

Record of Discussion of Online Session on 'Capacity Building for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing' held on 27.09.2024 at 10:00 AM.

The Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education held an online session on 27.09.2024, at 10:00 AM for nominated faculty members of selected Centrally Funded Institutions (CFIs). This session focused on 'Capacity Building for Promoting Positive Mental Health, Resilience and Wellbeing'.

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

3. The modality of the online capacity building program includes 2 sessions per month with 10 participants for each session from the identified set of CFIs starting from the month of May 2024. For the month of September 2024, two sessions were planned; first on 17.09.2024 and second on 27.09.2024. For the session held on 27.09.2024, a total of 93 participants (85 nominated faculty members) attended the session. The list of participants is attached in the annexure.

4. The programme began with a welcome address by the Director, Higher Education. He explained that this workshop is part of an integrated approach to promoting positive mental health, resilience and wellbeing in HEIs and it is now being formalized under the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme. The NEP calls for motivated, energized and capable faculty in higher education; and the idea of this programme is to enable faculty to become co-collaborators with the government to promote positive mental health in HEIs. He elaborated that these online sessions are envisioned as a platform for faculty from a diverse range of CFIs sharing their experiences and best practices so that these can be collated and disseminated. Following this welcome address, he introduced and welcomed all the resource partners to the session.

5. The resource partners for this session were:

(i) Dr Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist & Program Director, Expressions India

(ii) Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi

(iii) Dr Aparajita Dixit, Senior Psychologist, Expressions India and Master Trainer, University & School Mental Health

(iv) Dr Shantanu Misra, Faculty Support, Counseling Center, IIT Kanpur

5. The session was then taken forward by Dr Jitendra Nagpal who explained that these online sessions are not meant to be didactic lectures but as open and interactive dialogues. Dr. Nagpal said that India is a country of a young population; 360 million people are between the ages of 18-29. In this context it is crucial to recognise that our

young people can benefit from the foundational reinforcement we provide in terms of promoting positive mental health, wellbeing and resilience. Dr Nagpal said that higher education faculty in this case play a significant role as they are the first responders, so to say; the first point of contact with a distressed student.

6. Professor Namita Ranganathan was then invited to take the session forward. She initiated by reminding faculty that they will be remembered for life if they not just teach well but also if they manage to make a difference in the lives of their students. Professor Ranganathan emphasized the fundamental idea that students are more than just recipients of knowledge; they are individuals with their own identities and senses of self. This recognition is vital as we shape their experiences within higher education institutions (HEIs). She urged educators to prioritize the personal development of students, ensuring they emerge not only with degrees but with a robust sense of self.

7. Prof. Ranganathan highlighted the importance of understanding the "life-space" of students, which encompasses their backgrounds, family influences, sacrifices, dreams, desires, achievements, and failures. This context is particularly pertinent in Indian society, where family plays an all-encompassing role. She contrasted this with the "mind-space," which is often overwhelmed by the curricular demands placed upon students.

8. In light of these considerations, Prof. Ranganathan called for a critical review of the curriculum. She pointed out that the way we deliver educational content significantly impacts students' cognitive load and overall well-being. Drawing from successful practices at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), she illustrated how diverse student backgrounds necessitate innovative approaches. At JNU, for instance, the Language Acquisition Programme serves as an academic scaffold for students who may not be proficient in English, acknowledging the varied vernacular backgrounds they come from.

9. Prof. Ranganathan advocated for the creation of similar support systems across HEIs, addressing various aspects of university life to aid student adjustment. She suggested collaboration between faculty and research scholars to facilitate these initiatives. She advocated for the provision for tutorials/mentorship slots within the weekly timetable. These will not only help students in resolving academic issues but also create space to larger perspective building discussions, problem solving and building student-teacher rapport. Recognizing the cognitive comfort of students is paramount, as is an awareness of their emotional states.

10. To foster a more inclusive and enriching environment, Prof. Ranganathan proposed a semester-wise calendar that integrates academic and cultural activities. This approach would not only allow for personal growth and self-development but also empower students to take the lead in shaping their campus experiences, embodying the principles of participative democracy. Prof. Ranganathan called for a more flexible, compassionate approach to student life in HEIs. She further stated that fostering an environment of negotiation rather than authoritarianism will mitigate any rebellion against authority, creating a healthier, more collaborative and rewarding educational atmosphere.

11. The session was then handed over to Dr Aparajita Dixit who spoke about prevention and building resilience in students at HEIs. Dr Dixit pointed out flag-signs of mental unrest, anxiety, panic, and even depression among students. In varying degrees these included; increased presence on social media; sleeplessness, lethargy; lack of interest in class activity; non-existent reading habit; fear of failure/stagnation; lack of a feeling of belongingness etc. Dr Dixit called for leniency on part of the faculty if students are unable to meet deadlines. She said that lack of time management may be a symptom of underlying mental health issues and penalising students for it may aggravate the situation. What is required instead is to acknowledge the concerns of students and to reflect and validate their feelings. The simplest way of doing this is to listen to students. When a distressed student approaches a faculty, the first reaction of the faculty should not be to undermine the student; they must listen and respond. Here, Dr Dixit highlighted the difference between reacting and responding, stating that faculty should not react but respond to the issues of students.

13. Dr Santanu Misra, Faculty support, Counselling Centre, IIT Kanpur, was invited as a resource person to share his insights on IIT Kanpur's Wellness and Counselling Centre as an exemplar. He informed the participants that IIT Kanpur's counselling and wellness centre is the oldest in any HEI in India. He quoted the institution's policy: Recognize, Respond, Refer. He then explained various indicators of mental health and wellbeing, including safety risk indicators, academic indicators, physical indicators, and psychological indicators. He elaborated on the triggers and social factors that affect the mental health and well-being of students.

13. Further, he discussed the accessibility and role of the centre, highlighting the following features:

- a) 24×7 on-call duty apart from regular office hours
- b) Appointments available via website, email, walk-ins, and referrals
- c) Modes of support include regular sessions, single sessions, group therapy, and relaxation
- d) The centre helps students grappling with academic, psychological, social, and behavioural challenges
- e) Student Benevolence Fund to extend financial support to regular and registered students
- f) Academic remedial classes and a mentor-mentee culture
- g) PG & UG orientation programs and parents' orientations
- h) Sensitization workshops about wellness

14. The session ended with a vote of thanks.

List of Attendees

Faculty Members

S. No.	Name of the Institution	Nominated Faculty Members	Attendees	Absentees
1	Central University of South Bihar	Prof. Dharmendra Kumar Singh (Coordinator) Mr. Mani Pratap Lt.(Dr.) Pragya Gupta Dr. Parijat Pradhan Dr. Prashant Dr. Surendra Kumar Dr. Pradip Ram Dr. Pratishtha Sonker Dr. Priti Rai Dr. Jogindar Singh Chauhan	1. Prof. Dharmendra Kumar Singh (Coordinator) 2. Mr. Mani Pratap 3. Lt.(Dr.) Pragya Gupta 4. Dr. Parijat Pradhan 5. Dr. Prashant 6. Dr. Surendra Kumar 7. Dr. Pradip Ram 8. Dr. Pratishtha Sonker 9. Dr. Priti Rai	1. Dr. Jogindar Singh Chauhan
2	Central University of Tamil Nadu	Prof. P. Srinivasan (Coordinator) Ms. R.Lakshmi Dr. Rajkumar Subramani Dr. S. Mahalakshmi Dr. K. Nandhini Dr. Kuldeep Singh Nagi Dr. Suganya.V Dr. D. Surendran Dr. Mansurali Anifa Dr. Kavya Bakka Dr. S.Akila	1. Prof. P. Srinivasan 2. Ms. R.Lakshmi 3. Dr. S. Mahalakshmi 4. Dr. K. Nandhini 5. Dr. Kuldeep Singh Nagi 6. Dr. Suganya.V 7. Dr. D. Surendran 8. Dr. Kavya Bakka 9. Dr. S.Akila 10. Dr. Vithya V 11. Dr. Jayaraman	1. Dr. Rajkumar Subramani 2. Dr. Mansurali Anifa
3	IIIT Vadodara,	Dr. Ashish Phophalia Dr. Ravi Nahta	1. Dr. Ashish Phophalia	None

S. No.	Name of the Institution	Nominated Faculty Members	Attendees	Absentees
	Gujarat	Dr. Pramit Mazumdar Dr. Bhupendra Kumar Dr. Sunandita Debnath Dr. Vivek Vyas Dr. Varun Kumar Dr. Deepika Gupta Dr. Gaurav Pareek Dr. Abhisek Paul Dr. Venkata Phanikrishna B.	2. Dr. Ravi Nahta 3. Dr. Pramit Mazumdar 4. Dr. Bhupendra Kumar 5. Dr. Sunandita Debnath 6. Dr. Vivek Vyas 7. Dr. Varun Kumar 8. Dr. Deepika Gupta 9. Dr. Gaurav Pareek 10. Dr. Abhisek Paul 11. Dr. Venkata Phanikrishna B. 12. Dr. Swapnil	
4	National Institute of Technology, Calicut	Dr. Satyananda Panda Dr. Sathiya S Dr. Cecil Antony Dr. M. Yogesh Kumar Dr. Anu Mary Chacko Dr. Tom Skaria Dr Vijayaraj K Dr. Amit Kumar Rai Dr. Teja Reddy V Dr. Haribabu K Ar. Samiksha Srichandan	1. Dr. Satyananda Panda 2. Dr. Sathiya S 3. Dr. Cecil Antony 4. Dr. M. Yogesh Kumar 5. Dr. Anu Mary Chacko 6. Dr. Tom Skaria 7. Dr Vijayaraj K 8. Dr. Teja Reddy V 9. Dr. Haribabu K 10. Dr. Vijayakumar	1. Dr. Amit Kumar Rai 2. Ar. Samiksha Srichandan
5	National Institute of Technology, Warangal	Prof. G. Amba Prasad Rao Prof. Surajbhan Sevda Prof. Rajmohan K S Prof. Srinivas Basavoju	1. Prof. G. Amba Prasad Rao 2. Prof. Rajmohan K S 3. Prof. Sumanth Chinthala 4. Prof. M Raja	1. Prof. Surajbhan Sevda 2. Prof. Srinivas Basavoju 3. Prof. T. Rahul 4. Prof. Gaurav Kumar Sharma

S. No.	Name of the Institution	Nominated Faculty Members	Attendees	Absentees
		Prof. Sumanth Chinthala Prof. M Raja Vishwanathan Prof. T. Rahul Prof. Priyanka Chawla Prof. A. V. Giridhar Prof. Pranitha J Prof. Gaurav Kumar Sharma	Vishwanathan 5. Prof. Priyanka Chawla 6. Prof. A. V. Giridhar 7. Prof. Pranitha J 8. Aroakia Kumar R	
6	IIT(ISM) Dhanbad	Prof. L A Kumaraswamidhas Prof. Nabakumar Jana Prof. Vishwas N Khatri Prof. Neetish Kumar Maurya Prof. Ashok Kumar Prof. Tarun Kumar Naiya Prof. Udit Bansal Prof. L D N V V Konda Prof. Madhulika Gupta Prof. K Priya Ajit Prof. Prashant Kumar Sharma	1. Prof. Nabakumar Jana 2. Prof. Vishwas N Khatri 3. Prof. Ashok 4. Prof. L D N V V Konda	1. Prof. L A Kumaraswamidha s 2. Prof. Neetish Kumar Maurya 3. Prof. Tarun Kumar Naiya 1. Prof. Udit Bansal 2. Prof. Madhulika Gupta 3. Prof. K Priya Ajit 4. Prof. Prashant Kumar Sharma
7	IIT Gandhinagar	Dr. Subramanian Sankaranarayanan Dr. Siva Chopperala Dr. Mukesh Dhanaka Dr. Priyabrata Ghana Sharada Visweswara Channarayapatna Dr. Madhumita Sengupta Dr. Pankaj Khanna Dr. Raghavan Ranganathan	1. Dr. Siva Chopperala 2. Dr. Mukesh Dhanaka 3. Dr. Priyabrata Ghana 4. Sharada Visweswara Channarayapatna 5. Dr. Pankaj Khanna 6. Dr. Raghavan	1. Dr. Subramanian Sankaranarayanan 2. Dr. Madhumita Sengupta

S. No.	Name of the Institution	Nominated Faculty Members	Attendees	Absentees
		Dr. Abhishek Bichhawat Dr. Karthik Subramaniam Pushpavanam Dr. Rohit Kumar Mishra	Ranganathan 7. Dr. Abhishek Bichhawat 8. Dr. Karthik Subramaniam Pushpavanam 9. Dr. Rohit Kumar Mishra	
8	IIM Lucknow	Shivashish Tripathi Dr Arvind Shroff Dr Utsav Pandey Dr Himadri Shekhar Chakrabarty Dr Tamalika Koley Dr Divya Choudhary Dr Deepak Prajapati Dr Vishakha Chauhan Dr Ashutosh Jha Dr Kartik Yadav Dr Krishnan Jeesha	1. Shivashish Tripathi 2. Dr Arvind Shroff 3. Dr Himadri Shekhar Chakrabarty 4. Dr Tamalika Koley 5. Dr Divya Choudhary 6. Dr Deepak Prajapati 7. Dr Vishakha Chauhan 8. Dr Ashutosh Jha 9. Dr Kartik Yadav 10. Dr Krishnan Jeesha 11. Dr. Karishma Rekhi 12. Raghavan	1. Dr Utsav Pandey
9	IISER Tirupati	Dr. Vasudharani Devanathan Dr. RamKumar Sambasivan Dr. Vijayalakshmi V Subramanian Dr. Ashwani Sharma Dr. Raghunath O Ramabhadran Dr. Jessy Jose	1. Dr. Vasudharani Devanathan 2. Dr. RamKumar Sambasivan 3. Dr. Vijayalakshmi V Subramanian 4. Dr. Ashwani Sharma	None

S. No.	Name of the Institution	Nominated Faculty Members	Attendees	Absentees
		Dr. Tapan Chandra Adhyapak Dr. Sukhmeen Kaur Kohli Dr. Utpal Saikia Dr. K Nirmala	5. Dr. Raghunath O Ramabhadran 6. Dr. Jessy Jose 7. Dr. Tapan Chandra Adhyapak 8. Dr. Sukhmeen Kaur Kohli 9. Dr. Utpal Saikia 10. Dr. K Nirmala	

Additional Attendees

Affiliation Details	Name of the Attendees
Ministry Officials, Resource Persons, Officials from UGC & NIEPA	1. Sh. Devendra Kumar Sharma, Director, Dept. of Higher Education, MoE 2. Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Senior Psychiatrist & Program Director, Expressions India 3. Prof. Namita Ranganathan, Professor & Former Dean, Faculty of Education, Delhi University 4. Dr. Aparajita Dixit, Senior Psychologist, Expressions India and Master Trainer 5. Sh. Binay Prasad, NIEPA 6. Dr. Sangeeta Angom, NIEPA 7. Sh. Ramesh Kumar Sharma, Under Secretary, Dept of Higher Education, MoE 8. Richa Shrivastava, Consultant, MMTTP, MoE