

COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE (EVEN SEMESTER 2016-17)

FINAL ASSIGNMENT

Group Members:

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Topic:

Inducing awareness in Bulimia nervosa.

About the Topic:

Bulimia nervosa is an eating disorder usually characterized by periods of bingeing or excessive overeating followed by purging. People with bulimia have a fear of gaining weight. They attempt to use purging to manage their weight or prevent additional weight gain. A person with bulimia might eat more than 2,000 calories in one sitting and then induce vomiting. Vomiting, however, is not the only method of purging. Excessive exercises, laxative use, enemas, fasting or a combination of purging methods are common alternatives to vomiting.

In addition to genetically, environmental factors may be responsible for triggering the onset of bulimia. These might include peer pressures, family attitudes, the influence of the media creating a need for thinness, poor self-esteem and a lack of acceptance of self and body shape.

Bulimia and Anorexia most commonly affects girls and women, although it has increasingly become common in boys and men in recent years. On average, the condition first develops at the age of 16 to 17 years. As adolescent girls and boys reach puberty, they find themselves growing larger at precisely the time when they are most aware of society's expectation for them to become 'thinner'. Dieting, rather than healthy eating becomes a way of life for children in search of thinness. Dieting damages healthful metabolic processes leading to stomach rupture whereas purging may result in heart failure due to loss of vital minerals. The acid in vomit erodes the dental enamel on teeth, oesophagus becomes inflamed; there is increased risk for suicidal behaviour, substance abuse, clinical depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and other psychiatric illnesses. Recent studies suggest that as many as 8% of women have bulimia at some stage in their life. The condition can occur at any age, but mainly affects women aged between 16 and 40. Bulimia nervosa can affect children, but this is extremely rare. Reports estimate that up to 25% of people struggling with eating disorders may be male.

Globally, bulimia was estimated to affect 6.5 million people in 2013. About 1% of young women have bulimia at a given point in time and about 2% to 3% of women have the condition at some point in their lives. Approximately 4.7 million females and 1.5 million males have their lives threatened by this potentially deadly disorder. The suicide rate among people with bulimia nervosa is 7.5 times higher than in the general population. Every 62 minutes at least one person dies as a direct result from an eating disorder. Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness. Bulimia nervosa is a serious mental illness that requires intensive treatment.

Getting help and creating awareness for your bulimia gives you the best chance to overcome this eating disorder.

Target Audience: People from the age group 15- 28 years.

Why this particular stakeholder?

Bulimia Nervosa affects people of all working age. However, it has drastic impact on the younger age group of 15- 28 years. Some of the many reasons to trigger bulimia are relatively negative experiences, low self-esteem, comparison/competitiveness, bullying, 'trying to fit in' etc. This particular age group encounters a lot of new experiences, learning environment and different people along with different personalities. So it is needless to say that the given age group encounters a lot of scenarios and can be easily influenced to make changes in him/her to adapt to these new surroundings.

Even though none of our users were bulimic; after the questionnaire survey, we learnt from their responses that they were very critical about themselves and evaluated their appearances excessively (in other words they were victims of overthinking). Hence, we realized that this is the age where we are easily influenced by the changing trends around us and that we are the potential victims of Bulimia; and if triggered negatively can suffer this unhealthy disorder.

Therefore, this campaign is a set of three interactive posters to show people what it is to be a Bulimia victim, hoping to prevent and discourage it.

What was the Objective for a 'Questionnaire'?

We formulated a questionnaire based on questions of personality traits, eating habits, shopping/purchasing routines with other activities. These simple questions are designed to know more about our user's personality, decision-making and preferences. They do not address the topic of Bulimia directly but instead subtly pose questions to know more about the user. 4 users filled out our questionnaire.

After receiving their response on the questionnaires, we learnt that although none of our users were victims of Bulimia, most of them were concerned about their appearances, choices and social life. This showed how their surroundings, people and changing trends around them became factors that affected them personally.

Hence, based on the questionnaire we made a word map which consists of our analysis of the responses, our insights and also our research on Bulimia. Based on this word map, we further proceeded to make a set of three interactive posters to represent the life of a bulimic victim hoping to spread awareness and help in preventing this particular eating disorder.

References (secondary research):

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/traits> <https://digitalsynopsis.com/inspiration/60-public-service-announcements-social-issue-ads/> <https://dynamicyou.org/mental-health-questionnaires/online-eating-disorders-questionnaire/>

http://www.oddee.com/item_97982.aspx

<http://www.nedc.com.au/bulimia-nervosa> <http://www.anad.org/get-information/about-eating-disorders/eating-disorder-types-and-symptoms/>

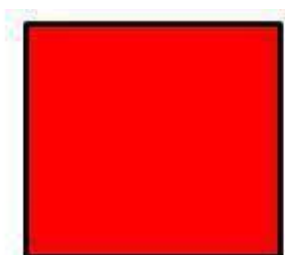
THE AVERAGE ANSWERS OF OUR 4 USERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE

Represent the meaning of these emotions mentioned with line drawing and colour:-

Use the red box to make a line drawing of what the words make you feel.

Use the black box to represent the particular word with a colour.

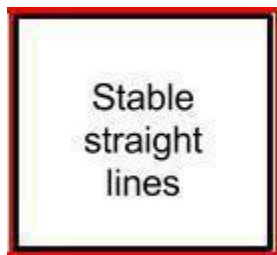
Anxiety



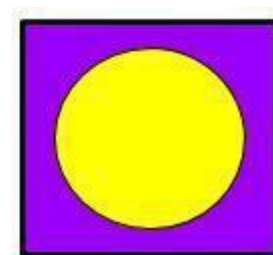
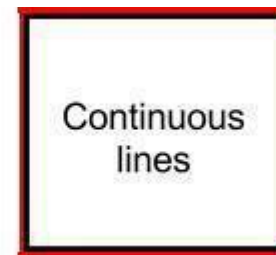
Judgement



Confidence



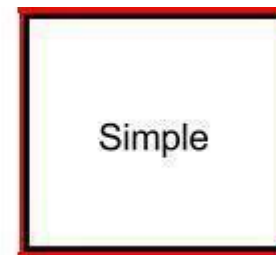
Content



Fear



Unconditional Love

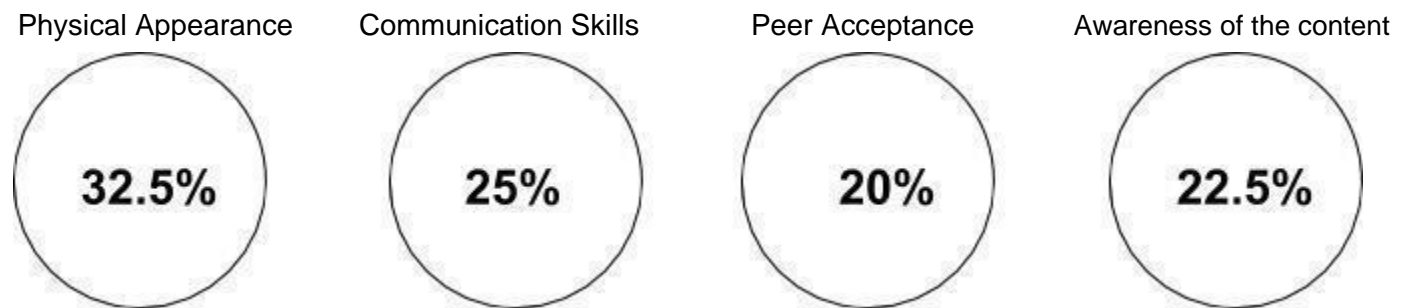


Write Briefly.

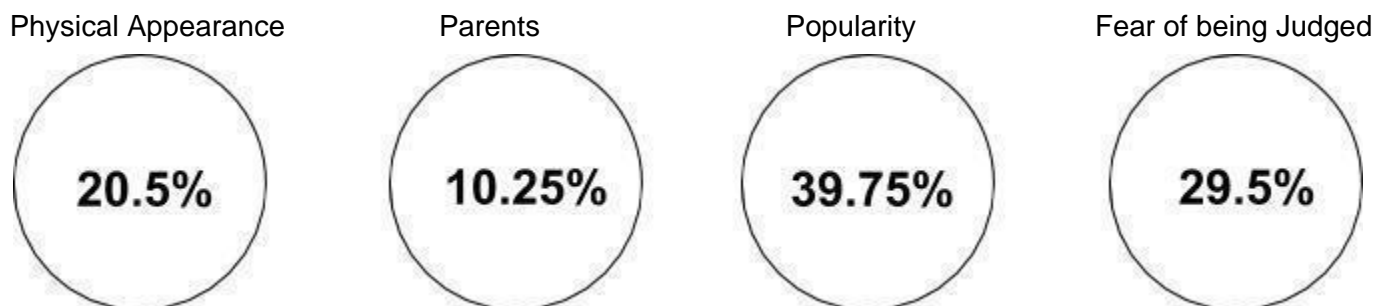
- How do people describe you? Is it true?
- How would you describe yourself?

Ans) Girls seem to be critical about themselves. Boys are self-aware but casual in their response.

Sort out the factors affecting your Confidence.



Sort out the factors affecting your activity on Social Media.



Choose multiple from the following:

1. Cross out the clothing you wouldn't prefer to wear :-



Ans) There is no solid deduction from the results we received. The choice of clothing depended mainly on what they felt was comfortable.

2. You are hurrying up for an important appointment/class/lecture but you are very hungry. Choose(tick) your breakfast material that you mustn't skip.



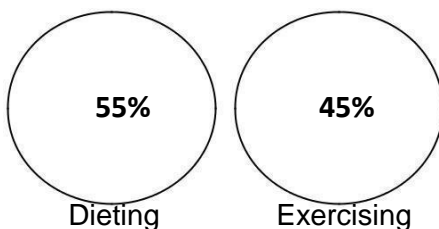
Ans) Preference: Quick and easily accessible food

Tick according to your preference:

1. I tend to "ruminate" or dwell over things that happen to me for a really long time afterward.

Ans) Often

2. Whenever you try to lose weight, give the percentage of :



3. Has your shape influenced how you think about (judge) yourself as a person?

Ans) Agree

4. My attention is often focused on aspects of myself I wish I'd stop thinking about.

Ans) Sometimes

5. I cannot go through the day without worrying about what I will or will not eat.

Ans) Neutral

6. I carefully plan most of my purchases.

Ans) Neutral

7. I have determined that there are certain "safe" foods that are okay for me to eat, and "bad" foods that I refuse to eat.

Ans) Neutral

8. I become angry when others show interest in what I eat and pressure me to eat more.

Ans) Rarely

9. It is easy for me to put unwanted thoughts out of my mind.

Ans) Disagree

10. I have uncontrollable eating binges during which I consume large amounts of food and afterwards I make myself nauseous.

Ans) Less than once a week

11. I can spend hours reading books or magazines about dieting, exercising, fitness videos, or calorie counting.

Ans) Disagree

12. I enjoy cooking gourmet meals and/or high calorie foods for others, but I would never eat them myself.

Ans) Rarely

13. I buy things according to how I feel at the moment.

Ans) Strongly agree

14. I go through long periods of time without eating (fasting) or eating very little as means of weight control.

Ans) Often

15. My friends tell me that I am fit, but I do not believe them because I feel fat.

Ans) Agree

16. I would panic if I got on the scale and found out that I had gained weight.

Ans) Often

17. I am unable to maintain a weight that is considered healthy and consistent with my build, age and height.

Ans) Often

18. It is very important that I am thinner than all of my friends.

Ans) False

19. I often buy food spontaneously.

Ans) Often

20. I have an overwhelming fear of gaining weight.

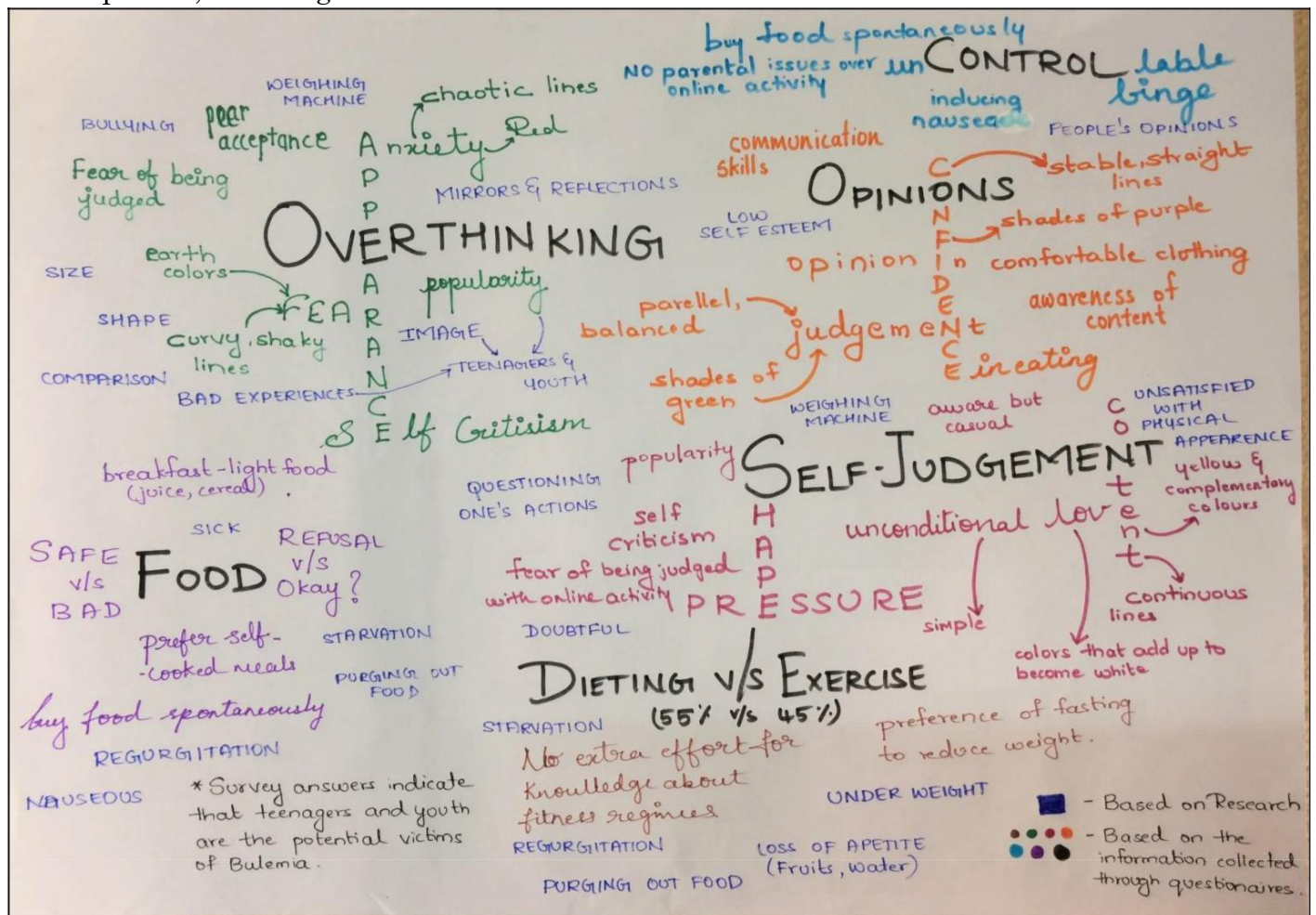
Ans) True

Information gathered over users' answers:

- People overthink and self-judge about themselves.
- The users selected 'dieting' more than 'exercise' (55% over 45%)
- They selected appearance/shape as a major factor affecting their image on a social and personal stand (self-judgement)
- They were 'Determined that there are certain "safe" foods that are okay for one to eat, and "bad" foods that one refuses to eat'.
- They opted for 'I rarely become angry when others show interest in what I eat and pressure me to eat more'.
- They selected 'I have uncontrollable eating binges during which I consume large amounts of food and afterwards I make myself nauseous.-Less than once a week'.
- Users aren't conscious of what they eat and hence don't have control over it (binge eating)
- They practiced -No extra effort to know about or browsing for fitness regimes.
- Users enjoy self-cooked meals.
- "I see it I buy it" describes how our users purchased food.
- Users preferred fasting to reduce weight.

Word map:

Based on the questionnaire we made a word map which consists of our analysis of the responses, our insights and also our research on Bulimia.



Our Campaign Caption:

Scale doesn't define you, Walk Away from BULIMIA.

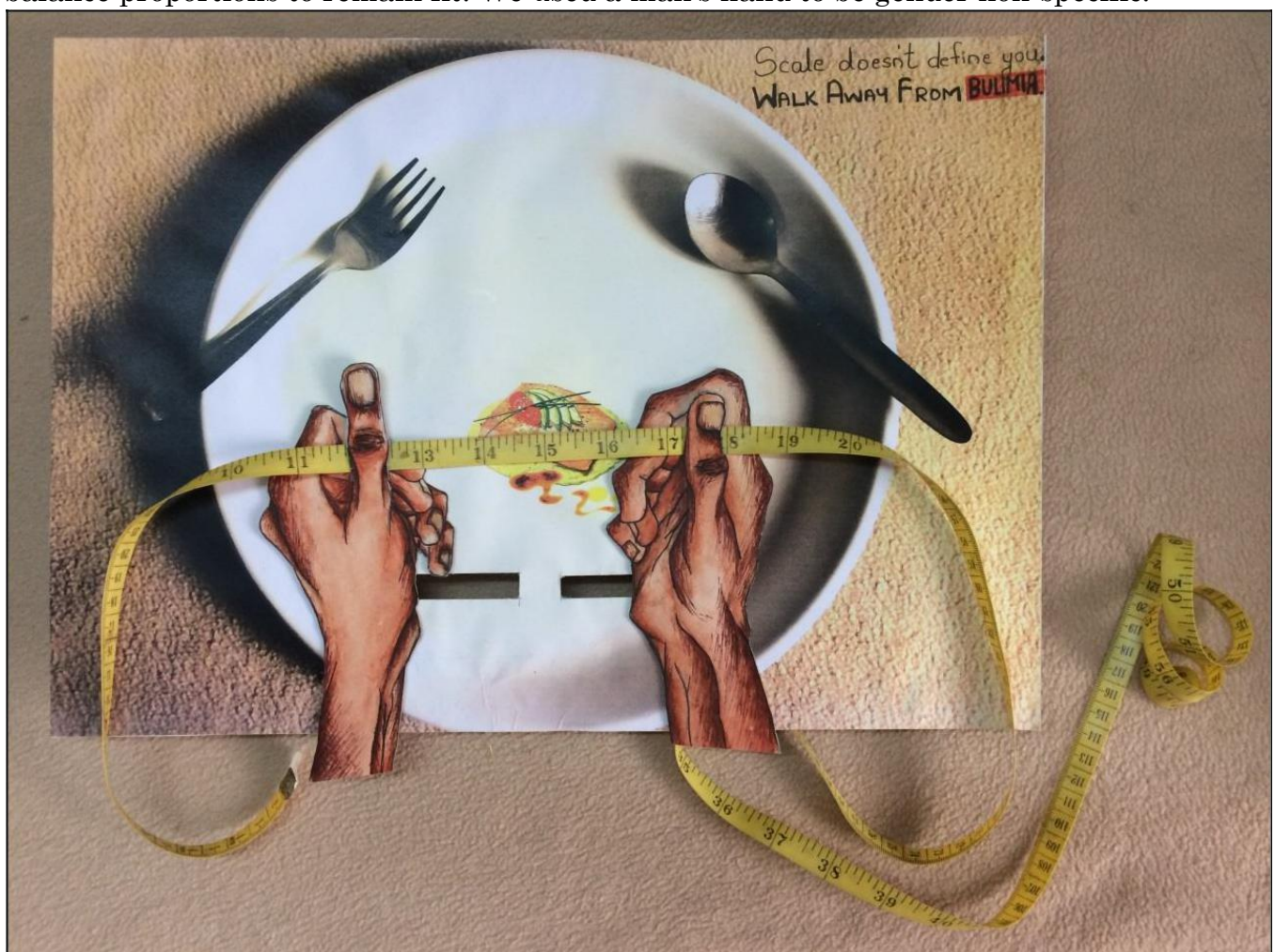
Cause of Intervention (Insight):

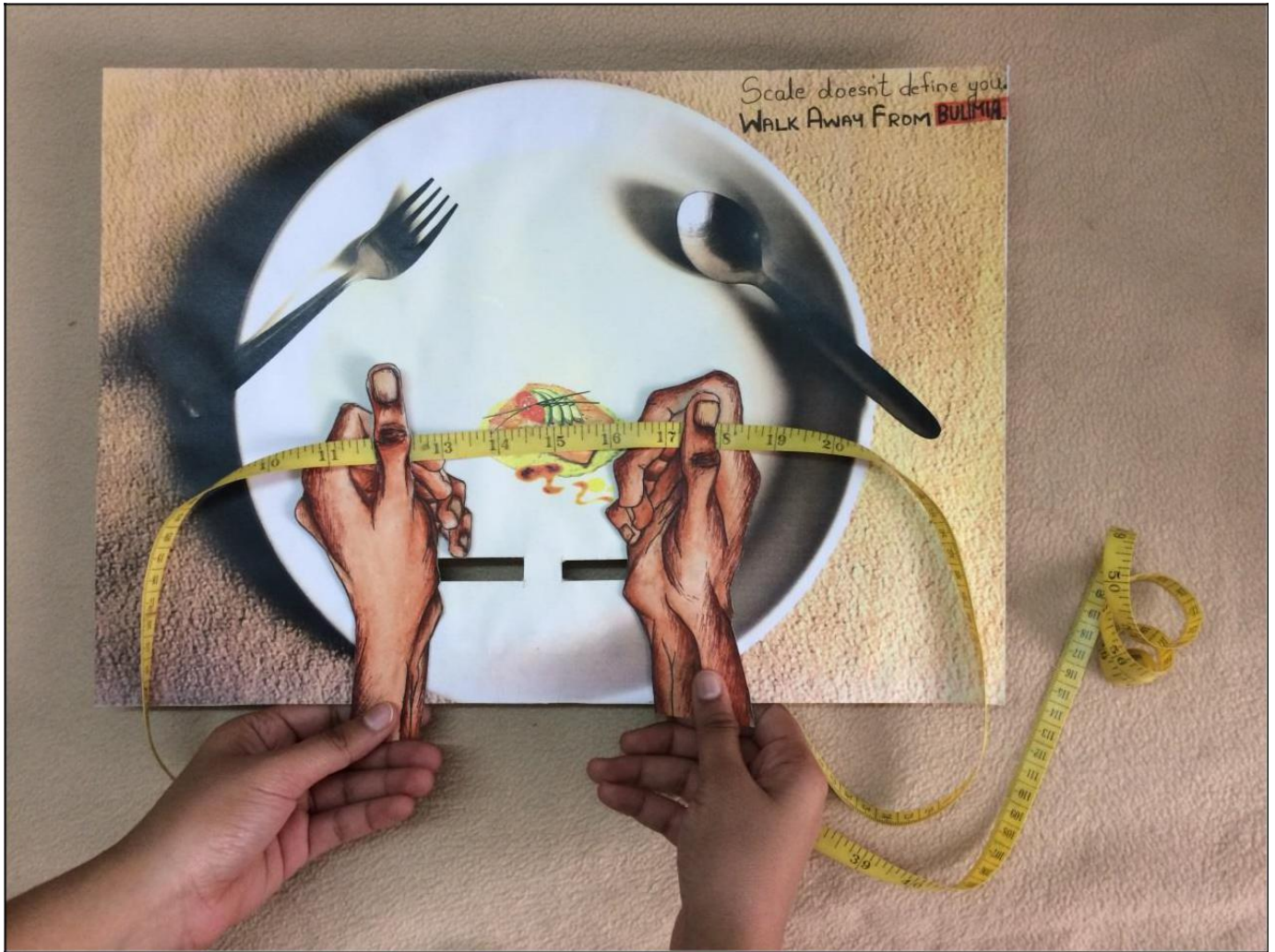
Based on the response that we received after conducting the survey, we analysed and categorised the data into a word map to understand and decode the meaning of our users better. After, pondering over the word map, we realised that even though our users were not Bulimic or suffer from any eating disorder, they were quite concerned about being judged, their appearance, low self-esteem, etc. They also showed signs of over thinking and self-judging. This made us realise that even though they did not show any symptoms of Bulimia, they could be possible potential victims of Bulimia if they are triggered by the factors that are influencing them- their surroundings, friends, colleagues and other people. Inspired from the quote, 'Prevention is better than cure', our campaign consists of a set of interactive posters which targets teenagers and youth to show them what it is to be the victim of Bulimia and hence, trying to leave a message that helps in preventing (discouraging) and 'saying no' to Bulimia.

INTERACTIVE POSTERS – EXPLANATION

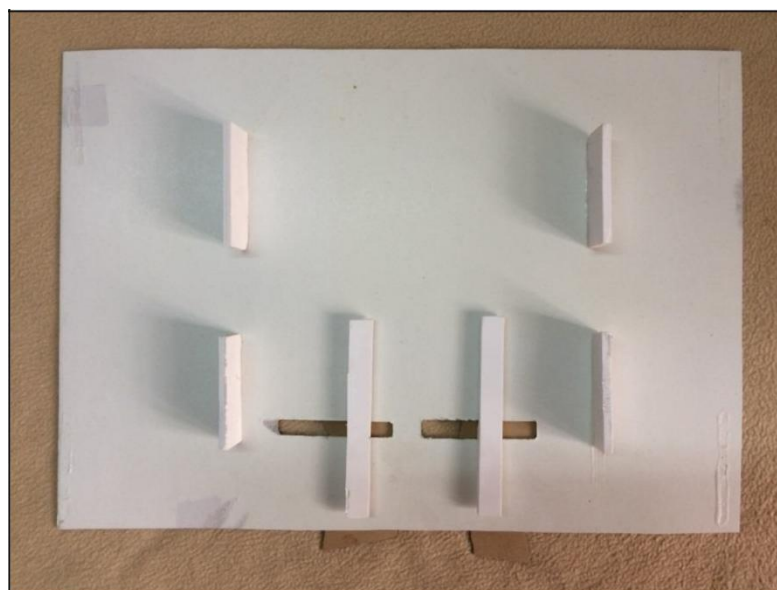
1) Measuring Plate:

This Poster shows the photograph of a plate with a spoon and a fork holding a small amount of food. A guy's skinny hands can be seen holding a measuring tape in front of the food. This Poster shows two hands holding the measuring tape as to measure the food on the plate. The measuring tape on display is lower than 20 inches, which represents the size of the waist. This is a Bulimic patient's perspective towards a plate of food. It shows how that person over thinks about the little amount of food that is going to be digested by him/her and how it is going to add weight to his/her body. It shows his/her fear towards gaining weight and how it scares them from consuming enough to be alive. It also brings out how dieting is given more preference over exercise as they would rather starve to be dangerously skinny than balance proportions to remain fit. We used a man's hand to be gender non-specific.





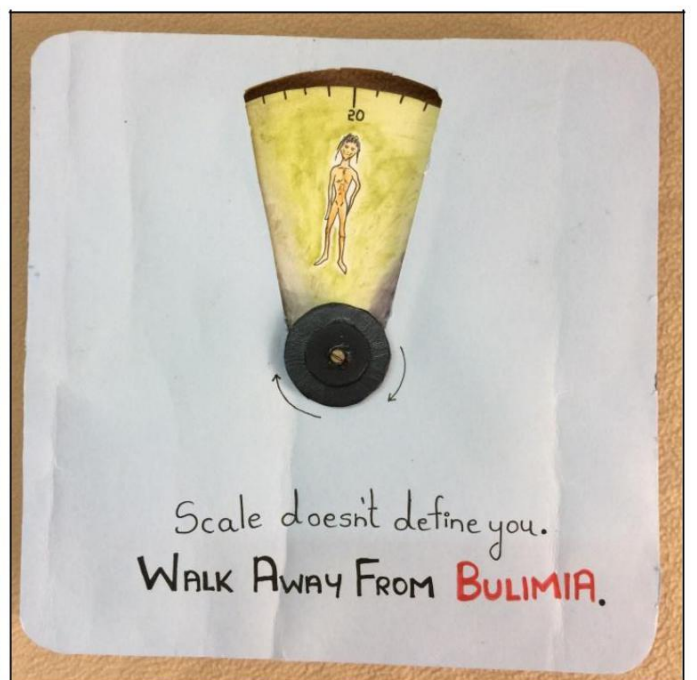
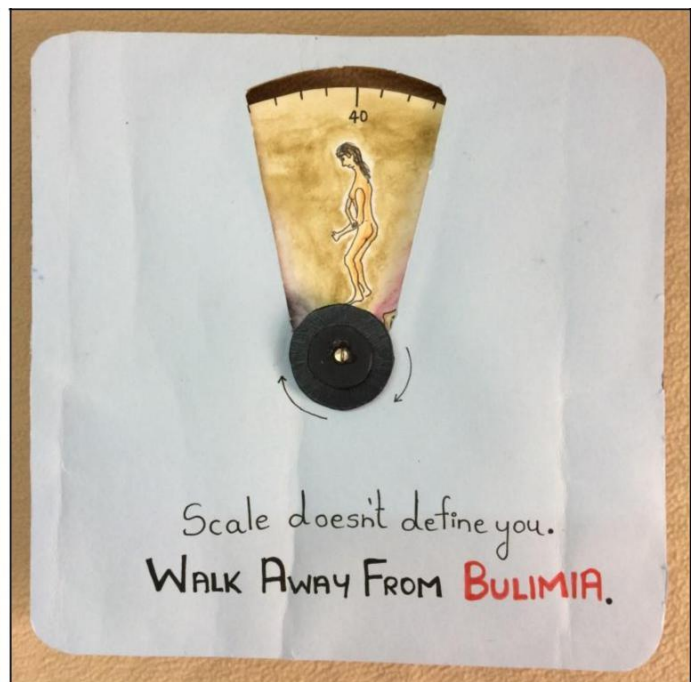
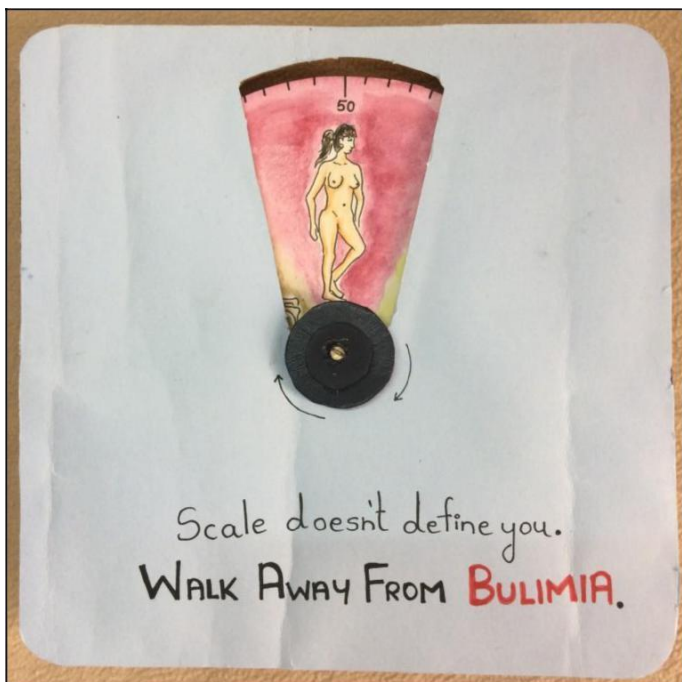
The hands are attached in way that it can be moved on X-axis which makes the poster interactive. The users can move the hand a measure the amount of food on plate. The measuring range is set around 20" implying the waist size of a bulimic patient.

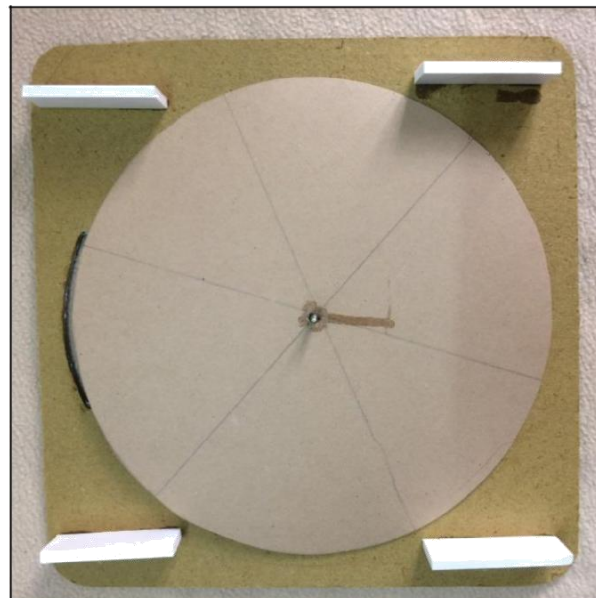
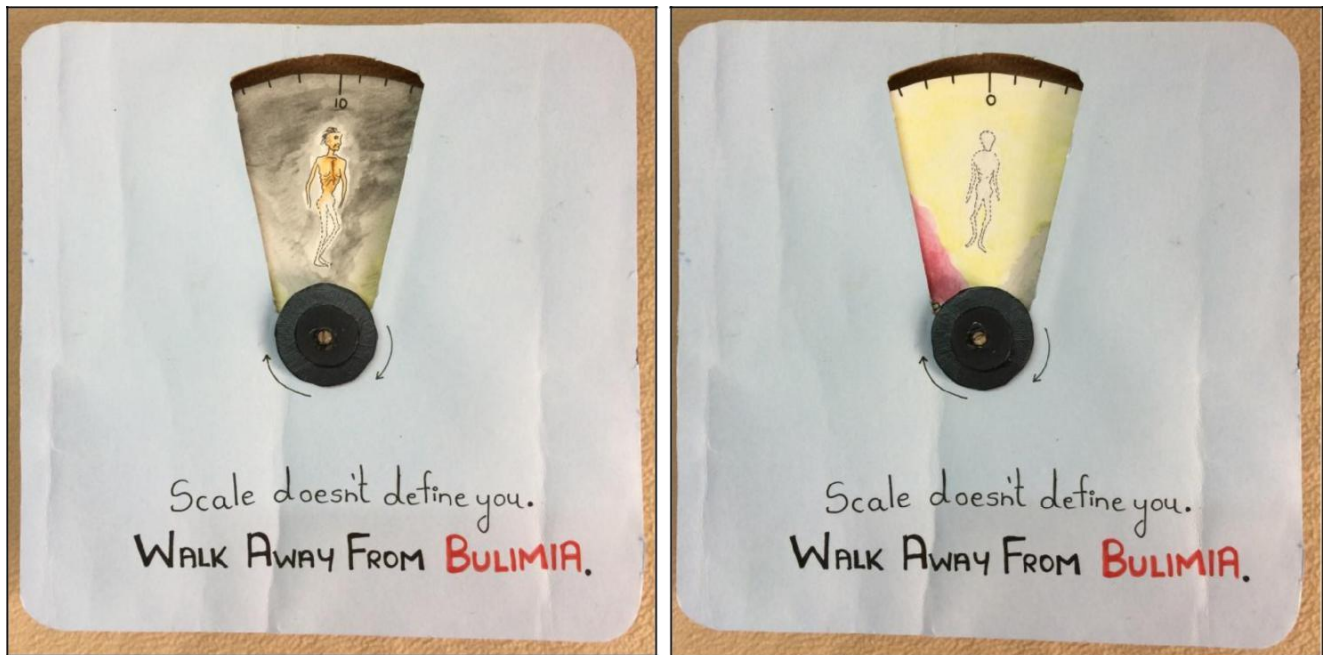


Back view of the 'measuring plate' poster

2) Weighing Scale:

This poster is made to look like a weighing scale. It has a knob, which can be turned to see the changing weights in the display window. The changing weights range from 50kg to 0kg. The display changes to show the transformation of a body from 50 kg to 0 kg as the knob rotates clockwise. At 50kg, the image of an average fit woman is shown and as the knob is turned the weight of the person goes on decreasing till 0 kg, the weight reduces to kill the person. This shows the struggle a bulimia victim faces with weight issues. Here, we are trying to show that the victim becomes so obsessed with dieting that he/she does not have control over it (or turns anorexic) or does not know when to stop and hence goes on till he/she starves to death. We are trying to show how this is dangerous enough to threaten and take life. Being fit and in shape is healthy and much required but being obsessed over your weight so much that it kills you is an extremely scary and shocking thought. Hence, this poster encourages you to be positive, embracing yourself and take things in your own control without letting outer aspects influence you.

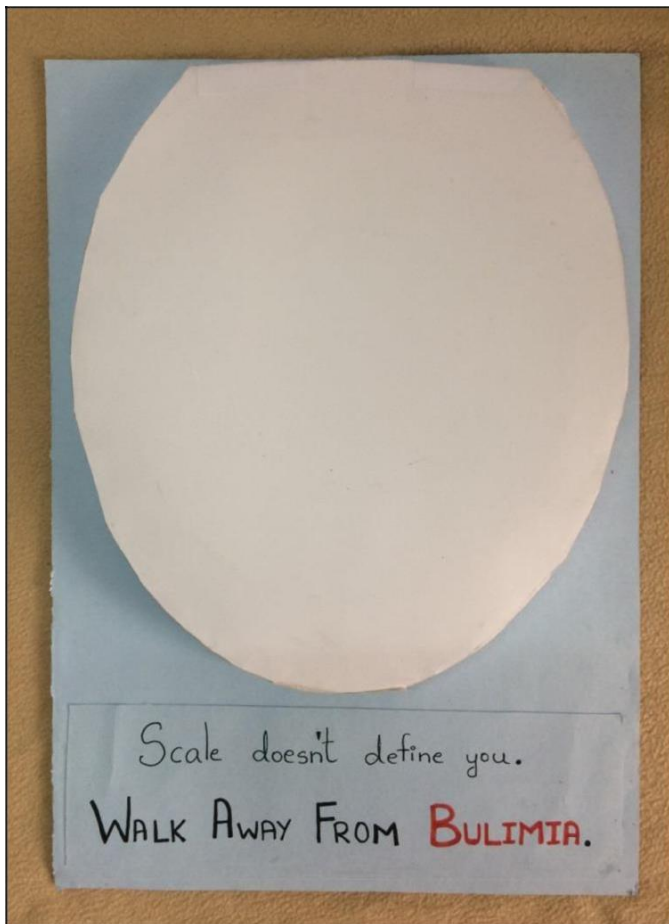




Back view of 'weighing scale' poster

3) Toilet bowl:

This poster shows the image of a toilet seat, which can be lifted up to reveal the reflection of a very skinny girl in the water. Above the sketch of the girl's reflection is a quote "You're still not perfect..." This poster is from the perspective of a bulimic victim. It is to show that when he/she goes to the toilet bowl to puke, they can see their reflection in the water which makes them feel that they are still not perfect which thereafter encourages them to purge as they see that vomiting is the only solution to become perfect and have the ideal weight according to them. This poster also acts as a mirror to the viewer, showing how anyone can easily fall under the trap of self-judgment, over thinking and self-criticism leading to eating disorders like Bulimia. It brings out that 'self-judgment, comparison, trying to fit in' can sometimes be dangerously harmful. It can lead to life threatening processes and hence should be discouraged.



We posed Conditions for reactions to our interactive posters:

We asked different users to interact with the posters. We mentioned that we have added an interactive element and that they have to figure out the element themselves. We wanted to see if the posters worked well to be self-explanatory. We asked the user to write down the **first impression, message and feedback** for each poster separately. We encouraged them that none of their responses were wrong so that they felt free to express themselves. In all we had five users to interact with the posters.

CAMPAIGN RESPONSES

1) Measuring plate

How much
What I eat will define my
waist inch

Try to lead a healthy / normal
diet.

It's a bit ambiguous. The concept and
the layout is very well coordinated

I like the idea of the
poster being interactive
as this makes the
impact of the message
stronger.
Also, when I personally
measure the food on
the plate with a literal
inch-tape, it highlights
the ridiculousness of
the action even further
and makes me aware of
how much I may actually
do this in real life.

IMPRESSION & MESSAGE

The displayed piece, according
to me shows how you should
not measure the quantity of
your intake for the sake of
your figure. As the message
states by itself, Scale doesn't
define you, it's an unhealthy
choice that one shouldn't adopt
to.

FEEDBACK

The displayed piece is
interactive that gives an
audience a better understanding
of the concept. The measuring
tape can be considered
direct but easily helps to
put forth the message. Overall,
Wonderfully thought off.

message - conscious before eating
fatty food. The measuring

consciousness before eating
fatty food. The measuring
tape is showing their
anxiety towards gaining
weight. It repels them
from eating food.
Hands look very malnourished

the posters help the victims
to self realise, introspect
& reflect.

Installation 1:-

My understanding of this installation is
that a young ~~middle-aged~~ ^{who} man is
measuring his food and ensuring that
it's 'suitable' for him. However, the fact
that the hands were those of a man and
not of a woman. (Especially since you
told me this condition is more common
in women). Confused me.

Perhaps if the hands were more feminine
and had nails it would have a
stronger impact.

The background looks overexposed.

I don't know if this was on purpose to
enhance the dramatic effect (if it is, it's
clever but too subtle for the simple
minded).

2) Weighing scale

~~Really well executed~~ The importance of a weighing scale in my life

Frying to show the reality and hardships of bulimia.

Really well executed. Shows you the cheap prices. Good illustrations.

I really like the idea of using a weighing machine to highlight this disorder as most people are obsessed with the numbers on scale and not being healthy which may lead to severe health conditions in the future.

However, personally I would have preferred if the scale would have moved anti-clockwise. But I like the realism of the scale as even in this the numbers escalate clock-wise.

IMPRESSION

On first go, it seems to be just a regular weighing machine talking about weightloss.

MESSAGE

As you interact with the piece, it clearly shows how during the process of "slimming down", one slowly kills himself in the journey, depriving yourself from vital food. It's a self destructive process.

FEEDBACK.

Interesting way to show how intense weight management can end up not just mentally killing oneself but literally as well.

The weighing machine shows how they want to lose weight in spite of people telling them they are proper. It shows how they are obsessed with losing weight and don't know when to stop. They themselves should push themselves towards gaining normal weight. Reducing weight doesn't define you and family & friends should help them get past this.

Installation 2:-

This installation is very intricate but what I didn't understand is that for many young women (and men) the shape of the figure who was at 50 kilos was perfect.

Questions :-

- ① Was this supposed to notify that girls aren't satisfied?
- ② Is it trying to show how serious the effects of weight loss due to bulimia can be?
- ③ Many girls (including myself) are aiming for the body at 50 kg, why will anyone reduce further?
- ④ Being curvy is the new sexy (in 2017). So why would anyone lose weight?
- ⑤ Would it have worked if the drawing was fatter (perhaps 70)?

3) Toilet bowl

The toilet seat shows the proper image of bulimia.

It The message hits your head.
One should stop this practice

Well planned. Loved the illustrations.
~~It's~~ It's a reality.

I like the use of a toilet seat and the image of the girl inside with a caption as it somehow gives me a feel of a mirror that shows what a bulimic person maybe going through.

I enjoy the fact that these posters are interactive because then it makes me realise the severity of the issue and that I too could be a victim of it.

IMPRESSION

The entire process of self inducing vomiting for the sake of weight & body management puts yourself into extreme situations to make yourself "Perfect" is something people fail to understand.

Such extreme measures to attain perfection and yet, it doesn't happen has been portrayed so simply yet conceptually. ~~done~~ ^{it shouldn't} Shows how you cannot attain perfection by depriving yourself & sacrificing. ~~Whether it's~~ It's an overall message.

FEEDBACK.

Nicely portrayed and message has been put through in a simple yet conceptual way

From the Bulimic victim's perspective. According to the victim she is fat. When they go to throw up, they feel that they have to throw up in order to keep reducing weight to reach the ideal weight. Their reflection makes them prone to feel less confident. They must gain weight to be fit & nourished.

The first 2 installations mentioned 'SCALE' doesn't affect you and have literal scales on them. Where is this scale in the third installation? Perhaps a catch phrase related to vomiting (forcefully) would be stronger.

The font (in the toilet) isn't clear.

The concept is good. Change the catch-phrase and maybe it'll be stronger.

ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO POSTERS:

5 users viewed our interactive installations and gave us feedback. The feedback was given in three steps 'What is your first impression of the poster?' 'What message do you imbibe from this poster?' and 'What are your comments and suggestions?' The users used these steps to give us their reviews on the three posters separately.

From the reviews we learn that there were a lot that people still don't know about Bulimia and its effects. A lot of questions were asked and answered about Bulimia. This helped us know that people are very curious about eating disorders, what triggers it, symptoms, effects and who is affected by it etc. All of the users said that the posters clearly convey the message that it is supposed to portray and that the fact, that, it is interactive unlike other posters makes it more impactful. Most of them were able to decode the message that it was intended to give out which shows that we were able to communicate through our posters. A user revealed that she realized how she gives importance to trivial things like a weighing scale in her life and how it is actually holding her back from expressing freely. All of them openly expressed how they feel about eating disorders and how it is ridiculous that a minor aspect like a person's weight can destroy a person's whole life. They were also surprised to know how dangerous the consequences of an eating disorder can be and what it can do to a person's mental state by altering their confidence, self-esteem and values. They also talked about how, weight (scale) is just another aspect in life and it is not what defines you as an individual. Scale should not be given so much importance that it takes control of your whole life. They also talked about how they over think too much and keep re-evaluating themselves; which could lead them into being the next victim of Bulimia. It was a self-realizing activity for them and they could figure out that they were no different than the victims of Bulimia and that they could also be a victim of eating disorders.

We believe that we were able to provide information to the lesser-known side of eating disorders. The users as well as their reviews, express that they are now more aware about eating disorders; they will see that they do not become a victim of it. This process also helped us realize the severity of eating disorders; as most of the times, the victims themselves do not realize that they suffer from such a disorder and even if they do, it is not taken seriously and not talked about. Social media, advertisements, a person's surroundings, bullying, comparison, people etc. set up unrealistic goals for people to follow which lead to life threatening processes in a person's life. Setting of such goals should be stopped and this issue must be taken seriously to prevent suicides and deaths. Also, families, friends, colleagues etc. should step up and talk to a person showing Anorexic or bulimic symptoms as most of the time, low self-esteem and embarrassment leads to taking such a drastic step- cultivating an eating disorder. The communication between a Bulimic victim and another person/helper should be normal and they must be encouraged to feel equal.

REFLECTION POINTS ON THE FINAL ASSIGNMENT

- Eating disorders have to be taken seriously
- More campaigns, exercises, activities have to be designed to encourage communication of this topic.
- Self-judgment and over-thinking has to stop/curtailed. A way to make oneself aware of their overthinking syndrome must be encouraged.
- Awareness solves most problems.
- Appearance should not be given so much importance; it starts from self and then society.
- Making campaigns interactive leaves a much stronger and impactful message all together.
- Common people also have to be educated about mental illness.
- Being comfortable, embracing and facing everything should be encouraged.
- Cultural probes are the best tool to bring out the required information from the viewers without objectifying and addressing the topic directly.
- People from age group 15-28 are prone to most of the mental illness as their environment and trends keep changing.
- People from these age groups must actively participate in striving to make a change.
- Social media, advertisements, a person's surroundings, bullying, comparison, people etc. set up unrealistic goals for people to follow which lead to life threatening processes in a person's life. Setting of such goals should be stopped and this issue must be taken seriously to prevent suicides and deaths.
- Since media plays such an important role in shaping people's opinions, they should encourage fitness for every shape and size instead of making one ideal body type for people of different sizes, shapes and weights.
- Such issues cannot be addressed single-handed. It requires all the people to contribute and participate equally with respect.
- This is not an issue, which can be quickly addressed and be done with. Even though it looks quick and simple enough to solve fast, it requires time to collect information, analyse, interactions to come up with impactful situations.
- The campaigns need not be huge and glamorous; it can be anything that makes even a small change in the way people look at that particular issue. Even a talk, booklet or single letter can do the job if impactful enough.
- There is no gender specificity in mental illness and eating disorders. People who knew about Bulimia at a certain extent, had biases that only females of modelling profession in fashion had his disorder. We helped them understand that that there were cases with males increasingly prone to Bulimia and Anorexia.
- It is only with the way of thinking that one becomes strong and confident with oneself. Informal Factors affecting them like their parents and friends help them to get mentally stronger.