

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY -  
Departmental activities conducted in the year 2020

PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATION REPORT -

The following activities were conducted -

1. The Department of Psychology, Kamala Nehru College organized a session on 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2020 on the topic “Rethinking Global Mental Health Movement” by Ms. Shikha Soni, Part-time Assistant Professor at IIS University, Jaipur and Mental Health Research Assistant with Barnet Enfield and Haringey NHS Trust. It was a great learning experience on challenging the universality of Western psychiatric nosology and emphasising the need for increasing research interest in cultural psychology/psychiatry. The session was extremely informative. It was also thought- provoking because it exposed students to new perspectives to clinical psychology. The students also learnt about certain limitations and challenges to the current clinical practice in India. The session also helped students get information and clarity about studying abroad.
2. The department of Psychology organized a career workshop on “careers in psychology” for the students. The workshop was conducted by Dr. Gagandeep Kaur of Unique Psychological Services on 26th February 2020. The students were apprised with the latest developments in the discipline and careers related to the different branches of psychology. The resource person shared extensive details about study prospects after bachelors and how to prepare for entrance exams for master’s programs. She also highlighted some of the reputed institutions to pursue psychology in India and abroad. The session helped the students clear many doubts and anxieties about future prospects in the field.
3. The Psychology Department of Kamala Nehru College in view of the current ongoing situation of the Covid-19 and various stresses related to it, conducted a web seminar for the second years on the topic “Practical training on Stress Management through Alternative Techniques in Psychology” by Mrs Bharti Kapoor (Subject expert) on 27 th April, 2020, coordinated by Dr Mandeep Kaur (Subject teacher) and Dr. Yogeeta Bhatia, the Teacher- In- charge of Department of Psychology. The seminar began with a brief discussion with Subject expert asking the students to define how they view stress. After this she described certain stress relief procedures such as developing a hobby, remembering good moments and laughing to overcome the stress experienced by the students. She also introduced the students to a new stress releasing technique called the EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) which employs the use of various energy meridians present in the human body to release stress. The session then went onto the next phase where the students were made to indulge in the process of mediation. The students practiced focusing their attention on the inner sources of energy and were simultaneously made to practice the breathing technique to relax their mind and body. The session ended with the speaker telling the importance of gratitude in today’s life.

Overall the event helped students to achieve some amount of relaxation under such difficult and stressful conditions of the Covid-19.

4. The Psychology Department of Kamala Nehru College organised an online session on “What Fuels Communities to Prioritize Maternal and Child Nutrition: Case Studies from India and Myanmar” by Ms. Rai Sengupta on 4<sup>th</sup> May, 2020. She is an esteemed Development Consultant, currently working with IPE Global Limited and her work has been recognised by UNICEF. The expanse of her work and experience gave students an insight into community organisation and information about the various problems associated with maternal health care in India. Through an in depth analysis, she helped the students understand the economic distribution in Indian households along with their influencing agents. Furthermore, along with strong theoretical discussions, the session provided a platform for students to learn about real life community intervention experiences in Myanmar and India. The session also highlighted the importance of holistic and participatory interventions. The session helped to broaden perspectives and bring out a different reality than what mainstream psychology textbooks portray.
5. In joint collaboration, the department of Psychology and Internal Complaints Committee hosted webinar on 26th May, 2020 to address some of the concerns and share critical reflections around online violence and sexual harassment against women. Dr. Kalpana Bhakuni opened the session by discussing how the rise of Internet age has led to empowerment of voices of women and other marginalized groups, yet it has also led to increase in the incidents of various forms of online sexual harassment including cyber stalking, rape threats, blackmail, picture morphing and even more. She stressed on the importance of discussing the feminist, legal and psychological perspectives on sexual harassment against women in online spaces. The esteemed panelists of the webinar included Dr. Bijayalaxmi Nanda, Acting Principal, Miranda House and a feminist scholar. Dr. Nanda spoke about a wide range of issues underlying women working in public spheres. She emphasized on the need to sensitize workforce to the changing work dynamics post Covid-19 vis-à-vis women’s lives. Ms. Joseph Monati, the second panelist made students and faculty aware of the information they are putting in the online world. He enlightened us with the information regarding the various legal redressal mechanisms available for women. Finally, Ms. Achira Chatterjee, a clinical psychologist shared that any discussion on sexual harassment against women cannot be at the expense of conversation with boys and men. Parents, teachers, and society need to understand how socially sanctioned objectification of women plays an important role in sexual harassment of women in online spaces. The webinar that saw the participation of over 70 participants, ended with a question and answer session and a vote of thanks.
6. On June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the first and second years bid farewell to the graduating class of 2020 in an online mode through class group photograph, titles to each student and messages from the faculty.

7. On Teacher's Day on 5<sup>th</sup> Sept, 2020, students expressed their affection with e-cards for their teachers in the online mode.
8. World Mental Health day is an international day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy against social stigma. Since the advent of Covid 19 pandemic, the world is on the verge of a mental health crisis, with daily doses of death, isolation and fear generating widespread psychological trauma. The department of Psychology marked World Mental Health day on 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 by organizing an online panel discussion on the theme, "Aftermath of the pandemic: What lies ahead?" With this theme, we aimed to initiate a conversation on the surge of mental health issues during and after the pandemic, providing insight into managing difficult emotions and dealing with crisis in a resilient manner. Renowned clinical psychologist and Professor of Psychology (retired) Dr. Aroona Broota and Founder Director at Action For Autism (AFA) and autism activist Ms. Merry Barua were invited. The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Itisha Nagar, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Kamala Nehru College and was well attended by over 120 students.



Dr. Broota reflected on how the psychological fear of contracting the virus and the resulting social isolation had caused a wide range of symptoms of psychological distress: including low mood, insomnia, stress, anxiety, anger, irritability, emotional exhaustion, depression and post-traumatic stress symptoms. She also suggested some possible solutions for us to take care of our mental health during the stressful times. Ms. Merry Barua enlightened the students about how the pandemic and lockdown had affected people with disabilities and their families. The nationwide lockdown has been even harder for people battling with mental health disorders. Ms. Barua shared how people with disabilities are adjusting to the 'new normal' and how the need for social distancing has made it

difficult for people to receive services like therapy and special education. The session ended with a round of question and answer from the audience.

9. For the purpose of spreading awareness on Mental health, our Psychology students made a Mental Health Day video in October 2020, that finds its place on our college social media handles.
10. On November 24, 2020, a Department Orientation was held online through zoom for first year students, where the first year students were introduced to all the faculty members of the department.
11. On November 27, 2020, the second and third years warmly welcomed our first years in the Departmental Freshers Welcome, online through zoom platform.

