

Best Practice by Rabindra Mahavidyalaya, Champadanga Session 2021-22

1. Title of the Practice

Developing Mental Health and Social Awareness for Current Generations at Post COVID Period

The young people all over the world are daily confronting the “devastating” mental health issues as a result of the challenges experienced from the onset of COVID as a global outbreak. In 2022, the World Health Organization and the United Nations in 2020 have also echoed this sentiment on a global level. In the past three years, this outbreak has exposed adolescents to a range of unprecedented events, including repeated periods of quarantine, school closings, strained peer relationships, COVID infections, the death of loved ones, and an overall sense of unpredictability in their lives. The relevant literature unfolds that the COVID-19 pandemic exerts a deleterious impact on the mental health of the youth.

2. Objectives

Such outreach activity is aimed at educating our students on essentials of mental wellbeing and social awareness in facing stressful situations in the pandemic era.

3. The Context

During the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown adolescents experience short-term as well as long-term psychosocial and mental health issues. The case of our College students is not an exception. Numerous vulnerability factors, such as developmental stage, educational attainment, pre-existing mental health condition, socio-economic disadvantage, or confinement due to infection or fear of infection hugely affect the pupils.

Keeping their present mental health condition in mind, our institution has organised a programme titled “*Developing Mental Health and Social Awareness Programme for current Generations*” just after reopening of the College under the aegis of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) and Women’s Cell of Rabindra Mahavidyalaya in collaboration with WHY (Wellbeing and Happiness for You), an independent and non-profit making Organization accredited by The National Council of Education, Bengal (NCEB) addressing the social and

cultural backdrop of mental health and developing timely social awareness about the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic in a series of one-to-one counselling.

4. The Practice

The institution has this hope that such initiative helps the students to cope with the increasing stress and disruptions created in the post-COVID situation in the academic arena.

The counselling programme commenced from April, 2022 at the College campus. Each session was conducted via online mode between at college hours (45 minutes to 1 hour per session). The participant was to be benefited by ten straight free counselling sessions. Interested students submitted their names, contact numbers and email address to the concerned Head of the Departments for ensuring their participation in the said programme. We made sure that all the conversations between the student participants and the counsellors was kept as something ‘highly confidential’.

The programme holds out a unique promise by opening the door of ‘well-being’ for the students in the very midst of ‘ill-being’ and by helping them access mental health support services completely free of cost for developing healthy habits and mechanism to cope up during the time of crisis. This support system was found out as something rare and an event hardly thought to be organized by other academic institutions.

Instead of wide advertisement within the College through publication of notice, we resorted oral communication especially by the Head of the Departments as a way of lifting up the burden of the so-called ‘self-stigma’ or ‘public-stigma’ psychologically affecting the students and possibly keeping them away from joining into the programme in the initial phase for fear of “status reduction within friend circle,” “role restriction,” and obviously “friendship refusal.” But assuring the confidential tone of the counsellor-counselee conversation helped breaking the ice. And dealing tactfully with. The factor of social stigma.

5. Evidence of Success

The programme started only with 5 college students though only very soon its good-effect infiltrated by that few beneficiaries and within some days around 45 students came to enlist their names as counselee. After that, the mental health counselling programme ran smoothly via the online mode. Feedback was taken after each session very carefully and always maintaining the confidentiality. After four months, 26 students found themselves as benefited

from the session, of which six students continued up to eight free sessions for satisfactory recovery.

It is pertinent to note here that the programme carried very tiny ratio of male students as only three participated in the programme while girl students constituted the majority of participants.

It may be concluded that for the first time the mental health counselling programme reached its target to a great extent. It clearly indicates that the barrier of psycho-social stigma could be dealt with tactfully as pupils are made to become aware of the fact that mental illness is treatable and recovery is possible.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

The online mode of the counselling programme created a little problem primarily due to network issue. Additionally, the programme badly needed a fixed Mental Health Counselling Cell which is a pre-requisite for maintaining privacy of the counselee. More advertisement in a strategic way must be an integral part of the programme to encourage pupils to break the silence and to do away with the self-sigma bubble or trap and to build a good mental health in an inclusive manner.



Principal
Rabindra Mahavidyalaya
Champadaaga • Hooghly

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Integrating local schools through Future Career Prospects Awareness Programme - A Community Initiative

The career counselling and training programme of the Department of Geography, Rabindra Mahavidyalaya was introduced to help school-students at elementary and secondary grade channel their abilities towards useful goals and make wise career decisions in the field of Geography.

2. Objectives of the Practice

The Programme carried an in-depth and challenging practice to assist career guidance to the school-going learners by estimating the level of interest of each student from elementary level up to Higher Secondary level by providing a fundamental introduction to the numerous career alternatives in Geography and allied fields.

The goal was to mentor and advise the students according to their aptitudes by opening the door of knowledge to more fulfilling and gratifying career opportunities and future prospects in Geography.

3. The Context

Facilitating higher studies in rural areas has been continuously facing a challenging reality for the decades where hurdles are more but opportunities are sparse. Majority of the students from rural agro-rich catchment areas enrol in our institution as 'first-generation college students.' Unlike others, they do not get the proper guidance - neither at home nor from schools - to pursue academic studies. Most of them live in a real dilemma for their coming future. It has become a vital issue after the Covid situation. Therefore, it is the prime need of the hour to introduce such a programme to invite the local students along with the teachers to unfold many opportunities and future prospects in the field of Geography.

4. The Practice

The programme holds such a uniqueness by inviting Secondary level students of local schools of the rural areas to make them aware regarding future prospects in the field of Geography that is rarely organized by any higher academic institution. A number of 151 students of 10 schools with 8 teachers joined the programme. The topics of discussion include the huge possibility of future higher studies in diverse fields of Geography, such as, Regional Planning, Rural Studies, Tourism, Geoinformatics, Population Studies and Disaster Management in renowned academic centres/Universities in India. A long interaction added more flavour to make the programme a grand success.

It was intended as a timely nudge on our part to make the school authorities aware of the new possibilities that have been opening up in the field of Geography and the potential of job opportunity related to it. Altogether, it was something fresh and new as an initiative and though convincing the students was difficult at the starting point but when they were made aware the level of participation increased and was more spontaneous.

5. Evidence of Success

The short-term target to gain a positive feedback from the students and the school teachers about the programme was fulfilled. Huge positive feedback came from them, especially from the teachers who gave fruitful suggestions like

- a) Making a school with a locational vantage as the 'nodal agency' and keep on organizing similar such programme now with further involvement with the guardians
- b) Conducting such programme at least once in a year
- c) Introducing hands-on-training in select parts related to the 'Practical' components of the syllabus
- d) Arranging seminar for students to make them aware of the recent research trends in Social Sciences and other related fields.

The feedback received appeared to be very positive as per as the willingness shown by the students is concerned as they expressed their intent of availing the new courses with multiple job opportunities as a meaningful course of study.

6. Problems encountered and Resources Required

No such specific problems occurred except some financial constraints to run the programme smoothly.

The programme required more specialized Resource Persons from University and Industry as well.

One Day Seminar
on
Career Opportunities and Future Prospects in Geography

Venue: Room no. 48, Rabindra Mahavidyalaya, Champadanga
Thursday, 28th April, 2022 at 12 pm

CHAIR PERSON

Dr Prasanta Bhattacharyya
(Principal)

CO-CHAIR PERSON

Prof. Tanmay Bandyopadhyay
(Coordinator, IQAC)

SPEAKER

Sanjay Maity
(Faculty, Dept. of Geography)

Convenor: Dr Susmita Sengupta (Faculty, Dept. of Geography)
Jt.-convenor: Bapi Kisku (Faculty, Dept. of Geography) & Silpasri Kar (Faculty, Dept. of Geography)

Organized by: Department of Geography and Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), Rabindra Mahavidyalaya

Photo 1. Brochure of the Programme

Career Opportunities and Future Prospects in Geography

Thursday, 28th April, 2022 – 12 noon to 2 p.m.
Venue: Rabindra Mahavidyalaya, Champadanga
Offline Mode

Career Planning with Geography → **Choosing Proper Subject at Higher Secondary Level** → **Choosing Geography Hons. (B.A/B.Sc.) at Undergraduate level**

WHO CAN ATTEND?
School students appearing Madhyamik Examination (2022)/
studying Higher Secondary/Undergraduate students who wish to make his/her career planning with Geography

REGISTRATION
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdHEcJl7A-TBm5RyamSC4ain2mspg078mbGIEnKyAmp1-r1cQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

Photo 2. Leaflet of the programme