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## Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Ms A S Manjari, Registration Number: 1981006, PhD Scholar at the School of Psychological Sciences, Education and Social Work, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Saturday, 06 December 2025 at 9.00 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R&D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

**Title of the Thesis** : **Development and Testing the Efficacy of Mental Health Awareness and Destigmatisation Program among Adolescents**

**Discipline** : **Psychology**

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The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva – voce examination.

**Place:** Bengaluru  
**Date:** 28 November 2025

  
**Registrar (Academics)**

## ABSTRACT

The incidence of mental health issues among adolescents has risen. However, many do not seek professional assistance due to barriers such as a lack of awareness and stigma. Although students receive life skills training, topics such as mental health symptoms, self-diagnosis, labeling, bullying, and stigma are frequently neglected in school programs. This study aimed to develop and implement a customized, culturally appropriate module on mental health awareness and destigmatisation for adolescents aged 14-18 years in Bangalore. An exploratory sequential mixed methods approach was employed. During the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted, and inputs were obtained from mental health professionals with a minimum of two years of experience working with adolescents in Bangalore. Data were thematically analyzed using Attride-Stirling's (2001) network model. Four global themes were identified based on the research questions. From the generated themes, the basic themes endorsed by the majority of participants were shortlisted and finalized as topics under the module on mental health awareness and destigmatisation. The module duration was 12 hours, with 6 hours each on mental health, awareness, and destigmatisation, respectively. Two experts experienced in implementing adolescent mental health programs validated the module and assessed the appropriateness of the activities. A quasi-experimental pre-post design was utilized in the quantitative phase, wherein adolescents aged 14-18 years and studying in pre-university colleges across Bangalore were identified using a purposive sampling technique. Fifty-five adolescents were screened using the Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC-17), with three excluded due to high baseline symptoms. Pre-assessment ( $n = 52$ ) employed the Mental Health Knowledge Schedule, Self-structured Case Vignettes, and Peer Mental Health Stigmatization Scale. 52 students were exposed to the module on mental health awareness and destigmatisation of 12-hour duration during a regular work week. Students' learning and reflections were collected after each session. Three participants with low attendance were excluded from post-assessment. The final sample included 49 adolescents (mean age = 16 years). Paired sample t-tests revealed significant improvements in all dimensions of the Peer Mental Health Stigmatization Scale (PMHSS). The Wilcoxon signed-rank test indicated significant improvement in Mental Illness Recognition scores on the Mental Health Knowledge Schedule (MAKS). While the program effectively reduced stigma and improved recognition of mental health problems, it did not significantly alter overall attitudes and knowledge among adolescents toward their peers with mental health issues. Further research with larger adolescent groups, focusing on altering knowledge and attitudes, is crucial for enhancing the long-term impact and sustainability of interventions that aim to eradicate stigma and improve help-seeking behaviors among adolescents.

**Keywords:** *Mental health awareness, destigmatisation, adolescents, attitudes, knowledge, program*

### List of Publications

1. **Manjari, A. S., & Sudhesh, N. T.** (2024). Knowledge, attitude, and stigma among adolescents: Effect of Mental Health Awareness and Destigmatisation (MHAD) Program. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing*, 37(4), e70003.
2. **Manjari, A. S.** (2025). Mental health professionals' insights on developing and implementing a Mental Health Awareness and Destigmatisation program (MHAD) for adolescents. *Social Work in Mental Health*, 23(2), 165–192.
3. **A.S., M. and N.T., S.** (2024), "Peers, Parents and Families as agents of influence on adolescents' perspectives towards people with Mental Health Problems: Mental Health Professionals' Views", *Journal of Public Mental Health*, Vol. 23 No. 4, pp. 316-329. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPMH-04-2024-0048>