

R.A. PODAR COLLEGE OF COMMERCE& ECONOMICS (AUTONOMOUS)

SELF-DEVELOPMENT CELL ANNUAL REPORT: 2021– 2022

4th April 2022

Faculty In- charge: Mrs. Kavita Jajoo

The second wave and the continuation of the Covid era brought with it a host of new challenges & mental health issues. It is in such times that the significance and foresight, with which this Self Development Cell [henceforth referred to as SDC] had begun, can be ascertained well.

This year too, in consultation with the authorities at the R.A. Podar College of Commerce the provision of Counseling and Developmental sessions was provided via telephonic, WhatsApp video calling as well as online videoconferencing platform [preferred platform being Zoom].

The SDC had started functioning primarily on 2 days of the week since January 2021 since the last academic year having taken cognisance of the rising demand in the need for counselling sessions, felt during the pandemic. Ms. Sukhada Kelkar engaged in sessions till August 2021, where after she had to go on maternity leave. The handing over began from June 2021 itself with Ms. Shital Ravi and Ms. Radhika Kulkarni coming on board.

The SDC functioned this year primarily on 2 days of the week, Thursday & Fridays. However, because of the online format of sessions, there was a flexibility of spreading the sessions on other days mutually convenient and on the request of some students.

Brief summary of Counseling & Guidance sessions conducted:

Duration: Minimum 30 minutes up to maximum of 1.15 minutes per student

Counseling Themes: Counseling & Psychotherapy as well as Career Guidance was conducted depending on the presenting concerns.

No. of clients handled: 43 students plus 2 teachers.

- During the pandemic scenario the students were informed to seek a counselling appointment by writing an email inquiry to the official email id selfdevelopment@rapodar.ac.in
- Accordingly, the students were allocated a session.
- Few Parental reach sessions were also engaged in between students and their family members depending on the nature of the concerns identified.

Individual Sessions [Including Personal as well as Career Guidance sessions]:

The SDC conducted counselling sessions for a total number of **43** students and **2** teachers in the academic year, spanning from April 2021 till March 2022. Individual counselling sessions were held for students across all streams in Junior and Degree College. While the first year of the pandemic was challenging in one way, the second year when work and curriculum related focus had to be brought in, it posed a different set of challenges & coping issues.

In the career guidance sessions, various queries from students were answered about courses, their eligibility, entrance exams and top-ranking institutes. Information was also given about general options after HSC, B.Com, and Graduation. Information was also given regarding requirements for postgraduate options after completing Commerce stream and other related careers. Students were strongly encouraged, supported, and guided to develop a thorough market research and observational approach while planning future prospects.

Various issues were handled by the counsellors this year as well in the personal counselling sessions. The concerns of the students ranged from conflicts within families due to Covid-19 lockdown, Covid-19 related fears and phobias, suicidal ideations and intervention for the same, physical health related anxieties, peer pressure, anxiety and stress-related concerns, self-esteem issues, psychosomatic issues, personality development, emotional issues, relationship issues, study planning difficulties, exam stress, time management difficulties and study related issues.

The psychotherapy and guidance sessions were directed for various issues as detailed below:

- Handling health related anxiety, panic attacks, depressive symptoms presentations due to the stressors of the pandemic times.
- Handling student's mental - emotional concerns & lifestyle rehabilitation during the pandemic.
- Grief Counseling due to loss of a loved one.
- Supportive Therapy and counselling given to a student diagnosed with Tuberculosis.
- Handling difficulties in concentration and improving attention span.
- Handling exam anxiety.
- Learning effective study skills.
- Realistic goal setting to overcome motivational difficulties.
- Relationship management & handling peer pressure.
- Handling self-confidence and self-worth issues.
- Communication Skills training.
- Learning effective Time Management.
- Career uncertainty causing emotional and familial distress.
- Handling gadget addiction & self-management related to social media.
- Handling family conflicts and dealing with parental pressure.
- Effective Self - Regulation skills and balanced lifestyle management.
- Career Awareness, Career Exploration & Career Information exploration were conducted during some of the students' counselling sessions.

- Handling difficult emotions experienced post break up of a committed relationship.
- Handling Anger issues.
- Handling mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression.

Counseling and therapy for some of these students was ongoing on a regular basis throughout the year. The students were taught effective study skills techniques, concentration techniques, time management skills, motivation, goal setting, acceptance of self, relaxation techniques and techniques to handle emotional stress.

Behavioural Modification therapy, REBT, CBT, cognitive therapy, motivational counselling, vocational guidance and coaching, Mindfulness, Grief Counseling, Crisis intervention, Narrative-based therapeutic approaches, and Art-Based Modality were some of the approaches used to help clients to address the various issues faced by them. Whenever it was observed that the client may need pharmacological intervention, they were encouraged to consult a medical practitioner and have a thorough medical evaluation done.

Workshop with Teaching and Non-Teaching staff members:

On 25th June 2021, Ms. Sukhada Kelkar did a workshop titled 'Life Uninterrupted: Keep Going' with the teaching and non-teaching staff members. This was well received by the staff members.

Orientation Sessions:

The orientation sessions for SDC were conducted in the month of February 2022. 7 of the First Year classes at the undergraduate level of the various courses [B.Com as well as self-financed courses] were covered. Ms. Shital Ravi, one of the counsellors' conducted online orientation sessions, which took place, between 14th February 2022 to 21st February 2022.

Through this session, the students were initiated and informed about the different activities that the SDC conducts. The impact of the pandemic was also discussed and how it has affected the mental health of people globally. Thus the students were sensitized as to why the self-development cells' activities are important and more so in the wake of the pandemic and how they will benefit by availing these services which are completely free for the students.

The session was done with the help of a PowerPoint presentation and audio visuals were also used to make it more interactive and appealing to the students. The timings and other details were also conveyed. During the sessions, how privacy and confidentiality of information shared would be maintained was discussed. The session was followed by Q & A and students' doubts were clarified. These orientation sessions were well received by the students and the mentors.

Conclusion:

It is indeed very satisfying as a psychologist and as a SDC team member to have been able to reach out to and help so many of our students in various aspects of their lives. The SDC indeed is a USP which the college is proud of.

Report Compiled by:

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