

## **Increasing Student Suicides in Higher Education Institutions**

### **Why in news?**

Despite increased awareness about suicide, the suicide rates are increasing and has to be addressed.

### **What is the status of student suicide in Higher Education?**

- According to Ministry of Education, 33 students died by suicide across the IITs since 2018.
- In total, there were 61 cases of suicides during this period, across the IITs, NITs and IIMs.
- According to [National Crime Records Bureau](#) data, student suicides saw an increase of 4.5% in 2021, attributed in a large measure to the Covid pandemic and related anxieties.

### **What are the factors responsible for student suicides?**

- Academic stress
- Family reasons
- Personal reasons
- Mental health issues
- Official apathy
- Social and caste discrimination
- 85% attendance rule - if a student fails to do so then he must repeat the course.
- Intense, high-pressure educational environment, where students are unhealthily competitive.
- Relative-grading system makes the institutions more competitive.
- Due to the combination of academic pressure and the administration's indifference towards student's issues, students resort to substance abuse.

### **What are the various measures taken by higher education institutions?**

- Conducting workshops/seminars on happiness and wellness.
- Regular yoga sessions.
- Induction programs.
- Institutions also focus on extracurricular activities, including sports and cultural activities.
- Assign one faculty adviser per 10 students to help with their academics and monitor their progress.
- The institute appoint student counsellors for overall personality development of the

students, especially those under stress.

### What are the various measures taken by government of India?

- **MANODARPAN** - Covers a wide range of activities to provide psychological support to students, teachers and families for mental and emotional well-being
- **Peer-assisted learning** - Support for students, by students, and normally takes the form of regular, timetabled, coordinated group study sessions or workshop.
- **Regional languages** - Introduction of technical education in regional languages to ease academics-related stress.

### What is the need of the hour?

- **Parents' participation** - The institutes should share student performance profiles (academic and non-academic activities) with their parents.
- **Early detection and alert generation** - Students live close to their peers and wing-mates for academic and non-academic activities.
- **Peers and wing-mates** - The peers and wing-mates could flag changes in behavioural traits such as missed classes, reduced participation in extracurricular activities and decreased interaction.
- **Remedial teaching and graceful exit** - Students struggling with academic pressure should be placed on academic probation for customised attention.
- **Third-party grievance redressal** - If a student is dissatisfied with the internal grievance redressal mechanism, they should have access to a third party for resolution.

### References

1. [The Indian Express | Student Suicide](#)
2. [The New Indian Express | IIT Student Suicide](#)
3. [The Print | Academic Pressure](#)