

Report:**‘Jonaki’ – Walking the Enlightened Path**

The Department of Psychology, Maharani Kasiswari College organized a programme on mental health assessment entitled “Jonaki – Walking the Enlightened Path” on 29th February 2020 from 11:00 am to 2:30pm. The aim of the program was to create awareness about mental health issues amongst the students of Kasiswari College. The primary objective was to address the stigma around mental health by initiating a conversation. It was also an opportunity for the students of the Department of Psychology to get a firsthand experience of working in a professional setup under the guidance of teachers.

The programme was inaugurated by the Hon’bl Principle Dr. SimaChakraborty. She was assisted by the students of the department. The programme commenced with a keynote address from Mrs. AnwistaGanguly, Head of the Department of Psychology, Maharani Kasiswari College. The announcements and presentations were made by the Semester IV (hons.) students with guidance from the teachers of the Department of Psychology. A total of 61 students collectively from Third Year Hons (1+1+1 system), Semester IV (Hons) & Semester II (Hons) of the Dept. of Psychology registered for the programme. A total of 50 students participated from the various departments of the college.

TAKEAWAY FROM THE PROGRAMME:

The programme was conducted with the purpose of making people aware about the significance of mental health and hygiene and how it may affect everyday living. It involved short sessions of various forms of mental status activities for the interested participants, who were both students and faculties of MKC, from various academic backgrounds. It included sessions on cognition and mindfulness, relationship dynamics and personality dimensions, as well as mental well-being and positive living. By participating in the sessions, the people got a glimpse into the ways in which their mind or mental processes operate, various interesting aspects of their personalities, their handling of interpersonal relationships, as well as how far they are adopting positive living and well-being in their lifestyle. They also gained knowledge about certain measures that they might take in the positive direction.

The big takeaway from conducting these sessions were the very positive feedbacks that received from all the participants. There was a unanimous agreement among the participants, that they had been immensely enriched by the knowledge about mental health and its significance. Most participants reported that how much they have thoroughly enjoyed the session. A palpable excitement was observed in the seminar hall. Post session, many of the participants shared their views about how the experience have changed their perspective about mental health and how it suddenly appeared much more acceptable to them, to talk openly about such issues, or to take help from professionals, if the need arises.

Hence, it may be summarized that the programme was immensely successful in removing the mental barrier of people regarding addressing mental health issues, which is the first stepping stone towards healthy living and positive thinking.

THE PROGRAMME PLAN:

At the beginning of the assessment session, a brief case history was taken of the guest participants who registered for the programme. Assessment areas explored were Mind Mapping, Sketching Personality, Relationship Ties, & Positive Living. Individual kiosks dedicated for the above mentioned areas were set up by the students with relevant posters explaining the assessment area, along with other art and craft items.

Mind Mapping

Since the inception of the discipline, researchers have been interested in studying consciousness that is “thinking and awareness”. With advancement in studying procedure consciousness came to be termed as cognition. Cognition refers to the mental processes such as attention, learning, memory, reasoning, problem solving etc. Advancement in the field of medicine developed the understanding of human anatomy and physiology and it was hypothesized that the brain may be the center of human behavior.

The objective of mind mapping was to give students an insight into the most complex organ – the brain. It also aimed to point out the underlying brain areas for various cognitive functions. Neurocognition is the interaction between our brain and behavior. It is at the base of all our actions – what we attend, how much we retain, how we perform, to how we react, how much social cues we can attend to. Neurocognition helps us in making decision whether to park the car on the side and listen to a grieving friend or following the google maps in reaching your destination.

One needs to stay mindful of the numerous stimuli around and act accordingly. 11 registered students participated in the testing procedure with prior training from Mr. Kaustav Manna.

The tests administered –

1. Digit Forward: The task requires the participant to recall & recite a string of digits in a forward fashion. It is a test for attention. Digit forward task is a subtest of Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – WAIS (1987).
2. Digit Backward: It is a subtest of Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – WAIS (1987). The task requires the participant to recall and recite the digits in backward fashion. The task is a measure of working memory.
3. Symbol Search: The task requires for the participant to visually scan and determine the target symbol. It is a measure of processing speed. It is a subtest of Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – WAIS (1987).
4. Coding: It is a measure for visual-motor dexterity and processing speed and accuracy. It is a subtest of Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – WAIS (1987).

After completion of the testing, scoring was done. Accordingly a feedback was given to the participants about their performances. The participant’s strengths and weakness were discussed individually and on the basis of their performance suggestions were meted out to them.

Relationship Ties

A kiosk was there named “relationship”. This kiosk was included because it was thought that relationship is a very important in any person’s life. From our birth or even before that we are surrounded by relationships throughout our life. Around fifteen (15) students managed this kiosk and they had different roles to play for the day. They were supervised by Ms. Parama Gupta. Three (3) types of assessments were done here. The name of the tests along with their purpose has been described below:

1. Adult Sibling Relationship Questionnaire- This questionnaire also known as the ASRQ measured the relationship of the students with their siblings who came for assessment on three (3) domains namely a. Warmth, b. Conflict & c. Rivalry. This questionnaire was included here because the major target was students of the college here who are mostly adults with a dominance of siblings or sibling like relationships in their life.
 2. Relationship Profile Test-This questionnaire also known as the RPT measured the attachment pattern of the students who came for assessment on three (3) domains namely a. Destructive Overdependence (DO), b. Dysfunctional Detachment (DD) & c. Healthy Dependency (HD). This questionnaire was included here because it is well known that our attachment style influences our new relationships in future. The major targets were students of the college here who are in the peak of their social life where they tend to make new relations almost everyday. It was thought that highlighting on their attachment style at this stage would be very beneficial.
 3. Stevens Relationship Questionnaire- This questionnaire also known as the SRQ measured the relationship pattern of the students who came for assessment with their partner on six (6) domains namely a. Independence (I), b. Intimacy (Int) & c. Romantic Attitudes & Behaviour (R), d. Assertive Conflict Resolution & Communication (A), e. Equality of Decision Making (E), f. Liberated Beliefs of Sexual Roles (L). This questionnaire was included here because the major target were students of the college here who have either selected a partner, in the process of selection or will be selecting in near future. It was thought that exploring their relationship pattern with their partner at this stage would be very much beneficial.
- All the questionnaires were assessed, scored & interpreted on spot by the students of Department of Psychology after prior training. Brief suggestions were also given to the candidates while handing them over their score card in written format. Any questions from the participants end were also encouraged and answered by the students having Psychology as their honours subject with help from the teachers as & when required.

Positive Living

Martin Seligman described three paths to happiness- the pleasant life, the good life and the meaningful life. Positive living may be described as encompassing all those positive aspects of human experiences that make life worth living psychologically. One of the principal contributory factors to positive living is living hygienically, with happiness and positivity. It emphasizes on the positive human development and deemphasizes maladaptive behavior and negative thinking.

This brings the assessment of mental health as a focus of positive living.

Positive living focuses on the character strengths and behaviours that allow individuals to build a life of meaning and purpose; to move beyond mere surviving, to flourishing. For this, the individual needs to master certain impulses and bad habits that may prove detrimental to a fulfilling and constructive life.

One of the genuine evils of today's world is excessive dependency on virtual reality, which takes a toll on positive living. Hence, the third variable considered for assessment is internet dependency.

In the present psychological assessment programme, aptly titled as 'Jonaki', the extent of positive living of the participants of MKC college, were assessed on three different dimensions- their mental health, well-being and extent of internet addiction. The assessments were carried out by 10 students with guidance from Dr. ReshmiPalit.

These variables are assessed by the following:

- GHQ-28 -a General Health Questionnaire(for assessing mental health and psychiatric morbidity)
- PGI Well-being Scale (for assessing the level of well-being)
- Internet Addiction Assessment Questionnaire (for assessing the extent of internet dependency)

The procedure for assessment was as follows:

- A Case History of each participant was taken for future reference.
- Each participant was made to sit comfortably and a rapport was established with him/her. Each test was explained along with proper instructions and after the participants gave their responses, the data were subjected to proper scoring.
- Each participant was handed over a short assessment report, containing the various dimensions tested, the levels of problems if any, along with suggestions to deal with the problems effectively.
- Confidentiality was maintained as much as possible and a section containing basic tips or strategies for positive living was also included in the report.
- Finally, the participants were asked to fill in a feedback form at the end of the assessment sessions, to understand whether they enjoyed the session and whether it appeared fruitful to them.

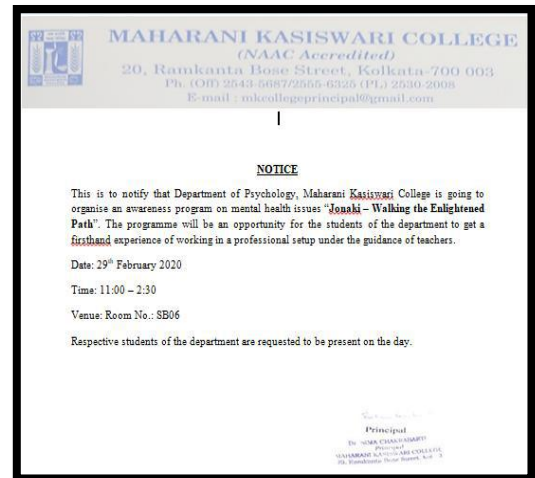
Sketching Personality

The Personality Kiosk conducted a Personality test using Draw-a-Person Test (which is a projective test) developed by Florence Goodenough and interpretation given by Ogdon (1977) . Here interested participants drew human figures (collected by 1st year students). Based on the drawings, interpretation (according to the manual) and report was prepared mostly by 2nd and 3rd year students with the help of their respective teacher and handed to the participants. Later, few participants also enquired about few tips to reduce the difficulties as found in the report, to

which, the respective teacher Ms. AtriSanyal (a Registered Clinical Psychologist) shared few tips.

Overall, a positive feedback was received from the students as well as the teachers of the other departments of MKC. The programme would not have been possible without the constant support from our respected Principal ma'am & the office of Maharani Kasiswari College.

Photographs:



Programme Flex

Notice of the Programme



Inauguration



Students applying the skills of psychological testing



Students with Departmental Faculty