

---

# The Role of Trauma Informed Practised in Promoting Mental Health and Inclusivity in Schools in The Post-COVID Era: A Case Study of GTBPS, Durgapur

---

Sutapa Acharya<sup>1</sup>, Nandini Das<sup>2</sup> and Barnali Jana<sup>3\*</sup>

---

**Copyright:** © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

---

<sup>1</sup> Principle; Guru Teg Bahadur Public school, Durgapur, West-Bengal, India

<sup>2</sup> PGT Psychology/ Counsellor; Guru Teg Bahadur Public school, Durgapur, West-Bengal, India

<sup>3</sup> Special Educator; Guru Teg Bahadur Public school, Durgapur, West-Bengal, India

---

ISSN: 2349-5464 | DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.18783898 | Volume 11, Issue 1, 2026 | Pages 44-58

---

## Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic is evident to imbibe a significant impact on the nation's education system thereby exacerbating the challenges in the grounds of mental health care. This insinuated the need for more comprehensive trauma-informed practices within school settings. The undertaken study aimed to explore the role played by the adopted trauma-informed strategies in promoting of mental health and inclusivity in the post-Covid era, taking the case of Guru Tegh Bahadur Public School (GTBPS), Durgapur. It is an inclusive school with an atomicity of over 4500 students, located in the heart of the steel plant city.

Using a survey questionnaire, data is collected from around 470 students (considered as a sample) mostly from middle school (classes 6 to 8). The obtained data is then analysed to assess the effectiveness of the given methods of *structured schedules, mindfulness and guided imagery activities, peer-mentoring programs, cultural and diversity awareness events, and parental involvement*. Findings indicated that where majority of the responses perceived these efforts to be crucially effective post-Covid, however, a significant response number acknowledged the consistency of their impact before and after the pandemic.

The undertaken study can be said to underscore the significance of trauma-informed strategies in inducing a supportive learning environment. From the given results, institutions across the nation can thrive to imbibe certain evidence-led practices into their own settings. A future roadmap is provided to recommend further improvements such as *expansion of mental health resources, data-driven evaluations, teacher training programs, and stronger school-parent collaborations*. Through reinforcement of such initiatives, GTBPS is expected to likely evolve and achieve its milestone for trauma-informed and inclusive educational institution.

**Keywords:** Readiness, Trauma-Care practices, Covid-19, Mental Health Support Systems

---

## 1. Introduction

Given the marquee of NEP 2020 and NCF 2020, it can be said that the contemporary educational landscape under CBSE curriculum is becoming increasingly diverse including students from different socio-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. While CBSE schools are being tasked with nurturing student's academic potential, now along with, they are must require to address mental and emotional well-being of the students. A substantial number of students have been observed to enter their classrooms ferrying invisible weight of "trauma", that has been researched to significantly impact their ability to learn, gel with their peers, and thrive in a teaching-learning environment like that of school settings. As described by Venet (2023), "trauma" is any event that can be deeply distressing or disturbing to the psychological health of an individual. Researches indicated trauma to have profound impact on the cognitive processes, social interactions, as well as emotional regulations thereby threatening academic accomplishments and personal development of the students (Qian et al., 2022).

Parallely, the Covid-19 pandemic is certain to have left an indelible mark on the nation's education system by bringing in disruption to the traditional learning methods and exacerbation of the pre-dominant challenges in the context of mental health and well-being (Muralidharan & Singh, 2021). The unprecedented level of stress conjoined with uncertainty and trauma amongst students, educators, and families, paved the path for holistic approaches to education. Since then, trauma-informed practices did gain significant weightage as the education system assembled to address the multifaceted damage of the pandemic on the learning outcomes and student's mental well-being.

### 1.1. Background and Context

At Guru Tegh Bahadur Public School (GTBPS) which is located at the heart of the steel city Durgapur and is also an award-winning inclusive set-up, owing to the challenges of the post-Covid era have emphasised the prominence of fostering an empathetic and supportive teaching-learning environment for its students. As an establishment which embraces inclusivity and diversity, GTBPS has always been the spearhead in its implementation of trauma-informed practices to address the psychological needs of its students. The in-house Department of Behavioural Sciences at GTBPS, consisting of special educators, school guidance counsellors, and master trainers of peer-learning programs, together makes it a point to keep

up with the best practices and address individual learning and socio-emotional needs. In the post-Covid era, the reporting's of trauma-associated issues has been amplified thereby making it imperative to adopt certain strategies inducing resilience and recovery. The given paper examines certain adopted trauma-informed practices at GTBPS and its effectiveness in meeting the challenges in the post-pandemic era. The paper investigates the guiding principle of the implementation methods and its impact on cultivating a safe and sustaining school environment. Further, the paper analyses the wholesome experience of GTBPS till date, to explore future roadmap and highlight the potential of readiness for trauma-informed care and emergencies in transforming schools into sanctums of healing and diversity amidst global crises.

### 1.1.1 Adopted Strategies at GTBPS addressing the needs

Addressing the challenges posed in the post-Covid era and encouraging mental health and inclusivity, GTBPS incorporated a range of trauma-care practices that are tailored to address the needs of its diverse student's structure. This paper examines 5 of such adopted practices over the years which are declared below with attested evidences.

#### 1. Setting Schedule and Check-Ins

Research indicated regular and predictable schedules brings in certainty thereby giving stability to students. Students are able to feel connected and understood giving them more confidence and a platform for emotional expression. GTBPS incorporated regular "Class Log-Books" to be filled by the teachers and students both (below fig. 1). The Log-Books require daily check-ins by teachers and peers and is aimed in reducing uncertainty and FOMO<sup>1</sup>. Even, the students who are unable to attend school for a particular day or week, can check the log-books and receive updates on what classes they have missed and what has been taught in those classes providing them with awareness and self-confidence.

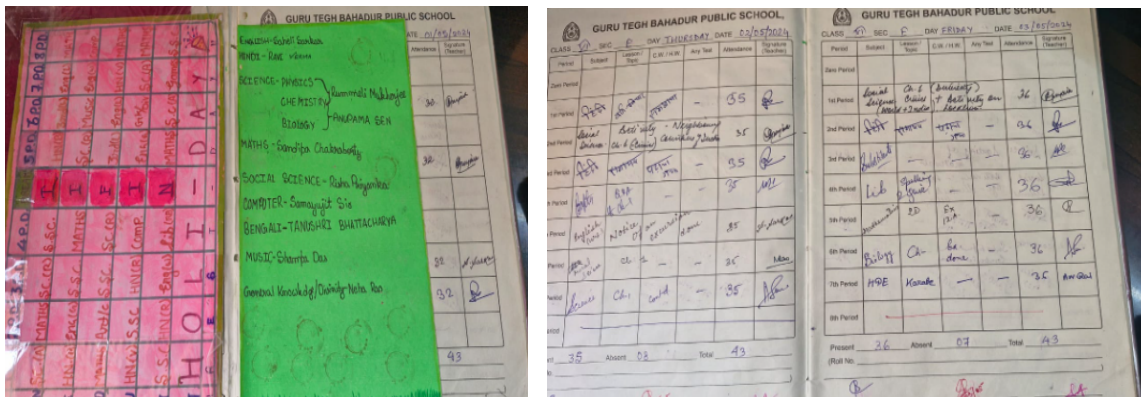


Fig 1: Log Books (Source: GTBPS, Durgapur)

#### 2. Guided Imagery and Mindfulness Activities

Guided Imagery and Mindfulness activities are aimed to enable the students to regulate their anxiety levels, enhance their focus and help them build resilience. Activities like "Imagine & Draw", "Marvel Mondays", "Try-it-Tuesdays", "Wellness Wednesdays", "Thankful Thursdays", "Freebie Fridays", "Monday Moos", "Tuesday Tears", "Wednesday Worries", "Thursday Tensions", "Friday Fears", "Monster Box Emotions", "Anti-Bullying Corners" all has been incorporated by GTBPS on an alternative weekly basis across the 5+3+3+4 stages to encourage gratitude, self-awareness, emotional management, self-control, advocating a sense of calm and balance (below fig. 2). These are mostly classroom activities where students are

encouraged to navigate all kinds of emotions as per the given days thereby inducing a transformative power moving from negative to positive feelings.



**Fig 2: Evidence of Mindfulness and Guided Imagery Activities Conducted Weekly (Source: GTBPS, Durgapur)**

### **3. Peer-Mentoring Programs**

Under peer-mentoring programs, both CWSN and non-CWSN students are paired with supportive mentors (either their own classmates or immediate seniors) with the aim to provide individual guidance, confidence, and a sense of belonging. GTBPS has “*Buddy Program*” in place which is directed to cultivate empathy and reduce feelings of desolation. The Buddy’s assist the students to carry their regular chores and ensure that they actively participate in every event thereby fostering the significance of interpersonal relationships amongst them (below fig. 3).



**Fig. 3: Evidence of Support – Buddy Program** (Source: GTBPS, Durgapur)

#### **4. Inclusion in cultural awareness events and diversity days**

Involvement in celebration of diversity events provides students with opportunities to learn about vivid cultures and appreciate the richness associated with communities. It plays an eminent role in fostering a sense of belonging and emotional safety which contributes to reducing feelings of exclusion, strengthening relationships with peers and reducing any triggers that might induce re-traumatization. In GTBPS diversity days like, *Veer Bal Diwas*, *Durga Puja*, *Basanta Utsav*, *Halloween Day*, *Vivekananda Jayanti*, *World Disability Day*, and several more are celebrated to empower students through representation (below fig 4).



**Fig. 4: Celebration of Cultural Awareness and Diversity Days (Source:**



**Diversity Days (Source: GTBPS, Durgapur)**

## 5. Parental Involvement workshops

Families play a crucial role in the well-being of students; therefore, it becomes critical to recognise the need for increased efforts involving parents into the ongoing curriculum and not just in typical PTMs<sup>2</sup>. Regular communication, collaborative activities, and interactive workshops with the parents enhances the support system in line for the students while establishing a cohesive network. In GTBPS, *orientation workshops* for each class, *career counselling seminars* for parents of students from grade X and XII, and *weekly parents' interaction meetings on general discussions* (below fig 5) are held to create a trauma-sensitive environment for the students both at school and at home.



**Fig. 5: Parental Involvement Workshops with School Counsellors**

(Source: GTBPS, Durgapur)

## 1.3. Objectives and Research Questions

1. To examine the impact of structured routines on the well-being and sense of security of the students in the post-Covid school environment
2. To assess the efficacy of guided imagery and mindfulness activities in managing anxiety and emotional regulation within an inclusive school setting
3. To evaluate the ways in which participation in cultural awareness initiatives impacts student's emotional well-being, academic achievements, and overall adjustment in schools in the post-Covid era.
4. To investigate the role of peer-mentoring programs in building resilience and tending interpersonal relationship amongst students.
5. To explore the impact of parental involvement initiatives on the overall adjustment of the student and their emotional health.
6. To assess how the collective trauma-informed strategies have contributed in implementation of a trauma-sensitive, inclusive, and supportive educational experience to the students of GTBPS.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The study is conducted amongst the students of classes VI to VIII of Guru Tegh Bahadur Public School, Durgapur which is an inclusive school that stresses upon trauma-informed curriculum. A total of 470 responses is collected from the students to induce a representative sample for the study. The selection of the sample is prominently based on its relevance to the considered age-group, since middle-school students are at their critical juncture of development, where mental health facilities that are trauma-driven and inclusive crucially impacts their learning experiences.

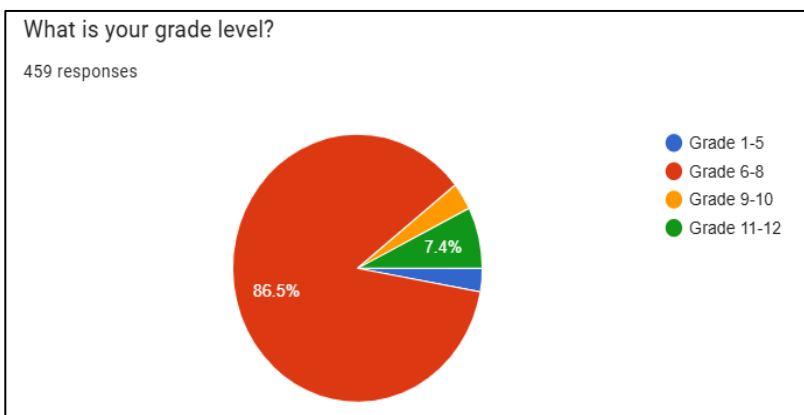
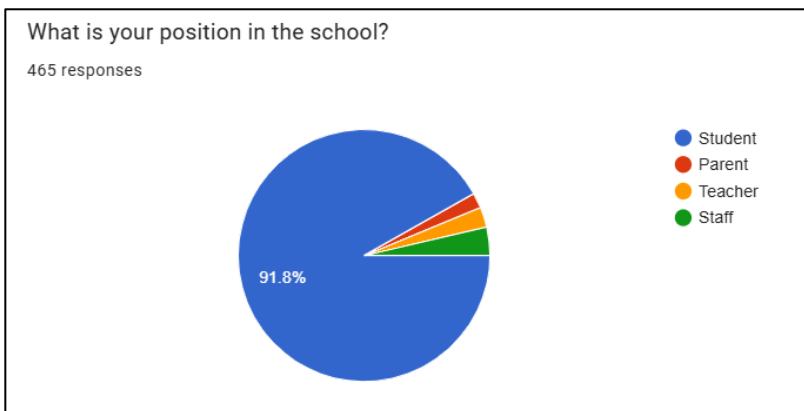
A survey questionnaire is used in the study as primary data collection method. The design of the questionnaire included close-ended questions covering significant areas such as school support systems, emotional well-being, peer interactions, cultural inclusivity, parental interactions, and mindfulness experiences. The administration of the survey followed a structured pattern to ensure consistency and response reliability. Participation of the sample was voluntary and the students were informed regarding the confidentiality of their responses.

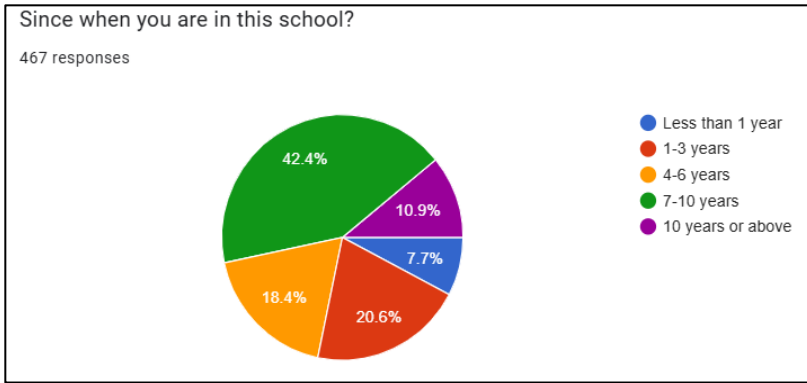
The structured questionnaire involved in the study included Likert items and MCQs. The acquired quantitative data is then analysed using descriptive statistics. Additionally, Google representations was used for data organisation and representation.

**Table 1.** Sample characteristics and study setting

## 4. Analysis & Results

### *Demographic details*

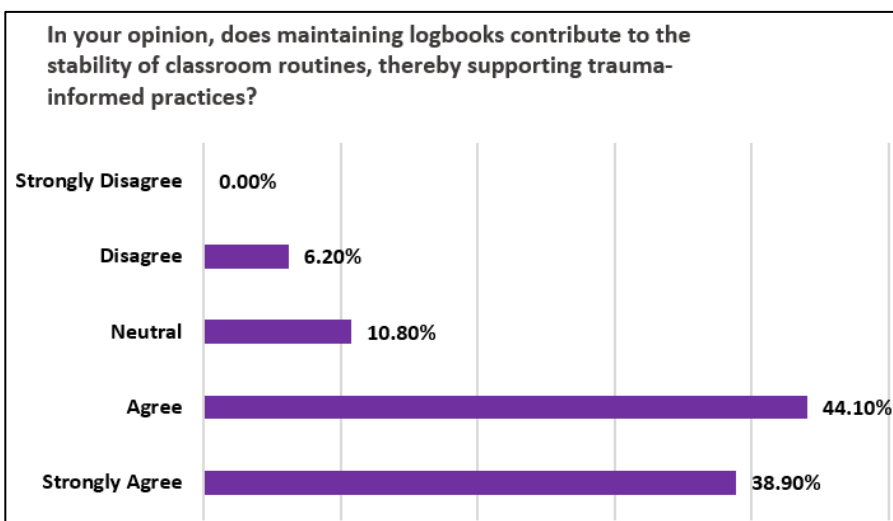
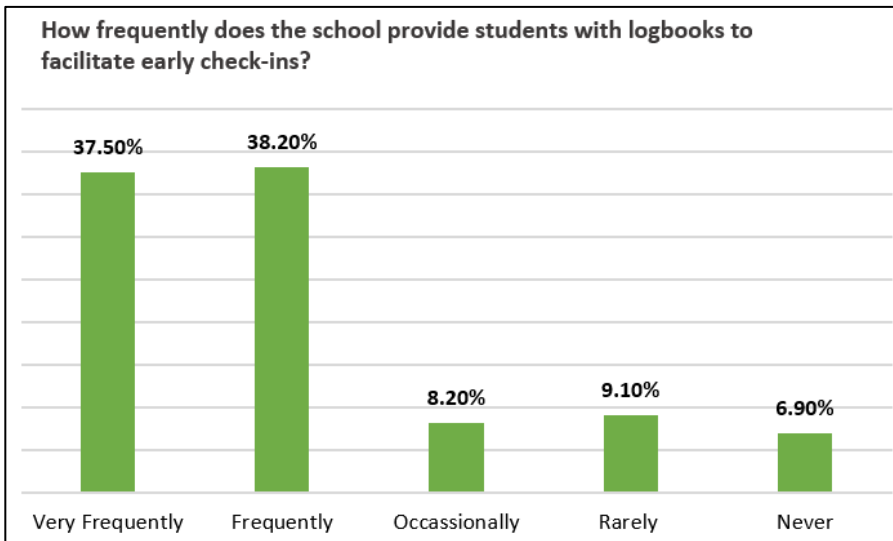




**Fig. 5: Demographic Details of the Sample**

**Analysis:** The above understanding of the pie-charts reveals the demographic details of the sample that participated in this study. The collected responses mostly included students (91.8%) from middle-school (86.5%) who are associated with the school for more than 5 years.

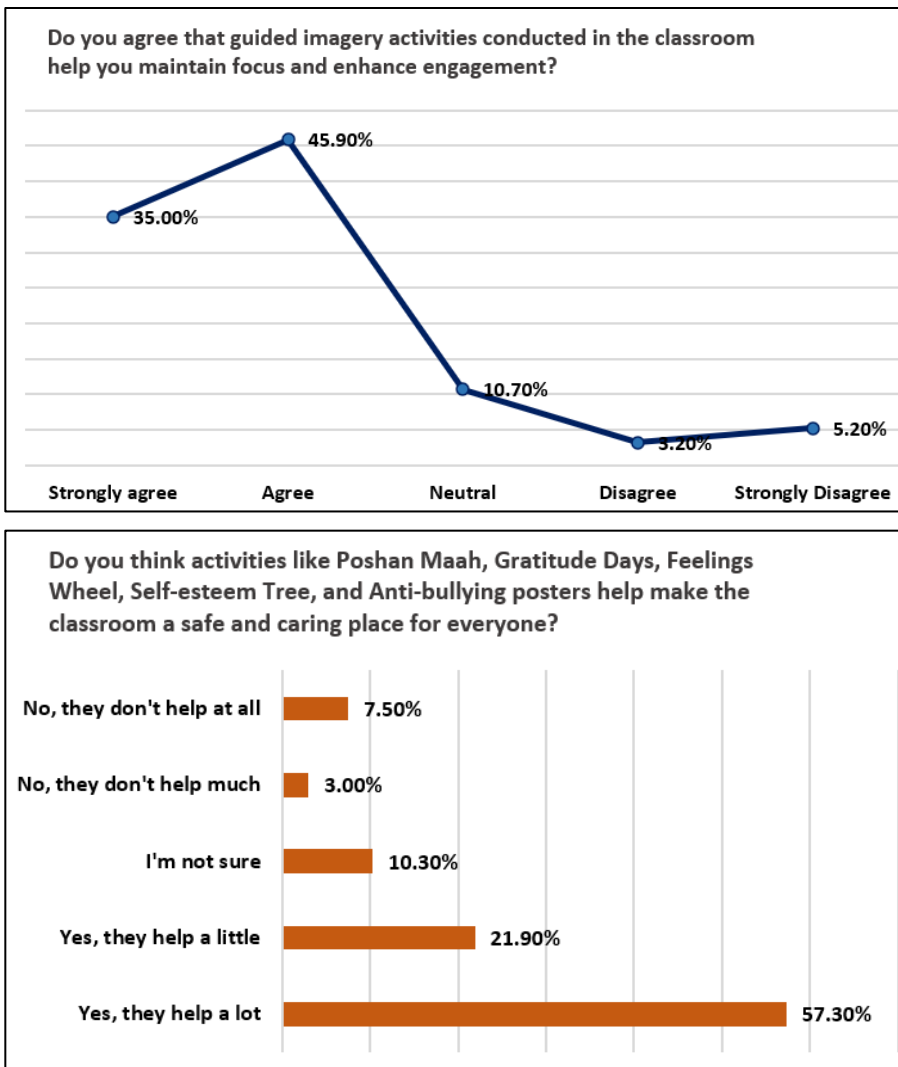
**Objective 1:** To examine the impact of structured routines on the well-being and sense of security of the students in the post-Covid school environment.



**Fig 8**

**Analysis:** It is found that 75.7% of the students agreed that the school frequently provide logbooks to facilitate early check-ins and around 83% of the students stated that maintaining logbooks does contribute to the stability of classroom routines, thereby adhering to trauma-informed practices. These responses highly indicates that structured routines do have a positive impact on the well-being and sense of security of the students, marking its effectiveness as a trauma-informed strategy.

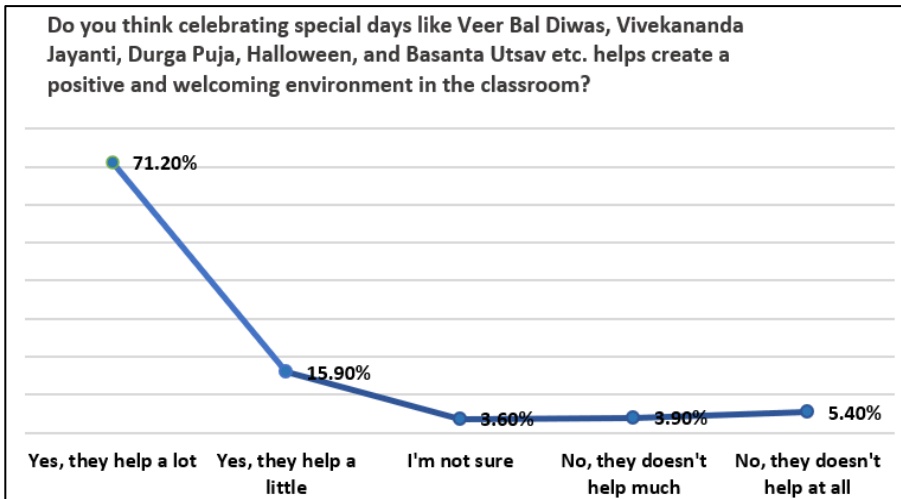
**Objective 2:** To assess the efficacy of guided imagery and mindfulness activities in managing anxiety and emotional regulation within an inclusive school setting



**Fig 9**

**Analysis:** From the above graphs, it is calculated that 80.9% of the students agrees that guided imagery activities which are conducted within the classroom set-up helps in maintaining focus and enhances engagement. Likewise, almost 79.2% of the sample viewed mindfulness activities to contribute in making the classroom a safe and a caring place for everyone. Therefore, these obtained results attests the effectiveness of guided imagery and mindfulness practices in anxiety management and emotional regulations of the students into their day-to-day learning experiences.

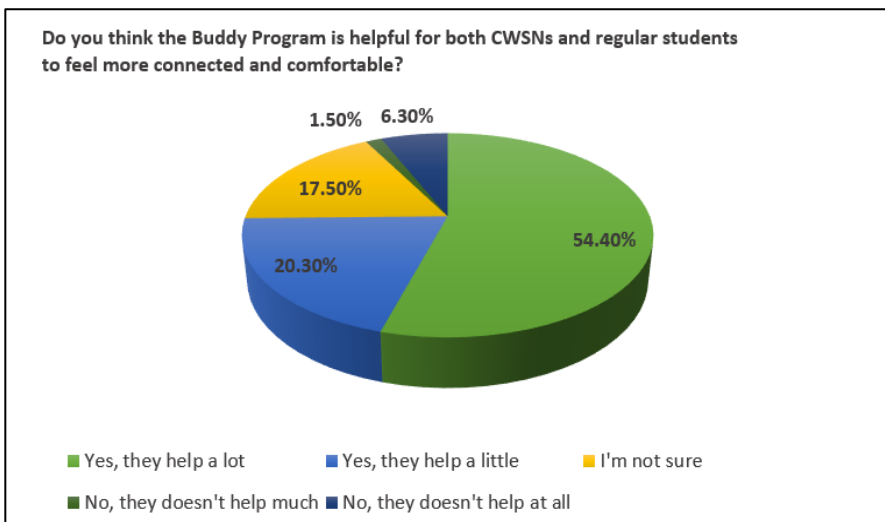
**Objective 3:** To evaluate the ways in which participation in cultural awareness initiatives impacts student’s emotional well-being, academic achievements, and overall adjustment in schools in the post-Covid era.



**Fig 10**

**Analysis:** As reviewed earlier, an inclusive environment plays a crucial role in reducing the aftermath of a trauma, giving a safe space and inducing the feeling of being included and accepted. The same is being revealed by the findings of the study as around 87.1% of the sample agrees that the celebration of diversity days in GTBPS, like Veer Bal Diwas, Vivekananda Jayanti, Durga Puja, Halloween etc. helps create a positive and welcoming environment in the classroom for the students. The majority of responses indicates that even the children could relate their emotional health with these celebrations.

**Objective 4:** To investigate the role of peer-mentoring programs in building resilience and tending interpersonal relationship amongst students.

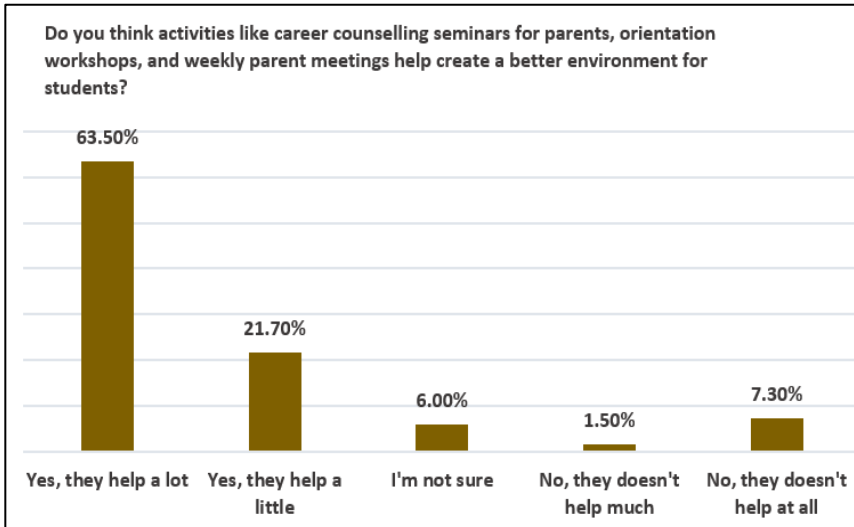


**Fig. 11**

**Analysis:** The Buddy Program at GTBPS has been an example of excellence when it comes to strengthening of interpersonal relationships. Through peer-leadership programs, the school not only aims to create leaders but also improve interactions amongst each other thereby rendering continuous support to the ones in need, most importantly in an inclusive school like

GTBPS. The data indicates that around 74.7% of the students agrees that such programs help in building resilience and improving interpersonal relationships. This marks the effectiveness of such programs in enabling trauma-informed practices within the school settings.

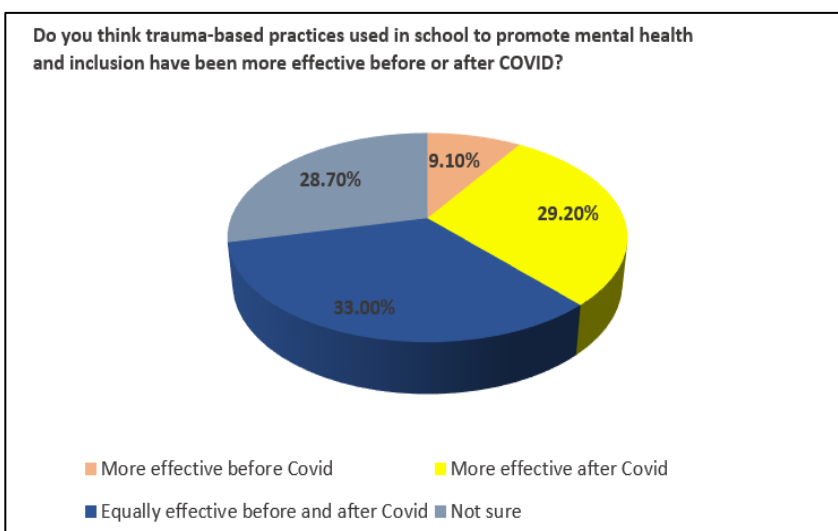
**Objective 5:** To explore the impact of parental involvement initiatives on the overall adjustment of the student and their emotional health.



**Fig. 12**

**Analysis:** The findings reveals that around 85.2% of the sample agreed that parental involvement into their curriculum strata positively impacts their rate of adjustment and emotional well-being. This highlights the role played by parents in reinforcing school-oriented trauma-informed practices thereby, also fostering a stable home environment. Active participation of parents into their child’s education helps in their emotional development thereby enriching their coping mechanisms and induce increased levels of social integration.

**Objective 6:** To assess how the collective trauma-informed strategies have contributed in implementation of a trauma-sensitive, inclusive, and supportive educational experience to the students of GTBPS.

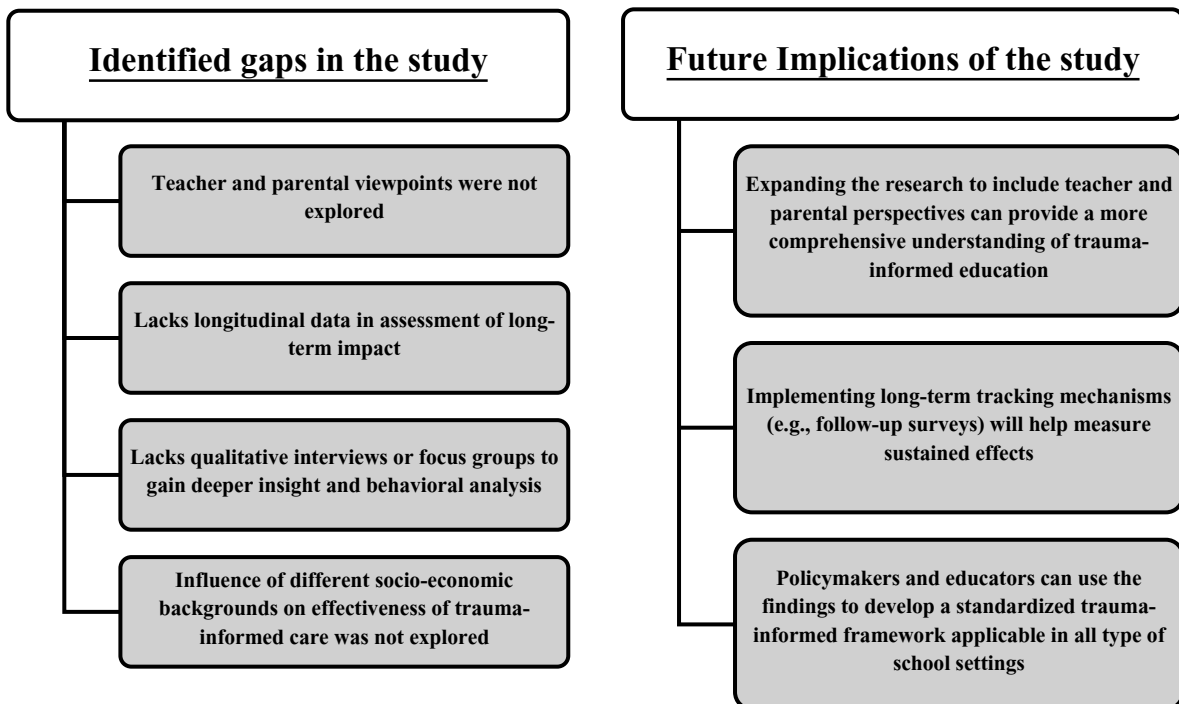


**Fig. 13**

**Analysis:** Though many of the students indicated that the school’s effort towards trauma-informed practices is “more effective after Covid”, yet a majority of them tend to imply that the efforts are consistently effective both before and after Covid. The obtained results indicates that GTBPS has already been successful in establishing a strong foundation for trauma-informed education that ensures emotional stability and support across crises. The analysis of the results could be that the increased emphasis on mental health post-Covid might have enhanced the awareness of the strategies, leading the students to view them as more impactful. Addressing Objective 6, it can be said that the collective trauma-informed strategies adopted by GTBPS is indeed effective in ensuring proactive and sustained commitment of the school to render an inclusive learning institution.

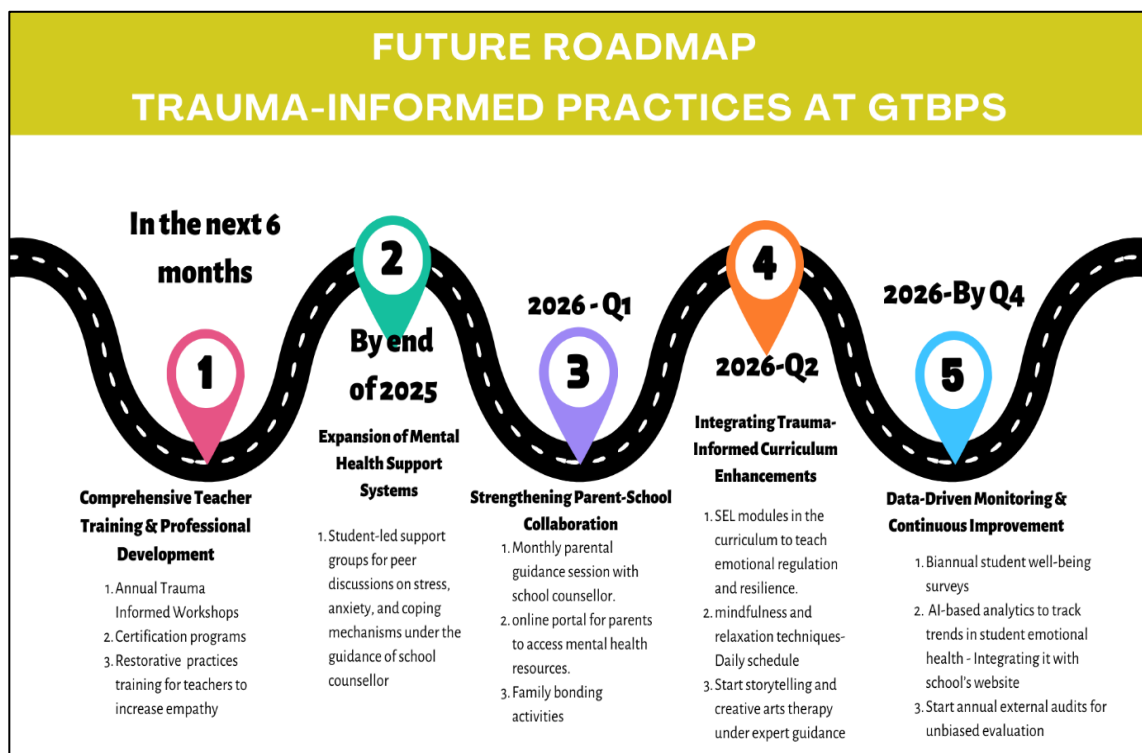
## 4. Conclusions

The undertaken study can be concluded to highlight the positive impact of trauma-informed practices in patronization of mental health and inclusivity, considering the case of GTBPS, Durgapur. The findings indicated students to be able to recognise and acknowledge the effectiveness of trauma-informed efforts, with significant number indicating the consistency of the efforts before as well as after the pandemic. Parental involvement emerged as a key method with 85.2% of the sample agreeing that it has direct positive influence on their rate of school adjustment and emotional health. Other contemplated methods like peer-mentoring, celebration of cultural awareness and diversity days, mindfulness and guided-imagery activities, and structured schedules also revealed to have been significantly contributing in the creation of a safe and supportive learning space. Overall, the results of the study reaffirm that having structured trauma-informed practices can increase resilience, engagement, and emotional stability of students within a school setting.



## 6. Future Roadmap

Based on the outcome of the study to further strengthen GTBPS’s trauma-informed approach and its take on inclusivity, GTBPS needs to effectively draw strategic initiatives in the coming years. The 5 initiatives assessed in the considered study has already made significant strides in successful implementation of trauma-informed practices to support mental health and emotional well-being of the students. Over the coming years, GTBPS plans to further take a deep-dive in its trauma-sensitive approach to address the challenges and gaps, as well ensure long-term success. Imbibing an effective in-house teacher training program, expanding its mental health support systems, and fostering a more strengthened parental involvement would give the existing framework a fine boost. Adopting a data-driven and a holistic structure, school settings like GTBPS, would be successful in creating a nurturing, inclusive, and a resilient educational framework. The below roadmap gives a pictorial representation of the work to be undertaken in the coming years that aims in ensuring that each student receives the support they need to thrive emotionally and academically (below Fig. 14).



**Fig. 14: Future Roadmap**

(Source: GTBPS, Durgapur)

## Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

Abbreviation	Full Form
FOMO <sup>1</sup>	Fear Of Missing Out

## References

Muralidharan, K., & Singh, A. (2021). India's new national education policy: Evidence and challenges. *Science*, 372(6537), 36-38.

Qian, H., Shu, C., Feng, L., Xiang, J., Guo, Y., & Wang, G. (2022). Childhood maltreatment, stressful life events, cognitive emotion regulation strategies, and non-suicidal self-injury in adolescents and young adults with first-episode depressive disorder: direct and indirect pathways. *Frontiers in psychiatry*, 13, 838693.

Venet, A. S. (2023). *Equity-centered trauma-informed education*. Routledge.

---

**Disclaimer/Publisher's Note:** The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of Expressions India and/or the editor(s). Expressions India and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.

---