work alongside the Medical Officer to refer students in need of psychiatric support, who are then directed to psychiatrists at empanelled hospitals.

The emerging practices adopted on campus are:

1. **Peer Support:** Student volunteers are trained and inducted regularly by the Counsellors to reach out to the students on campus.
2. **Orientation Session:** The Counsellors conduct mandatory orientation sessions for all the new batches including graduates, post-graduates and scholars across the year. The sessions focus on sensitizing the students about the common psychological challenges, ways to navigate it and the services offered by the Counsellors.
3. **Meet Team Mitra:** It is a mandatory one-to-one interaction of the freshers with the Counsellors, involving an assessment using a questionnaire. This interaction helps them to get introduced to the services, reduces the stigma, and also aids in identifying any primary challenges
4. **Observance of Days of Significance on Campus:** World Health Day, National Youth Day, International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, World Suicide Prevention Day, World Mental Health Day, World Kindness Day, International Women's Day, International Men's Day & National Ayurveda Day are observed with various activities
5. **Group Session-Emogen:** Aiming towards an **Emotionally Fit Generation** open discussions are conducted in these sessions. The Sessions are led by the Counsellors and also by invited resource persons on topics like- "*Anger Management*", "*How to Deal with Exam Pressure*", "*Healthy Communication on Campus*", "*Interaction with Scholars*"

Workshop: Finding Wellbeing-Conversations Towards Common Grounds

6. **Special Sessions & Activities**
Fitness session was organized in collaboration with the Yoga Club and was led by the Institute Yoga trainer
A Human Library Session was conducted in which a client was an "open book" and the participants could interact with him on the topic of addiction to smoking and ways of

overcoming it.

An exclusive *Art Therapy* session was conducted with a focus on self-expression, self-exploration, coping, mindfulness, and emotional well-being through creative art-based activities

A special session on ways to enhance *Self Care* for wellbeing was organized.

Notes of Hope, Happiness Wall, and Gratitude Notes were live activities where students could openly express their thoughts in creative ways and exhibit them. *My Campus My Thoughts* was an online activity where students could express their general concerns in their surroundings and brainstorming its solutions with respect to saving the resources, protecting the environment and practicing eco-friendly behaviours in their hostels, classrooms, and on the campus.

7. Talks "*Psychological First Aid*" "*Healthy lifestyle and lifestyle diseases*", "*How to Stay Young and Healthy*" "*Women Health Matters*"

8. Competitions and Quiz: A **photography** competition was conducted to capture abstract themes of mental health, willpower and resilience, raising awareness and encouraging thoughtful expression through the lens

Essays on "How Can We Make Our Campus a Happier Place?".

Slogan Writing competition & Quiz- Conundrum was conducted to create awareness of substance use and its ill effects

9. **Surveys**: Surveys are conducted to assess general well-being, quality of life and overall health of the community. One survey was conducted exclusively for PhD students to identify their challenges on campus

10. **E-books**: We regularly encourage the community to express their thoughts, views, art and creativity on various topics. Few of the recent ones are:

- (i). "*Mindful Bliss - Your Inner Sunshine*" themes on psychological well-being
- (ii). "*Nikaya*"- a collection of articles as part of International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- (iii). *Invest in Your Planet-a compilation of articles* as part of World Earth Day

11. Screening of Movies: Short films and regular movies based on themes of Mental Health are screened to reach out to students aiming for psychological well being

12. Gatekeeper Training Program Students were trained by the Counsellors to identify early signs of mental health issues and provide support to students who are in crisis (September 2021-August 2022).

13. Special Activities: Faculty & Staff workshops are organized to improve the work-related quality of Life of the community

14. Mental Health Literacy Short videos, mailers, fact sheets, and articles are created and shared to reduce stigma and raise awareness on campus.

Challenges on Campus

While the Counsellors continue focusing on the wellbeing of the students there are many challenges that come across. A few of them are listed below.

- Student's participation in the activities pertaining to the Institute Counselling Services are limited.
- The stigma associated with seeking mental health support also prevails strong among students.
- The fear of being labelled if medical treatment is required from the Psychiatrist, in certain cases demanding a combined approach also remains a challenge which leads to poor outcomes in terms of mental health. This also leads to less participation in the activities arranged by the services of others, getting to know that they are in need of help or already undergoing treatment.
- Among clients who are already undergoing psychiatric treatment, monitoring aspects related to medical compliance, and regular follow-ups with the Psychiatrist is highly challenging.
- The lack of awareness about mental health leads to misinterpretation of signs and symptoms and delayed help-seeking behaviours.



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, RAIPUR

1. Introduction

The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Raipur, established in Atal Nagar, Chhattisgarh, has made substantial strides in supporting the mental well-being of its student body. With a mission to nurture future leaders in a learning-centric environment, IIM Raipur emphasizes the importance of a balanced approach to academic, professional, and personal growth. The institute's initiatives in mental health align with its goal of cultivating ethical, resilient leaders prepared to handle the demands of modern management roles. These efforts are facilitated through student-centered committees and campus offices that collectively address mental wellness in a holistic manner. This document provides an overview of the emerging practices employed by IIM Raipur in fostering mental well-being among its students and outlines the challenges that arise in balancing academic rigor with emotional support.

2. Team Objectives

The key objectives of IIM Raipur's mental well-being initiatives include:

- Raising awareness of mental health and promoting wellness among students.
- Ensuring a safe, inclusive campus environment that respects and supports each student.
- Equipping students with resilience and skills necessary to manage mental health challenges.
- Encouraging a culture of respect, inclusivity, and mutual support on campus.

3. Activities and Emerging Practices

(i). Holistic Awareness and Wellness Programs

IIM Raipur's Student Affairs Committee (SAC) plays a pivotal role in organizing wellness activities that raise awareness about mental health and equip students with stress management tools. Events like the International Day of Yoga focus on mindfulness, breathing exercises, and stress-relieving techniques. Additionally, the SAC commemorates the International Day Against Drug Abuse through campaigns that encourage a drug-free lifestyle and foster a community of health-conscious individuals.

(ii). Fostering Inclusivity through Anti-Ragging and Safe Campus Policies

The SAKSHAM Committee at IIM Raipur is dedicated to promoting respect and safety on campus through anti-ragging initiatives. These sessions educate students on anti-ragging policies, the importance of a respectful campus culture, and they implement streamlined complaint procedures for prompt resolution. This proactive approach fosters a sense of security and belonging, which is beneficial for mental well-being.

(iii). Skill-Building Workshops for Resilience and Personal Development

IIM Raipur organizes skill-building workshops through the SAC to address emotional and professional development. These workshops focus on resilience, self-awareness, and essential interpersonal skills, covering topics such as time management, leadership, and communication. By participating, students gain practical tools for managing mental health alongside academic demands.

(iv). Cultural and Recreational Events to Enhance Community and Social Support

The Cultural Committee (RANG) organizes social events like Ganesh Chaturthi and Onam celebrations, allowing students to unwind and connect with peers. These events foster a sense of belonging and build peer support networks essential for mental well-being, promoting inclusivity and mutual respect across the campus.

(v). Physical Health Initiatives Linked to Mental Wellbeing

IIM Raipur encourages physical activity through initiatives like Swachhathon, a 5km marathon, as part of Swachhata Pakhwada, promoting fitness, resilience, and community involvement. Additionally, the “Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam” campaign organizes tree planting activities that offer a rejuvenating experience in nature, known to reduce stress and enhance mental well-being.

(vi). Visiting Psychologists on Campus

IIM Raipur has introduced professional psychological support by arranging for psychologists to visit the campus on different days of the week. This service provides students with timely emotional support and mental health resources, helping them manage academic pressures and personal challenges in a safe and confidential setting.



4. Challenges

Supporting student mental well-being presents unique challenges due to the complexity of addressing individual needs within a diverse and high-intensity academic environment.

(i) Hesitancy and Social Perceptions Around Seeking Help

Some students hesitate to seek counseling services or engage in wellness programs due

to concerns about confidentiality or perceived judgment from peers, which can reduce engagement and impact the effectiveness of mental health initiatives.

(ii) Addressing Diverse Needs in a High-Intensity Environment

IIM Raipur's diverse student community includes individuals from various cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds with distinct mental health needs. Developing inclusive support systems that accommodate both Indian and international students, as well as those from varying economic circumstances, poses a challenge for support teams like SAKSHAM and SAC.

(iii) Promoting Involvement in Well-being Programs

Although SAC and the Cultural Committee (RANG) offer various initiatives, motivating students to participate actively in mental health programs remains a challenge.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, SHIBPUR

In recent years, the importance of mental health and emotional well-being has come into sharp focus, particularly in academic institutions where students often face immense pressure to excel. Recognizing this need, IEST, Shibpur has taken several steps to ensure that students have access to comprehensive mental health support. These efforts include appointing dedicated counsellors, organizing regular seminars and workshops, and offering online counselling services, all aimed at improving the mental and emotional resilience of students.

Counselling Support at IEST, Shibpur

The institute appointed Ms. Binati Mondal as a Psychiatric Counselor, offering online sessions via Google Meet once a week for three hours, typically from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., with potential for additional availability. Students can register through a Google form, and the Associate Dean (SW) manages scheduling and provides meeting details via email. Any technical issues can be directed to the Associate Dean, ensuring accessible mental health support for all students.

Online Interaction Programs on Mental Health: IEST, Shibpur hosts seminars and workshops to raise mental health awareness, including an online Interaction Program on June 10, 2020, featuring psychiatric counselor Mrs. Sudarshana Dasgupta. Attended by key officials, the event focused on mental health challenges related to COVID-19 and offered practical advice for managing stress and anxiety. Limited to 200 pre-registered students, it provided a platform for open discussion with experts about mental health concerns.

Workshops and Seminars on Mental Health and Well-being

IEST, Shibpur fosters mental health awareness through workshops and seminars on stress management, emotional well-being, and life skills. The "Mental Health and Well-Being of Students" seminar series engages mental health professionals, faculty, and students to share practical strategies, creating a supportive environment for students to discuss concerns and access necessary resources.

MANODARPAN Initiative

The MANODARPAN initiative, part of the ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT ABHIYAN and led by the Ministry of Education, aims to provide psychosocial support to students, teachers, and families, enhancing mental health and emotional well-being. Launched during the COVID-19 outbreak, it offers a range of resources, such as advisory notes, practical tips, posters, videos, and FAQs, all accessible on a dedicated webpage.

Clean Campus Drive and Marathon

IEST highlights the connection between physical activity and mental health by implementing compulsory weekly campus cleanings and monthly marathons to promote exercise and discipline. These initiatives help reduce depression and anxiety while enhancing sleep and cognitive function. Counseling services further support student health, fostering a nurturing environment for all.



Virasat

Virasat, an annual cultural event at IEST, Shibpur, in collaboration with SPIC MACAY, promotes mental well-being through Indian classical arts. It includes workshops on Kathak, Manipuri dance, and Yoga, led by renowned artists, alongside performances from legends like Ustad Wasifuddin Dagar, fostering mindfulness, creativity, and emotional relief for students. (Comprehensive Report-Vi...).



At IEST, Shibpur, various clubs and societies play a pivotal role in fostering the mental well-being of students by providing creative outlets and social interaction opportunities. Clubs like Reflexobeta - the dance club, and Euphony - the singing club, offer students a space to express themselves artistically, helping to relieve stress and boost emotional health. Participation in these clubs allows students to channel their creativity, which is essential for balancing academic pressures with recreational activities, contributing to a positive mental state.

Cultural Clubs and Societies

The Vivekananda Youth Circle focuses on spiritual and philosophical discussions, promoting mental clarity and resilience among students. By encouraging introspection and mindfulness, the group helps students cope with the emotional demands of student life, fostering a supportive community.



Departmental Grievance Redressal Committee (DGRC)

The *Departmental Grievance Redressal Committee (DGRC)* also plays a crucial role by addressing student concerns regarding departmental issues. Its mediation approach ensures that students' voices are heard, promoting a harmonious educational environment. This supportive framework helps mitigate stress, ensuring mental well-being through fair and transparent resolution processes.

NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY, SHILLONG

Emerging Practices followed in North Eastern Hill University that foster mental well-being

1. Introduction

The concern for students' mental well-being has now been identified as equally important as their physical well-being. Educational institutions are the main spaces which should promote mental health as students spend most of their time inside schools, colleges and university campuses. Hence, it is important for these institutions to allow students to grow not just academically, but emotionally as well as mentally. With special reference to North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, the view on mental health is taken with great consideration, and therefore it seeks to create a safe space for its students to thrive in their academics, social life, creativity and leisure. Here are a few of the emerging practices that are followed in the university that foster mental well-being:

Student Counselling Centre

The Student Counselling Centre (SCC) of North- Eastern Hill University is located at the office of the DSW and function to make available the services free to all the Undergraduate, Post-graduate, Ph. D students and faculties of the University.

The main objective of Student Counselling Centre (SCC) is to promote the mental health of all NEHU students, to improve their quality of life and create a learning environment that facilitates their individual development.

The Student Counselling Centre, will function at two levels- at the Departmental and University levels.

At the Departmental level, the University will appoint the Teacher Counsellors who will act as the guardians of the students and remain in touch with the students allotted to them (batch Approved by the 96st Academic Council held on 28th June, 2016 4 of 25 students) throughout the year to cater to their emotional and intellectual needs who will coordinate with the SCC at the University level.

At the University level, the SCC shall oversee the effective redressal of problems and challenges faced by the students.

The SCC at the University level will be assisted by a team of professionally trained and widely experienced female and male Counsellors, psychologist and a psychiatrist, all of whom are accustomed to helping people from many backgrounds and cultures with a wide range of issues.

As specialists working with students, the team can help address whatever it is that may be of concern to students and is affecting their well-being. The team may offer a broad range of services including individual therapy, group therapy, as well as medication, assessment and management.

In addition to these, the team may provide a range of programmes to promote mental health, emotional wellness throughout the campus community. Our counsellors may conduct orientation and interact with students during orientation, conduct sensitization programmes and theme-focused short-term group sessions in consultation with SCC at the University level and with faculties in every academic department of the University

Since the members of this centre belongs from different departments and students' union, they function and conduct various programmes for the welfare and the betterment of the students including physical health and mental well-being.

2. Community Service: Students are also engaged in social work and community service through voluntary Clubs such as the NSS Unit. The Unit actively organises cleaning drives, tree plantation and blood donation programs as well as special camps. This helps a student remain busy in a stress-free environment, while also socialising with students from other disciplines as well as cultural backgrounds. Dr. Susan Albers, PsyD, psychologist for Cleveland Clinic "volunteering is great for your mental health," He further added, "It has been shown to decrease stress levels, depression, anxiety and boost your overall health and satisfaction with life." Dr. Albers said when you help other people, it activates the reward center in your brain and releases serotonin, dopamine and endorphins.

3. Extra-curricular: Creative arts can also be used in mental health care through art therapy, which can include theatre therapy, dance movement psychotherapy, music therapy, poetry, pottery, drawing, painting, and craft therapy. In NEHU, there are a total of 11 officially recognized clubs viz., Nehu Drama Association, Nehu Readers Club, Music Club, Debate Club, Dance Club, Arts Club, Literary Club, Chess Club, Film Club, MUN Club and Eco Club, the oldest club of the university, which help the students to grow in their hobbies and meet likeminded people. These clubs also conduct events and programs to celebrate the talents and skills of every student.

4. Sports & Fitness: The university has more or less provided the students with all the sports & fitness infrastructures, viz., the Indoor Stadium, for all sports enthusiasts including teachers and students to keep their mind occupied, which will prevent stress from accumulating on their mind. The university has also provided outdoor courts and stadiums for students to utilize it and for outdoor sports like Football, Volleyball, Cricket, and other sports. Sports overall helps in reducing ones stress and in improving their mood. It helps in fighting addiction by intoxicated items as well as depression. Besides the Indoor Stadium, the university also maintains a Fitness Centre which is accessible to all students, where adequate fitness equipment are provided. It is regularly opened from morning till late in the evening. In addition, all hostels have a sports area for playing Basketball, Volleyball, Tennis,

etc.

5. Community Groups: The students of the university also have the freedom to create ethnic associations or community groups, especially for students from outside the state. Having a community group that shares the same language, culture, or geographical location makes students feel more at home. Hence, this helps them from being isolated. There are inter-community activities or fellowships organized occasionally by the Community unions, which help keep depression and stress away, and also fostering unity in diversity inside the campus. Thereby, improving the mental health of the students.

6. Physical Space: NEHU is among the top ten largest Central Universities in India in terms of area. It covers approximately 1225 acres of land. The campus promotes cleanliness and is an example of a green university, with most of its area covered with trees and plants. This large area provides ample space for students to conduct events, ride bikes, walk, meditate, or jog without feeling overcrowded.

7. Religion & Spirituality: Lastly, religion gives people something to believe in, provides a sense of structure and typically offers a group of people to connect with over similar beliefs. These facets can have a large positive impact on mental health. Thus, the university also provides a space for its students to celebrate any religious festival such as Holi, Diwali, Eid, Christmas. It also provides buses for its students on every Sunday for those who want to attend Church.



NIT SIKKIM

I. Introduction

Mental well-being is critical to student life, influencing academic performance, personal development, and happiness. In higher education, especially in demanding technical institutes like NIT Sikkim, ensuring students' mental health is paramount. This compendium highlights the emerging practices and challenges related to the mental well-being of students at NIT Sikkim, focusing on available support systems, prevalent issues, and potential improvements.

II. Emerging Practices for Mental Well-being



1. **Counseling Services and Professional Support:** NIT Sikkim provides counseling services that offer students a safe space to address personal, academic, and emotional challenges. Professional counselors play a vital role in supporting mental well-being by offering personalized guidance and therapeutic support.
2. **Peer Support Programs:** Peer support initiatives, such as student-led groups, foster mutual understanding and support among students. These programs promote open communication about mental health concerns and reduce the stigma associated with seeking help.
3. **Workshops and Seminars on Stress Management:** Regular workshops and seminars on stress management, time management, and mindfulness help students develop strategies to cope with academic and personal pressures. These sessions are designed to improve emotional resilience and overall mental well-being.
4. **Physical Activities and Relaxation Techniques:** Encouraging students to engage in physical activities such as yoga, sports, and relaxation exercises is another effective

practice. These activities promote physical health and contribute significantly to reducing stress and anxiety.

5. **Academic Support and Time Management Initiatives:** Providing academic support through mentoring programs, time management workshops, and study skill development is crucial for alleviating academic pressure. These initiatives help students balance their workloads and improve productivity, leading to better mental health outcomes.

III. Challenges Faced in Addressing Mental Well-being

1. **Stigma and Awareness Barriers:** One of the most significant challenges in addressing mental health issues at NIT Sikkim is the stigma associated with seeking help. Many students may feel reluctant to access counseling services due to cultural or social stigmas related to mental health.
2. **Limited Access to Resources:** While counseling services are available, the demand for mental health support often exceeds the available resources. This limitation can result in long waiting times or insufficient access to professional care, which may exacerbate mental health problems among students.
3. **Academic Pressure and Performance Anxiety:** Students at NIT Sikkim often face high levels of academic pressure, which can lead to performance anxiety, stress, and burnout. The competitive environment, combined with the expectation to excel academically, contributes to mental health issues.
4. **Social Isolation and Adjusting to Campus Life:** For many students, adjusting to life at NIT Sikkim can be challenging, particularly for those from different states or regions. Social isolation, homesickness, and the pressure to fit into a new environment can negatively impact mental health.
5. **Financial Constraints and Impact on Well-being:** Financial difficulties are another challenge that can affect students' mental health. The stress of managing academic expenses alongside personal costs can increase anxiety and diminish their overall well-being.

IV. Recommendations for Improvement



1. **Expanding Counseling Resources:** To address the growing demand for mental health services, NIT Sikkim should invest in expanding counseling resources. This includes hiring more professionals, offering virtual counseling options, and increasing the availability of mental health services on campus.
2. **Building a Supportive Campus Environment:** Creating a more supportive campus environment involves fostering open conversations about mental health, promoting peer support systems, and encouraging students to seek help without fear of judgment.

Promoting Mental Health Awareness and De-stigmatization: Regular mental health awareness campaigns should be conducted to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues. These campaigns can include workshops, seminars, and student-led initiatives to raise awareness and normalize discussions about mental health.

3. **Encouraging Holistic Well-being Practices:** NIT Sikkim should promote a holistic approach to well-being by encouraging students to participate in extracurricular activities, physical exercises, and mindfulness practices. This can help students maintain a balanced lifestyle and improve their mental health.

Conclusion:

Mental well-being is a fundamental component of student success at NIT Sikkim. While several emerging practices are in place to support students, challenges still need to be addressed. By expanding counseling resources, reducing stigma, and promoting holistic well-being practices, NIT Sikkim can further enhance the mental health support available to its students. With sustained efforts, the institute can continue to foster a nurturing and supportive environment that prioritizes the mental well-being of the students.

SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

Activities and Emerging Practices

Cultural Diversity as a Pillar of Mental Wellbeing

Cultural diversity plays a vital role in the well-being of both students and teachers at our university. University celebrate every festival together, and student societies like the Assamese and Bengali societies help preserve their own cultural traditions. They also introduce others to new ways of celebrating familiar festivals, enriching everyone's understanding of India's diverse cultural heritage.

Drama Club and Student-Teacher Interaction

The student-run drama club is a valuable resource for promoting both student and teacher well-being. It offers a platform for emotional expression, creativity, and connection, while also fostering important social skills such as communication and confidence-building. Students overcome stage fright, contributing to their personal growth and preparing them for future endeavours.

Emotional Challenges

University offers access to a dedicated resource known as "*Samadhan*," a special support cell which is managed by professors from various departments. *Samadhan* provides students with a much-needed outlet to discuss their concerns and offers professional guidance on stress management and emotional well-being



Experiential Learning through Field Trips

A key challenge in academic learning, particularly in fields like psychology and special education, is the gap between theoretical knowledge and its practical application. Students often find it difficult to grasp the full scope of issues faced by individuals with disabilities or those undergoing rehabilitation without first-hand experience. Field trips are an integral part

of experiential learning, offering students a chance to gain practical knowledge and skills beyond the classroom. Sikkim University has organised visits to rehabilitation centers such as *Freedom Rehab Centre, Gangtok* and *Special School for Children with Disabilities* in Gangtok, providing students with invaluable hands-on experience. These visits enable students to engage directly with real-world challenges in rehabilitation and special education, fostering deeper understanding and empathy. By interacting with professionals, children, and individuals undergoing rehabilitation, students can better appreciate the complexities of mental health treatment and special education. Such experiences are particularly vital in preparing them for future roles in psychology, counselling, and education. Research supports the value of experiential learning, showing that it enhances critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and student engagement (Kolb, 1984).



Weekly Mental Health Seminars for Psychoeducation

To further promote mental health awareness, our department holds weekly psychoeducational seminars every Wednesday, which are open to students from all departments. These seminars cover topics ranging from managing stress to understanding mental health conditions, and they provide a safe space for students to learn about mental health..

Logistical Challenges: Transportation and Campus Geography

Our university is spread across multiple buildings within a 10-kilometer radius, which can make transportation a major source of stress for both students and faculty. Recently, the addition of three more buses to the transportation system has helped ease some of the commuting difficulties between buildings. These improved services have greatly reduced stress related to time management and fatigue, thereby enhancing the overall mental well-being of both students and teachers. The Sikkim University Students Association (SUSA) conducts an annual review to assess transportation challenges and regularly adjusts the bus schedules and routes to address any issues, ensuring a smoother commute for everyone.

Annual Fest "Ra Mai Lo Sukhim"

The annual sports fest "Ra Mai Lo Sukhim" is a vibrant event that brings together students from across our widespread university, which operates in different buildings throughout Sikkim. Given the fragmented nature of our campus, students often find it challenging to connect and build relationships with one another. However, this festival serves as a crucial opportunity for students to come together in a unified environment, fostering a sense of community and belonging.

"Ra Mai Lo Sukhim" spans nearly a month and features a variety of sports and literary activities, culminating in a lively prom night. This diverse range of events encourages active participation and excitement among students, allowing them to engage with peers they may not have met otherwise. By promoting teamwork, sportsmanship, and friendly competition, the festival helps students develop social skills and build connections that can enhance their overall university experience.

The mental well-being benefits of such events are significant. Engaging in physical activities reduces stress and promotes a sense of accomplishment, while the social interactions foster emotional support and camaraderie. These experiences not only alleviate feelings of isolation but also contribute to improved mental health, as students feel more connected and integrated into the university community. Overall, "Ra Mai Lo Sukhim" plays an essential role in enhancing student well-being by creating a joyful, inclusive atmosphere that celebrates both athleticism and creativity.

Conclusion

Promoting mental wellbeing in educational institutions requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the needs of both students and teachers. By integrating cultural heritage, offering co-curricular activities like drama, providing professional psychological support, addressing logistical challenges such as transportation, and offering mental health education, our university creates an inclusive and supportive environment. These efforts are crucial for fostering a campus where everyone feels comfortable, connected, and capable of thriving academically and personally.

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH BIHAR

Introduction:

The Students Counselling and Wellbeing Centre (SCWBC) as an integral part of the University, is a student support service intended to help students adapt and make the best of their learning environment. This center has been established on campus for providing excellent student-oriented services to assist them in shaping their career besides enabling them to effectively cope with their day-to-day concerns in a constructive manner. The mission of SCWBC is to support students' intellectual, emotional, and social growth to improve their overall wellbeing. The services offered are intended to support students' social, intellectual, and personal development. The role of SCWBC is to ensure personal, psychological, and social well-being of students. They can meet professional counselling psychologists to discuss their personal concerns and issues during office hours from Monday-Saturday. The students are encouraged to use SCWBC services for their happiness and wellbeing. It is common knowledge that when students have problems that are unresolved, it reflects in their attendance, academic performance and ultimately in their personality development. The Centre therefore attempts to provide a nurturing environment wherein each student is empowered to face life challenges and move ahead to achieve their academic goals. It provides comprehensive preventive and general psychological services to the students, faculty and staff of the University. The members of the cell could deal with various psychological issues such as distress, burnout, mental fatigue, anxiety, de-motivation, academic failure, conflict resolution, dealing with difficult situations, time management, adjustment issues, and assessment of some prevailing psychological conditions that need medical supervision, improving physical health, resilience and capacity building etc. All contacts and information obtained during the course of counselling are kept confidential



Vision

To provide a comprehensive, developmental counselling programme that addresses the academic, personal, social and emotional needs of students to make them mentally strong as

overall wellbeing of students is of utmost importance. The Centre offers a range of services to help students with their mental health, academic success, and personal

Mission

Help support, guide and assist students to develop life skills to cope up with challenges and enhance their personality by making them not just excellent professionals but also good human beings with understanding and regard for human values.

Objectives

- To counsel and guide University students on various issues and help them to manage personal, professional and academic demands of University life effectively
- To facilitate students to adjust to the new environment.
- To help students and employees of all beliefs and identities who may react to such events with feelings that include anger, hurt, confusion, fear, helplessness, loneliness, and hopelessness
- To counsel the students requesting a withdrawal from a specific academic programme for non- academic reasons.
- To provide prompt counselling for mental health emergencies arising on account of highly charged events on the campus.
- To identify and refer mental health issues requiring medical and psychiatric assistance.

Mode of functioning

- The counselling services are available during all working weekdays from 3 pm to 5 pm at the University counselling center (Room no 344 and 343, Chanakya Bhawan). Every day two slots will be available for counselling.
- Students may consult the center through email or mobile number and they get the consultancy online also, if there is urgency.
- Centre had prepared one format (Case Record File) for collecting the information regarding the problem of the student and mentioning the details about the treatment procedure and follow up records. Everything is confidential.

Confidentiality:

Our records are separate from all other university records. We do not reveal any information about anyone using our services unless that person gives us written permission to do so or unless required by law.

Functions/ Role:

- Treatment/ Intervention: Supportive therapy, Informative counselling, Relaxation, Yogic practices, Time management, Cognitive restructuring
- Modes: Regular, individual session, group setting, Follow up, Exam time visit
- Conducting sessions or organizing workshops related to life skills, time management, Awareness about the importance of mental well being
- Hel with anxiety, stress, relational problem, home sickness, adjustment problems
- Every year celebrating World Mental Health Week regarding sensitization and reducing the stigma related to aces of mental health intervention or psychological help
- Organizing invited lectures

Emerging Practices:

- Trusted and well-equipped counselling service
- Online and offline counselling session
- Support from the health Professionals/ Psychiatrist from ANMCH, Gaya
- Sports, Yoga and Therapeutic facilities provided by the Physical Education department and Psychological Sciences department
- Mentor- Mentee system for both UG and PG students
- Organizing lectures / talks and workshops on well ness and time management issues
- Organizing events like poster making/ Speech completion related to the promotion of the well being
- Celebrating World Mental Health Week every year as annual event
- Conducting orientation program in the starting of each session for facilitating the adjustment process for the newly admitted students
- Well established psychological lab for detail assessment of the students

Challenges:

- Stigma related to availing psychological help
- Lack of professional resources
- Identifying the covert mental health issues at the initial stage.

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TAMIL NADU

Introduction

The Counselling Cell at the Central University of Tamil Nadu (CUTN) is dedicated to fostering the mental and emotional well-being of its students, staff, and faculty. This cell provides vital support services to help individuals navigate life's challenges, particularly those that impact developmental stages, academic pressure, life transitions, interpersonal relationships, and mental health. This initiative is essential as CUTN hosts students from diverse backgrounds who often face unique challenges while adjusting to new environments.

Core Services and Outreach

1. Student and Staff Support:

- The counselling cell extends support to the CUTN community, including students, faculty, and staff, addressing psycho-social, emotional, behavioural, and academic issues.
- Counselling services help students confront academic pressure, adapt to life changes, manage relationship dynamics, and address mental health issues.
- Additionally, the cell provides services to faculty members and non-teaching staff and, upon request, extends these services to their families.

2. School and Community Support:

- The counselling Cell provides mental health services to Kendriya Vidyalaya and other local schools in Thiruvarur, helping students cope with academic and personal challenges.
- This outreach includes mental health awareness programs and training for teachers to manage students' mental health issues effectively.

3. Training Programs:

- CUTN students and research scholars receive training in essential counselling skills, peer counselling, and disaster psychosocial support. The training equips them with the tools to address mental health challenges and provides a foundation for peer support within the campus.

4. Awareness Programmes:

- Awareness initiatives are integral to the counselling cell's work. They conduct sessions in nearby schools on topics like suicide prevention and mental health enhancement, encouraging students and teachers to recognize and address mental health challenges.

Key Initiatives and Programs

1. Peer Counselling Training

- Initiated on Suicide Prevention Day in 2017, peer counselling training aims to empower CUTN students to support their peers through mental health challenges.
- The program provides annual three-day training sessions focusing on suicide prevention, general mental health support, and skill development for peer counselling.
- Students from various departments participate, receiving supervision and mentorship from faculty members. This engagement also involves volunteers in broader mental health promotion activities on campus.
- The training program highlights practical skills, communication strategies, and self-help techniques, ensuring that trained peer counsellors can offer reliable support.

2. 'Espoir' Peer Counselling Training Programme

- 'Espoir,' meaning "hope" in French, represents CUTN's commitment to providing psychological first aid and suicide prevention training.
- Espoir trains students in peer counselling and crisis support, enabling them to aid peers experiencing mental health difficulties.
- Practical sessions include group activities, role-play, and scenario-based learning to strengthen counselling techniques.
- The positive participant feedback underscores the program's impact, with 57 peer counsellors trained and available to assist on campus in crisis situations.



3. 'Arivoli' Outreach Program

- 'Arivoli,' which translates to "enlightenment" in Tamil, focuses on mental health awareness among young individuals, led by the Department of Applied Psychology and the counselling cell.
- Under the guidance of Dr. Mamman Joseph C., this program covers mental health education, distress recognition, and fostering a supportive culture.

- Activities include self-care, 'Metta-Meditation,' discussions on mental health stigma, and seeking help, aimed at equipping students with emotional resilience and tools for mental well-being.
- Over 322 students from schools in Thiruvavarur benefited from the Arivoli program, gaining practical mental health resources.



Arivoli at GBHSS, Nannilam, Tamil Nadu



Arivoli at Kendriya Vidyalaya, CUTN

Additional Initiatives

- **E-Pamphlet Development:** CUTN developed e-pamphlets on mental health and suicide prevention, covering topics like warning signs, risk factors, and protective factors. These resources were shared across the campus to raise awareness and provide critical information.
- **Solidarity Campaign:** A three-day solidarity campaign for mental health and suicide prevention garnered 988 signatures, uniting the CUTN community in support of mental health advocacy.
- **Special Events and Training for Faculty and Staff:** The counselling cell organized exhibitions, panel discussions, guided meditation sessions, and mentoring training for faculty, all aimed at promoting a holistic culture of mental well-being across the university.

Impact and Community Engagement

Through its wide-ranging support, training, and awareness programs, the Counselling cell and the Department of Applied Psychology, CUTN plays a transformative role in promoting mental health and well-being within the university and the broader community. The initiatives, from peer counselling training to community outreach, demonstrate the university's proactive stance on mental health challenges, providing a solid support system for students, staff, and faculty alike. By cultivating awareness, training skilled peer counsellors, and engaging with local schools, CUTN's Counselling Cell continues to advocate for a compassionate, well-supported environment conducive to personal and academic growth.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, TIRUPATI

Introduction

Sarathi, by definition means a friend, a guide or someone who helps you walk your path. The Guidance and Counselling Unit of IIT Tirupati strives to work by this.

Sarathi aims to do away with the stigma around “mental illness” and the concept of “counselling” as a last resort. Instead, we envision a place where you can come, sit down, feel comfortable, talk it out and leave feeling better.

Objective:

Sarathi works towards building a suicide free campus, enabling a stigma free and empathetic environment towards the concept of mental well being so that someday, our campus may be free of depression/anxiety and may allow for peace and happiness.

Activities and Emerging Practices:

Sarathi provides one-to-one in-person counselling sessions. Students who opt for these sessions interact with our in-house counsellor. The discussions are kept private between the two of them. The student council of Sarathi works together to organise various events like awareness events, stress buster events, group discussions and seminars on topics related to mental health struggles that students often face. The student team is also responsible for understanding the environment at the grass-root level, be it in hostels, classrooms or generally around the campus. With the help of its diverse composition, the student team keeps tabs on how the students are doing and what sort of problems seem to be affecting student morale. These problems are brought back to the counsellors and faculty advisors for viable solutions.

Our Emerging Practices

We, at Sarathi, conduct regular sessions to raise awareness about mental health and its related challenges. A set of regular sessions, called “Barefoot Counselling” and “Gatekeeper training”, are aimed at educating students and faculty respectively about signs of depressed behaviour, the means to identify if someone is going through a difficult time and the ways to reach out to people empathetically, even those who are struggling with suicidal tendencies. Our “Research Pit-Stop Training” program is aimed specifically at providing scholars with a platform to discuss their struggles and difficulties with a counsellor in a group setting. Such sessions reassure students that they are never alone in their struggles and enable them to work towards overcoming their difficulties together.

Our most successful program, the “UG Buddy Initiative”, aims to inculcate a healthy mentor-mentee interaction across batches. Each year, sophomore and junior year students are assigned as mentors to freshmen, even before they arrive at the campus. The mentors

help out with queries and discomforts, small or big, and guide the freshmen through the ways of our institute. They become the first connection for the freshmen and grow into valuable advisors as the years go on. Apart from the student team and in-house counsellors, our institute also collaborates with YourDost, a 24/7 online platform that houses highly-rated psychologists who are just a call away. We also constantly seek out new ways to connect mental wellness to other aspects of life, such as physical fitness. With yoga events and other collaborations with the sports council, students are pushed towards seeing mental fitness as a combined effort of great life practices, and not as a standalone goal to achieve. Additionally, faculty-student interaction and teamwork through game-days allow for students to be more comfortable with reaching out to their advisors and professors during stressful times.

What we want to do.

We, at Sarathi, also have our eyes set on some specific details that can help us reach out to every student on campus. Firstly, our rigorous attendance policies can be used to track a student's regular presence. A sustained unexplained absence may give us a hint about some underlying issues that the student might be facing. Such instances should be taken seriously and should be looked into. Secondly, encouraging mental health discussions within a classroom setting will allow students to warm up to the idea of talking out their troubles, seeking guidance and counselling without the associated stigma. Given the 1:10 faculty-student ratio, it should be relatively easy to identify struggling students. This practice is prevalent already with many faculty advisors making the effort to reach out to their students and check up on them, but it must reach every student.

Our main challenges.

While these are healthy practices that we stick by, there are certain challenges that we face on a regular basis: The sense of "not feeling okay", despite no physical strain, is associated with heavy societal stigma. Unfortunately, this ingrained belief is brought into the institute as well. The fear of being labelled "mentally ill" if you seek help from a counsellor discourages many who wish to take the first step. It would be imperative for Sarathi to preserve its "we are there for you" nature by fighting the stigma every day. Lastly the importance of Sarathi and its role in mental wellbeing, and wellbeing at large, is not taken as seriously as it should be by the population.

NATIONAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY, TIRUPATI

National Sanskrit University, a Central University established is a premier institution in the field of higher learning in Sanskrit studies, Traditional Sastras and Sanskrit Teacher Education. It is funded by the Ministry of Education through UGC. **Vice-Chancellor Prof. G S R Krishna Murty**, An Eminent Sanskrit Scholar with 37+ years of Teaching & Research experience. Author of 10 original books & 7 translation works with 40+ articles, Recognized by Uttar Pradesh Sahitya Academy & UP Sanskrit Sansthan Mahamahopadhyaya by Hindi Sahitya Sammelana. Lifetime achievement award in creative writing by SNet samskritam.net.in/. Experienced Administrator with multiple board memberships. Prof. R.J.Ramasree Registrar i/c A Senior Professor in Computer Science, She has served as Head of the department Computer Science. The basic objective of setting up the Vidyapeetha is to impart and improve Sanskrit Teacher Education, to accelerate the pace of higher Sanskrit learning and to combine the traditional Sanskrit education with modern scientific research. In the year 1987, the Vidyapeetha was declared as a Deemed to be University by the Government of India, considering its service to the cause of Sanskrit Education, its achievements in research and publications and the general progress it had made in the past 25 years. It was formally inaugurated by the then President of India Sri R. Venkatraman on 26th of August 1989. In March 2020, the Indian Parliament passed the Central Sanskrit Universities Act, 2020 to upgrade Rashtriya Samskrita Vidyapeetha, a deemed to be university to a central university as National Sanskrit University.

UGC's Innovative Programmes the University has been awarded with four innovative programmes - (1) Sabdabodha Systems and Language Technology (2) Yoga Therapy and Stress Management (3) Masters in Ancient Indian Management Techniques. With the approval of the UGC, the University has been offering a PG Course in Sabdabodha Systems and Language Technology, P.G. Diploma in Yoga Therapy and Stress Management. A full time two year Masters Programme in Ancient Indian Management Techniques has been running successfully since its inception in 2012. The University has also been conducting research and training programmes in the thrust areas of these programmes. Sanskrit literature. As a part of this project, nearly 140 concepts on **Ayurveda, Chemistry, Astronomy, Aeronautics, Geology, Physics, Botany, Mathematics, Meteorology, Metallurgy, Economics, Management, Gemmology and Acoustics** have been prepared and exhibited in different places **Sanskrit-Science Exhibition** aims at highlighting the scientific wisdom for promoting about the mental well-being all over India.

Emerging Practices:

The university has implemented practices that prioritize students' mental, emotional, and physical well-being. A key approach is fostering **open communication**, encouraging students to openly share their feelings in a safe, non-judgmental environment. This reduces mental health stigma and builds a supportive campus culture. Additionally, integrating **mindfulness and relaxation techniques** such as meditation, deep breathing, and yoga

teaches students to manage stress effectively, helping them stay calm and resilient under pressure. Promoting **regular physical activity** – from sports to casual walks – further boosts mood, reduces anxiety, and enhances mental health. Emphasizing **healthy sleep habits** is also vital; educating students on sleep hygiene, including consistent sleep schedules and restful environments, improves cognitive function and emotional stability. Collectively, these strategies equip students with lifelong tools for maintaining health and well-being amidst the demands of university life.

Poster Making competitions related to mental health and well-being were held among the students of department of Education. The department students were actively participated in the programme.

As a part of the curriculum one-day workshop on "Art & Craft" was conducted on 05-07-2024 for Siksha Shastri (B. Ed) Pupil teachers.

“Art & Craft, Poster-making boosts self-esteem, enhancing cognitive function, problem-solving offers an outlet for creativity, allowing individuals to express thoughts, emotions, and ideas visually”



In celebration of International Translation Day, the Department of Translation at National Sanskrit University conducted a two-day national seminar focusing on translation techniques and challenges and also organized ten days’ workshop on grantha script translation. The seminar brought together eminent scholars, research scholars, and faculty members to explore various aspects of translation.

“Students engaging in language translation exercises the mind, potentially slowing cognitive decline and improving mental resilience, particularly as one ages, bridging communication gaps, increasing Empathy and Cultural Awareness.”

NSS Cell of National Sanskrit University participated in a 5K Walkathon on the occasion of World Heart Day, held on September 29, 2024. The event, organized by Amara Hospital in Tirupati, saw the enthusiastic involvement of 300 volunteers. This initiative not only raised awareness about heart health but also strengthened community ties.

Application of IKS in Sanskrit Texts and its Contemporary Relevance. The Malaviya Mission Teachers Training Centre at the National Sanskrit University organized a comprehensive six-day Faculty Development Programme on the theme “Application of IKS in Sanskrit Texts and its Contemporary Relevance.” Held from 17th to 22nd October 2024, this program aimed to bridge traditional Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) with contemporary teaching practices. Integrating IKS into education thus provides students with meaningful cultural insights, emotional resilience, and a strong sense of identity, all of which support their overall welfare and personal development.



Yoga Day 2024: As per the directions of the Ministry of Education and Ayush the Department of Yoga Vijnana, National Sanskrit University celebrated the 10th International Day of Yoga on 21st June 2024. The thrust of the IDY observation this Year is ‘Yoga for Holistic Well-being and Sustainable Living’. In this context, as per the discussions held with the authorities the Department of Sankhya Yoga and Yoga Vijnana are organized [A Two Day International Seminar on “Yoga for Holistic Well-being and Sustainable Living”](#) in our university on 20th & 21st June 2024.

Yoga Awareness March: The Hon’ble Vice- Chancellor Prof. G.S.R. Krishnamurthy flagged off the march, which was a 2.0 kms walk along with students and other yoga supporters, carrying placards to spread the messages of “International Day of Yoga”.

Yogic Diet: Before and after the “Yoga Awareness March”, all participants were served with Yogic diet (Yoga- Prasada) and Breakfast.



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

1. Overview

NIT Tiruchirappalli has implemented an Equity Action Plan to boost student academic performance through student-centered strategies, including assigning active mentors and counselors. The institute's proactive 'Counseling and Guidance Cell,' established under the Office of the Dean (Students' Welfare), provides enrichment and support services aimed at enhancing both personal and academic development for students, faculty, and staff.

The Counseling and Guidance Cell focuses on helping individuals overcome learning obstacles, improve interpersonal relationships, and address behavioral or adaptability issues. Its programs also contribute to overall personality development, equipping members of the campus community to handle life's challenges with resilience and self-assurance.

The cell is led by a faculty coordinator and staffed by two professional counsellors. Counsellors are available on regular basis daily for eight hours at the Central Library building. Students make extensive use of this facility. Additionally, counselors are present at the NITT hospital on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 2:30 PM to 5:00 PM. To cater to female students, a female counselor is available at the ladies' hostel on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM. If any individual requires psychiatric treatment, they are referred to a psychiatrist at the campus hospital.

Some of the services rendered are:

- ❖ Identifying and nurturing students' abilities
- ❖ Assisting with interpersonal, educational, and psychological issues
- ❖ Encouraging the development of a positive attitude to face challenges
- ❖ Helping students recognize their strengths and overcome weaknesses
- ❖ Providing a strength-based approach to treatment planning, focusing on optimal psychosocial care
- ❖ Offering individual counseling, group therapy, family counseling, and crisis counseling.

Additionally, an online counseling and emotional support platform called YourDOST was launched on August 6, 2019. It provides to connect individuals anonymously with experts like psychologists, counselors, and career guides. It offers confidential online support through chats, video and audio sessions, and hosts awareness webinars and workshops to enhance mental health. Around 1,000 counselors are available online 24/7, and the platform is accessible to all members of the NIT-Trichy community who possess a valid NITT email

ID.

2. Emerging Practices related to Mental Well-Being

The following are the emerging practices followed by the Institute to foster Mental Well-Being in the campus community.

(i). Monthly classroom orientation programs

The Counseling and Guidance Cell at NITT hosts monthly classroom orientation programs featuring motivational and psycho-educational sessions aimed at holistic student development. Renowned external speakers provide diverse insights, addressing topics like stress management, emotional intelligence, and mental well-being to support students' mental health and academic success.

(ii). Workshops on building Mental Health resilience

The Counseling and Guidance Cell offers tailored Mental Health Resilience workshops for research scholars, postgraduates, and undergraduates, focusing on psychological well-being, stress management, mindfulness, and coping strategies. Additionally, it marks 'World Mental Health Day' and 'Suicide Prevention Day' with events promoting mental well-being and resilience across the campus.



(iii). Sensitisation workshops for faculty members

Every summer, the Counselling and Guidance Cell at NITT conducts annual sensitization workshops exclusively for faculty members. These programs focus on crucial topics such as effective mentoring, work-life balance, promoting mental wellness in the academic environment. By empowering faculty with the necessary skills and awareness, these workshops aim to foster a supportive and inclusive campus culture.

(iv). Awareness workshops for parents of first year UG students

The Counseling and Guidance Cell holds annual workshops for parents of first-year students as part of orientation, addressing modern parenting challenges, especially for Generation Z and Alpha. Focusing on parents' roles in education, these interactive sessions offer expert insights and open dialogue, receiving positive feedback from participants.

(v). Sensitisation program on Mental Health awareness and early detection of distress

The Counselling and Guidance Cell at NITT organizes comprehensive sensitization programs on Mental Health Awareness and Early Detection of Distress. Targeting key student influencers, including class representatives, stewards, hostel wardens, and resident student counsellors, this initiative aims at emphasize the significance of mental wellness and equip participants with skills to identify students requiring support. To facilitate swift identification and intervention, a dedicated WhatsApp group was established, enabling seamless communication among stakeholders.



(vi). Mental health awareness programs for ICCR students

As part of its commitment to inclusivity and well-being, NITT conducts specialized mental health awareness programs for international students enrolled through the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scheme. These students, hailing from countries such as Bangladesh, Nepal, and others, face unique challenges adapting to a new cultural and academic environment. Tailored workshops and sessions address:

- Cultural adjustment and homesickness
- Academic pressure and language barriers
- Stress management and coping strategies
- Building resilience and social connections

These initiatives facilitate a smooth transition, fostering emotional well-being and academic success among ICCR students.

(vii). Surveys on mental health well-being of students

To gauge the mental health landscape of its student community, the counselling and guidance cell conducts a comprehensive survey on mental health well-being. This proactive initiative aims to understand the psychological needs and concerns of students, informing targeted support services. The survey's findings provide valuable insights into students' emotional wellness, revealing areas of strength and vulnerability.

IIM UDAIPUR

I. Introduction

IIM Udaipur has implemented several measures to support and safeguard the mental health and well-being of its students.

II. Activities and Emerging Practices

- (i) **Counseling Services:** IIM Udaipur offers professional counseling services to students, providing them with a safe and confidential environment to discuss mental health concerns. Two Professional counselors are available 24X7 to help students manage stress, anxiety, and personal challenges. These counselors conduct scheduled visits and sessions at the campus also.
- (ii) **Workshops and Seminars:** Regular workshops on topics such as stress management, mindfulness, and emotional resilience are conducted to equip students with practical tools for managing mental health.
- (iii) **Peer Support Groups:** The institute encourages peer support networks, allowing students to connect with each other and share experiences. These groups help students feel less isolated, creating a sense of community and shared understanding.
- (iv) **Mental Health Awareness Programs:** Awareness campaigns and events around mental health help reduce stigma and encourage students to seek help when needed. These programs aim to foster a supportive and understanding campus culture.
- (v) **Student Affairs Office Support:** The Student Affairs Office actively engages with students and monitors their well-being. The office often collaborates with counselors and faculty members to ensure students' academic and personal needs are met.
- (vi) **Flexible Academic Support:** To accommodate students facing mental health challenges, IIM Udaipur provides flexibility in academic requirements and deadlines where possible, ensuring students can balance their studies with mental health needs.
- (vii) **Physical Wellness Initiatives:** Recognizing the link between physical and mental well-being, the institute also promotes physical health through sports, yoga, and recreational activities, which can help reduce stress and improve mental health.

These initiatives demonstrate IIM Udaipur's commitment to creating a holistic and supportive environment for its students, ensuring they have access to resources that promote both mental and physical well-being.

BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY

Introduction

The time spent by each student in the University today is filled with adjustments, opportunities & challenges, varied decision making experiences and choices. This dynamic experience for the student often creates conflict and confusion within, thereby impacting his/her mental health and wellbeing. Banaras Hindu University under the able leadership of Prof. Sudhir Kumar Jain, Vice Chancellor, has been striving to create a vibrant campus life for students in the main campus and at Rajiv Gandhi South campus since mid-2022.

Emerging Practices

1. Workshops on Psychological Self and Wellbeing for Directors/ Deans/ Principal/ Senior Officials

Banaras Hindu University in its endeavour to drive impetus towards addressing students physical and mental health concerns, has conducted two interactive workshops for the University's top management to understand their own psychological self and wellbeing and to develop an empathic connection with others. This has resulted in acceptance and embracing the student-connect aspect of mindfulness by the Directors/ Deans/ Principal/ Senior Officials of the University necessary to drive change within the BHU Campuses. The Hon'ble Vice Chancellor has been leading this change and initiative, himself.



2. Student Leadership & Life Skill Development Initiative and Student Wellbeing Initiative Committees

To help students navigate life challenges, resolve psychological concerns and develop a life-long orientation towards resilience and mental wellness through formal and informal means, and to ensure that students' physical and mental wellbeing are enhanced, Student Leadership & Life Skill Development Initiative and Student Wellbeing Initiative Committees are established in all Institutes/ Faculty/ College in 2023. Focus of the Committees is to conduct individual and group meetings/ activities, workshops, talks, and

events on various aspects of wellbeing. In the academic session 2023-24, student engagement in wellbeing activities saw 18,027 students participate in 186 such activities whereas student participation in leadership & life skill activities was 11,699 in 166 such activities.

Further, in order to drive impetus towards the student's engagement on creativity aspect of student's mindfulness, Banaras Hindu University started an initiative where under Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan Internships, services of Visual Arts interns are being utilised to engage students from Institute/ Faculty/ College and especially from hostels in clay modeling/ pottery making, textile tie-dye workshops and painting workshops.



3. Promotion of Physical Activities & Sports

Banaras Hindu University, engaging the services of Physical Education interns under Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan Internships, has been working towards promoting physical activities & sports amongst the students in Institutes/ Faculty/ College and especially in hostels. Morning and evening physical activities and sports are being driven by the Dean of Students with active involvement of the Admin Wardens and Wardens. Also, hostels from the academic session 2023-24 are being provided with separate sports funds to augment sports utilities in hostels to encourage students in games and sports.



4. Psychological Counselling

Banaras Hindu University aims to promote preventive care, mitigation of psychological health risks, apart from adequate psychological counselling services on campus for the students. Also, with NEP-2020 laying emphasis on building resilience towards mental health of the student, and the need to augment student counselling services saw

institutionalizing of the Wellbeing Services Cell under the Associate Dean of Students (Student Development). 15 Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan Fellowship interns have received a three-month intensive training for in-person counselling. They have now been deployed across Institutes/ Faculty/ College as change agents to bring positivity in the whole scenario by trying creative ways to engage with students. In addition, 4 Clinical Psychological Counsellors have been recruited to expand various interventions and maximize outreach for all students.

5. Development of Hostel Coordinators, Admin Wardens, Wardens and Student Advisors as Primary Counsellors

In late 2023, an initiative was steered by Banaras Hindu University for its Hostel Coordinators, Admin Wardens, Wardens and Student Advisors to train and develop them as primary counselors' for students, who can be there to listen to their students but also normalize psychological wellbeing issues in University campuses. 56 Faculty members have since successfully completed a six-day training while 133 faculty members have received a one-day training.

Challenges

1. Student Participation

Student participation in various facets of wellbeing activities/ events has steadily been increasing. However, some students remain reluctant to participate in such activities/ events citing attendance and 'what's in it for me' probable. Hence, more effort is needed towards communication and engagement, so many more students will see the value of such activities.

Further, it is to be noted that many faculty members including some Heads and Deans tend to not to accept and embrace the changes necessary towards student mental wellbeing. The road to where Banaras Hindu University stands today with respect to its commitment on students mental wellbeing aspect, has had a fair bit of successes but a lot more remains to be done. Stigma associated with mental health amongst the faculty and students needs to be addressed holistically.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, VISAKHAPATNAM

1. Introduction

Mental well-being is a growing concern in educational institutions worldwide, and the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) are no exception. Known for their academic rigor, competitive atmosphere, and pressure-cooker environment, IIMs place students under immense stress. This can create anxiety, depression, burnout, and other mental health challenges. In this article, we document some of the mental well-being challenges faced by students at IIMs and highlight a few emerging practices that can be adopted to improve the mental health landscape in IIMs and other higher education institutions (HEIs).

2. Team Objectives

While the challenges related to mental health at IIMs are significant, they are not insurmountable. By adopting a proactive approach that includes counselling services, peer support, stress management workshops, and open conversations about mental health, HEIs, including IIMs, can create a supportive environment that prioritizes the well-being of its students. Addressing mental health concerns early and effectively will help students thrive academically and equip them with the resilience they need to succeed in their professional and personal lives beyond the IIMs.



Glimpses from the World Mental Health Day Celebrations held at IIMV on 10th October 2024.

3. Activities and Emerging Practices

Although these challenges are common across all IIMs, IIM Visakhapatnam (IIMV) has taken concrete steps to address the mental health needs of its students. Some of the emerging practices that have been implemented include establishing comprehensive counselling services, one of the most effective ways to support students' mental health. IIMV has established a professional counselling center with trained psychologists who offer confidential, one-on-one sessions. This provides easy access to counselling, along with regular mental health check-ups, which often help in the early detection and intervention of mental health issues.

Second, student-led peer support and welfare programs have been implemented, where the newly joined students can interact with seniors in an amicable environment whenever and wherever required. Peer counselling programs are a valuable resource for students who may feel more comfortable talking to their peers to seek academic and professional help. These peers act as first-line support, offer a listening ear, and guide their friends whenever needed.

Third, regular workshops on stress management, emotional resilience, and mindfulness practices are offered, equipping students with the tools they need to cope with the pressures of academic life. These workshops focus on practical techniques such as meditation, time management, and relaxation exercises that help reduce stress and anxiety.

Fourth, to reduce stigma and promote open conversations about mental health, IIMV organizes awareness campaigns that destigmatize counselling and therapy. Through initiatives like celebrating mental health days, the institute fosters a culture where mental well-being is considered as important as academic success.

Fifth, encouraging students to maintain a healthy work-life balance is crucial for their mental well-being. IIMV has established student-run clubs that facilitate extracurricular activities, sports, and wellness programs that allow students to unwind and de-stress. Creating platforms for students to share their own experiences with mental health challenges can also encourage others to seek help without fear of judgment.

Sixth, IIMV holds mandatory faculty-student mentorship programs where, in the first year of the MBA, every faculty member is assigned five students, and the students can discuss their concerns and issues, academic or non-academic, regularly. Having a trusted faculty member to talk to can significantly reduce feelings of isolation and provide a sense of belonging. In addition, the dining area is common for everyone to ensure no power distance between the students, staff, and faculty.

Finally, every year, IIMV offers financial aid to the most deserving students to reduce their financial burden and mental stress related to the loan they may have taken.

4. Challenges

One of the most significant challenges IIM students face is academic pressure. The curriculum is intensive, often requiring students to juggle multiple assignments, exams, and presentations in a short time. With competitive grading systems, students constantly strive to outperform their peers, leading to high-performance anxiety. There is a nagging fear of failure, which results in students feeling overwhelmed and mentally exhausted.

Second, the cohort-based structure at IIMs, where students study and live together, triggers unhealthy comparisons. The constant visibility of others' academic achievements, extracurriculars, or placements leads to a sense of inadequacy. The competitive environment at IIMs can make students feel they are always in a race and push them towards unhealthy coping mechanisms.

Third, IIMs attract students from diverse backgrounds in geography, culture, educational background, and prior work experience. For many, adjusting to the high-pressure academic environment, far from their homes, can be difficult. This adjustment period can cause homesickness and social isolation leading to mental health issues.

Fourth, the cost of education at IIMs is high, and many students take out loans to fund their studies. The financial burden and the pressure to land a high-paying job after graduation add another layer of stress.

Fifth, the unpredictability of placements, the preparation required for interviews, and the fear of not meeting expectations can severely impact mental well-being.

Finally, there is a deep stigma associated with mental health, even in this day and age. Although mental health awareness has grown in recent years, students, especially at prestigious institutions like IIMs, may fear being perceived as "weak" if they admit to struggling with mental health issues. This can prevent students from addressing their challenges promptly, leading to a worsening of their condition.
