

Best Practice –I: Counselling- as a supportive service to the student community

1. Title of the practice

Role of Counselling as a supportive service to the students' community and the larger society.

2. Goal:

The basic goal of counselling is to help someone to help himself/herself. The counselling cell is formulated with the intention to help students and other stakeholders of the institution. Personal Counselling is provided to students as well as to other stakeholders and the larger community on daily basis.

In personal counselling various issues of students like Confidence Building, Stress Management, career guidance, relationship management, Acquisition of study skills, managing mild depression, suicidal tendencies etc. are addressed successfully. We have also tried to help students addicted to substance abuse.

With the special intention to sensitize students about the larger social realities a special wing of counselling cell named *Manthan* is functional.

3. Context:

With the advent of mass education in India, today the number of students pursuing higher education is considerably large. Our college is not an exception to it. Moreover, we cater to the students who hail from very humble socio economic background. Even today quite a few of them are first or second generation learners. Hence, they do face a kind of Educational Stress.

This peculiar situation and other stresses like, competitive market situation, overuse of technology and social media or even attraction towards a mind altering drugs, evils of teenage depression and suicidal trends, etc. result in mental unrest amongst students, which naturally affect their family and parents.

Research in the mental health has indicated that Indian teens are prone to depression and suicide. To address this specific issue a Minor Research project titled "Helping suicidal teenagers" was undertaken for the entire campus (V.P.M) by our counsellor.

Based on this grass root experience many students are helped to reverse their disastrous journey towards suicide or drug.

In order to respond positively to this situation, we have started 'Counselling Cell' in our college, with the support of our Management. We have trained, specially appointed counsellor, psychologists and intern student volunteers, who look after 'Mental and Social' health dimension of our students' community.

4.The practice

The International Apex Body, WHO (World Health Organization) has very clearly included Mental Health and Social health dimension to the well-being of human community as such. Every system including higher educational is emphasizing the significance of Mental Health.

In the campus and in the vicinity of Thane, our college was the first institution providing personal counselling service (Year 2006-2007). Yet another peculiar thing about our counselling cell is that it has been extremely proactive in its approach and as has extended its wings in various directions with the intention of reaching out significantly to maximum number of students.

The actual implementation of practice is accomplished in the following manner-

A. Personal Counselling

Three to eight sessions are conducted with every client as per the personal requirement of the client. Mainly eclectic counselling, REBT, Philosophical counselling and milieu therapy is undertaken to conduct the counselling sessions.

- Parents are informed regularly or clients are referred to the psychiatrists if there is any serious indication of mental disorder.

- Help is extended to neighbouring institutions as well

- A complete confidentiality regarding the personal information of the client is strictly observed.

Teaching, non-teaching staff, parents and other people from the community have also availed the counselling facility in last few years.

Guidance and counselling sessions on themes like 'On the threshold of youth', 'Sex education' etc. and Talk shows involving parents, teachers and students are conducted.

B. De-addiction Initiative

Personal counselling and parental counselling is carried out on the regular basis.

Based on the inputs of milieu therapy more positive and supportive environment was created for the patients.

The help was extended to students of neighbouring institution students.

C. Employability Initiative

A course on training into 'Body beauty and care was undertaken for girl students from humble background in collaboration with the placement cell, India LabourNet and L'Oréal company.

D. Outreaching Activities in the Rural Areas.

In collaboration with *Parivartan Mahila Sanstha*, Counselling cell, Surge (Alumni Association) and NSS many activities like fund raising, conducting workshop for students and teachers on English speaking skills etc. was conducted. The main focus was on the Makhada Village which is the deprived hilly region of Palghar District.

E. Counselling for Students of North East

Team of Counselling cell visited the residential hostel of North East girl students from schools who were living in Thane for the purpose of primary and secondary education under the aegis of *Vishwa Hindu Parishad*.

F. Barefoot counsellors

With the intention to create mentors and equip them with certain basic counselling techniques two sessions are undertaken with the student volunteers.

Manthan

Sometimes just being aware about the large social realities and being more prosocial helps students to appraise their own minor but intense emotional problems. Many field visits, Talks by Social workers, film shows are organized by *Manthan* for our students

- Film screening and discussion
- Personality Development workshop
- Mental Health Week observation through activities like poster making competitions, Guidance lectures, bookmark competition
- Extended services

Various outreach activities undertaken by the counselling cell are:

- o Lectures on Counselling
- o Being resource persons in teachers' workshop
- o Career counselling
- o Aptitude Testing
- o Conducting sessions for V.P.M's Polytechnic students on goal setting, study techniques etc.
- o Career counselling for A.K. Joshi School students

To be very precise, counselling is pursued with the double intention to extend therapeutic help and to enhance the circle of 'Hope and Positivity' in the larger community.

5. Evidence of success:

Number of students seeking personal help from counselling cell for last few years is shown in the tabular form

Year	Boys	Girls	Staff Members	Outsiders	Total
2006-07	7	17	-	-	25
2007-08	11	29	1	-	44
2008-09	14	43	1	-	64
2009-10	19	40	2	-	69
2010-11	60	76	-	3	139
2011-12	77	94	5	16	192
2012-13	67	82	9	34	192
2013-14	64	131	13	7	215
2014-15	47	79	8	13	147
2015-16	76	129	8	49	262
2016-17	67	112	8	51	238

More students are interested in working as the mentors and barefoot counsellor.

6. Problems encountered and resources required

A. Constraints and Limitations

- Less inclination of students to seek professional help from counselling

- Shortage of trained counsellors
- Time constraint on the teachers. Due too extremely busy academic schedule counselling teachers find it difficult to dedicate more time for the personal counselling sessions
- General public opinion

Sometimes, parents and students are reluctant to seek the help due to the common taboo regarding mental health issues and counselling.

B. Problems Encountered

- Difficulty in reaching out to the masses.
- Need to construct more in depth socio-psychological programmes to elevate grass root level student clientele.
- Need to increase the number of counsellors
- Professional assistance to make de- addiction counselling more profound and effective.
- Training all teachers as Mentors

7. Notes

The most basic aim of education is to provide a goal directed positive activity, which in turn aims to transform and build a healthy personality. Precisely (though in a slightly different context) aim of counselling is also the same. Hence, in our opinion, counselling service, is the best complementary supportive activity in the field of education. Since in undergraduate section, we are focusing mainly on teenagers, which is indeed, significant as transitory phase of human life, relevance of this activity becomes self- explanatory.

From the point of view of Nation building, this is the best spatial platform for inculcating virtues like patience, mutual tolerance, democratic spirit, team building importance of positivity and so on.

Hence in our educational institution, we were committed and we shall be committed to the fulfilling endeavour of counselling.

Best Practice –II: Film Making and Film Appreciation workshops for Mass Media students

1. Title of the Practice

Film Making and Film Appreciation workshops for Mass Media students

2. Goal:

To provide a platform for inculcating and developing culture of Film making and appreciation among the students.

Changing trends in films have changed the dynamics of film making and appreciation. With the advent of new technology in different areas of film making, it is necessary to imbibe innovative techniques of making and appreciating the films from different perspectives. Students need to be sensitized towards the content and different genres of films. i.e. Comedy, biopic, action, political saga, thriller, horror, suspense, family drama, musicals, Science Fiction based films, animated films, parallel cinema, period films and a few more. Students should understand the aesthetic value and creativities and technicalities of film making. Apart from studying the theoretical aspects of film making students get platform to understand the practical nuances of the film making through this workshop.

3. The context:

The syllabus offered by the University for the mass media students has one subject named 'Understanding Cinema' which has restricted scope for practical exposure. The course is industry focused and professionally creative which requires practical experience of film making. To cater to

this need of the students the department organized the film making workshop. Since many students are inclined towards other career aspects of mass media like Journalism, Public Relation and Advertising etc. department is yet doing its best to sensitize all the students towards understanding and appreciating the films.

Student must be able to translate his/her theoretical knowledge in to real life situations. Keeping this in mind the department had organized Film making workshop to cater the needs of Mass Media students to prove their metal in the Industry. Many experts from the industry were invited as resource persons to conduct the workshop. The presentations, film screenings, and exposure to the Cinematography equipment, analysis of the technical aspects of films and presentations on editing software made by the resource persons proved to be very significant for the students. The resource persons addressed the real life problems in film making by giving a practical demo on pre-production, production and post production activities.

4.The practice

Indian film industry is one of the largest and flourishing entertainment industries in the world. Surprisingly, most of the universities in India which are catering the needs of higher education have not sufficiently focused towards professional aspects of film making and appreciation. Films are generally considered as the only medium of entertainment and no serious attention is being given to it as a useful tool to transform society and address the social evils. Films can be the best medium to make a vibrant society and witness a reformation in the day to day life. In this context, it is perceived that the department should organize a film making and appreciation workshop to acquaint students to know the aesthetic, creative and technical aspects of film making.

The implementation of the practice involves the following stages-

1. Appointment of teacher in charge
2. Appointment of Student leader and student in charge of various committees for workshop
3. Orienting the students towards film making aptitude

4. To enroll the students for the workshop
5. To invite industry based experts as resource persons
6. To make necessary technical arrangements for the presentations and film screenings
7. To encourage students to raise query during workshop
8. To encourage students to operate Cinematographic equipment like Camera and accessories

Some of the constraints and limitations are as follows:

1. There is restricted availability of technical resources like sound studio, VFX effects, animated effects technology etc.
2. Since Film making is a creative and time consuming activity, it is difficult to evaluate the practical outcome of workshop

5. Evidence of Success

The students have imbibed the skill of making technically furnished and creatively fine short films after attending the workshop. The results were perceived in the students when they started making quality films with limited availability of financial and technical resources.

Following are the benchmarks of the success of the workshop

1. Many students have started their own YouTube channel and making short films which are aesthetically creative and technically sound.
2. Many students have participated in National and International Short Film Festivals like Pune International Short Film Festival, Mumbai Academy of Moving Images popularly known as MAMI International Film Festival and many intercollegiate short film competitions.
3. Tushar Sawant's Short film 'Yours Lovingly' was selected for final round of **18th MAMI Film Festival**
4. Rushikesh Rokade won the **Special Jury Award** at the Rajasthan International Film Festival for his short film 'Rahaae'

5. Anurag Jadhav's short films 'Bajirao, Kawla, Fursat' impressed established film makers like Mahesh Manjarekar, Viju Mane and he is currently working as Assistant Director for the upcoming big budget Marathi Movie 'Shikar' directed by Viju Mane and produced by Mahesh Manjarekar.

6. Problems encountered and resources required

All students are not naturally inclined towards film making and appreciating films in Mass Media Department. Many would like to pursue career in Journalism, Radio, Television, Public Relations, and Advertising etc. It becomes difficult to attract all the students for this kind of workshop.

Some problems encountered:

1. Difficulties in motivating large number of students
2. It is difficult to handle the large group of students in limited span of time and with availability of limited resources.

Resources required:

Requirement of full-fledged, technically well-equipped studio with various aspects of film making like sound, mixing, dubbing, post-production, editing etc.

7. Notes

It is advised that the colleges should sensitize students towards appreciating the films. These days, many film makers have come up from small towns and interiors of India. The themes of films speak about the social issues of remote places and underprivileged sections of society. Here is the scope for arranging this type of workshops to attract the talent among students. Students and faculty members should understand that Films are the best medium of mass communication, social transformation and inculcating human and social values and not just the means of entertainment.