

On 16th September 2023, PB&J conducted a session based on the theme 'Suicide Prevention Week' in special regard to Kota suicide cases. A total of 41 students from the department of psychology attended the session out of which most were 1st and 2nd year students.

◆ *Session Highlights*

The following points were emphasized and discussed:

- ◆ A video showcasing Kota's historical issues with student suicides, dating back to 2016, was screened at the session. It served as a catalyst for discussions.
- ◆ Attendees, many of whom have a connection to Kota, shared their personal experiences and observations regarding the academic pressure students face there.
- ◆ The pressure on students in Kota largely stems from the expectations of parents, friends, and relatives. This intense pressure leads to stress and a sense of failure among students.
- ◆ The rat race mentality and toxic competitiveness prevalent in coaching centers contribute to high stress levels. The pressure increases as parents invest heavily in coaching, making students feel guilty if they don't meet expectations.
- ◆ Students in coaching centers often follow grueling routines, compromising their sleep, diet, and overall health. This persistent pattern continues from 9th and 10th grade to prepare for competitive exams like the IIT entrance.
- ◆ Schools in Kota segregate students based on streams, leading to differences in schedules and treatment. While this might benefit some, it fosters self-deprecation and discrimination among others.
- ◆ A lack of understanding and communication between parents and children leads to conflicts and misunderstandings, exacerbating stress.
- ◆ Many pressured students isolate themselves during preparation, which later hinders their ability to socialize and adapt.
- ◆ Getting into IIT is difficult, but the pressure to maintain performance after admission is even more taxing. Students focus on their future but often struggle to find happiness in the process.
- ◆ The cumulative pressure and situation in Kota can lead students to experience extreme stress and even contemplate suicide, despite their innate survival instincts.

Towards the end of the discussion, the session emphasized the need for kindness, generosity, and support in addressing the mental health challenges faced by students in Kota due to academic pressures. The discussions shed light on the complex interplay of factors contributing to this issue and underscored the importance of raising awareness and providing assistance to those in need.