

NED UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

AND

SINDH MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

PRESENT

SYMPOSIUM ON YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH & AI INNOVATION

CLINICAL PERSPECTIVES & FUTURE ROADMAPS

8 OCTOBER 2026 | STEM CENTRE, NED UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY, KARACHI

OUR MISSION



To promote mental health across Sindh by setting standards, strengthening services and preventing mental disorders, with a focus on the needs of young people.

SENATOR DR. KARIM AHMED KHAWAJA
Chairman, Sindh Mental Health Authority

To bring engineering, technology and research to the service of society by developing responsible, human-centred innovations, including AI, that support the mental well-being of young people.



PROF. DR. NOMAN AHMED
Pro Vice Chancellor, NED University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 8th October 2026, NED University of Engineering & Technology and the Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA) jointly hosted the Symposium on Youth Mental Health & AI Innovation: Clinical Perspectives & Future Roadmaps at the STEM Centre, NED University, Karachi.

The half-day event brought together clinicians, academics, engineers, policymakers and young voices, with people from 25+ institutes. Through keynote and academic addresses, a mental health technology showcase, personal narratives and an interdisciplinary panel discussion, the symposium examined how clinical care, public policy and artificial intelligence can work together to support young people.

The day closed with remarks from the Chairman of SMHA, Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja, and from the Pro Vice Chancellor of NED University, Prof. Dr. Noman Ahmed.

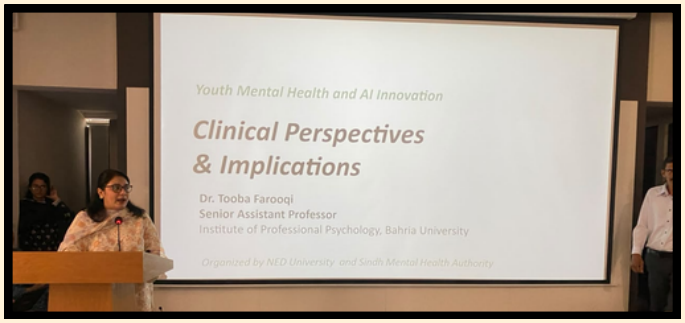


SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Keynote Address: Youth Mental Health, Clinical Perspectives & Implications







DR. TOOBA FAROOQI

Institute of Professional Psychology, Bahria University
Research Area: Applied Psychology, Organizational Psychology

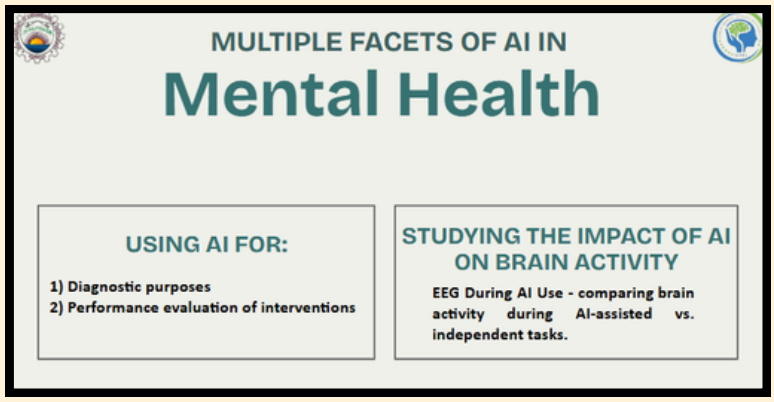
Dr. Tooba Farooqui of the Institute of Professional Psychology, Bahria University, gave the opening keynote. She drew on key findings from Pakistani and international research on youth mental health, and outlined the challenges young people face today. She also looked at what AI-based support can offer and where its risks lie. She said early identification, evidence-based care and clear referral pathways are essential, and that AI should act as a bridge to professional help and not as a substitute for it.

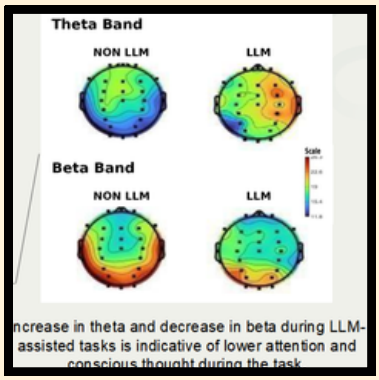
SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Academic Address: AI and Youth Mental Health, Opportunities & Innovation

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PROF. DR. MUHAMMAD ABUL HASAN

NED University of Engineering & Technology
Co-Principal Investigator-Neuro Computational Lab

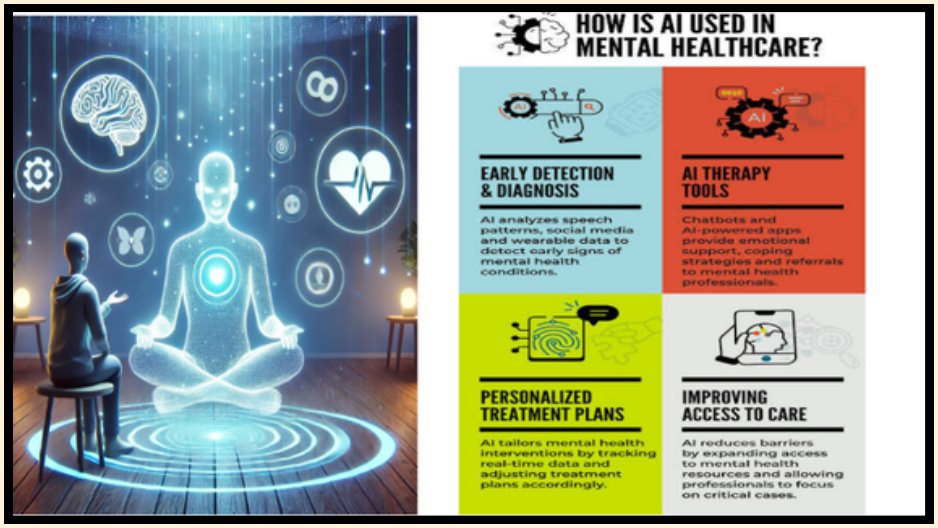
Prof. Dr. Muhammad Abul Hasan of NED University presented the university's progress in AI-driven health solutions. He described assistive technologies for people with disabilities, developed with the Government of Sindh, along with MindFoster for mental health and sleep support, digital cognitive assessment platforms and non-invasive neurofeedback systems. He also highlighted student-built aids such as WalkAid and sensor-equipped scanner sticks for the visually impaired, and campus research on local digital health use and the effect of AI models on brain activity.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES: PROGRESS & STRATEGIC FUTURE ROADMAP







PROF. DR. WASHDEV KUMAR

Head, Department of Psychiatry, Dow University of Health Sciences
Representing the Sindh Mental Health Authority

Prof. Dr. Washdev Kumar, Head of Psychiatry at Dow University of Health Sciences, presented on behalf of SMHA the progress made so far on youth mental health initiatives and the roadmap ahead

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Lived Experiences & Personal Narratives

MR. MUHAMMAD IDREES

Clinical Psychologist, Dow University of Health Sciences & Civil Hospital Karachi



DR. SANAM ROSHAN

Director Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Bridging Mental Health and Disability Inclusion

FARMAN ALI TANWARI

Regional Director for the Karachi Region at the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD)



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

INTERDISCIPLINARY PANEL DISCUSSIONS



OUR PANELISTS

- **Prof. Dr. Zainab Hussain Bhutto**
  Dean, Humanities & Social Sciences, DHA Suffa University
- **Prof. Dr. Ilyas Jatt**
  HoD, Dept. of Psychiatry, Benazir Bhutto Shaheed University, Lyari
- **Prof. Dr. Riaz Shaikh**
  Dean, Social Sciences & Education, SZABIST Karachi
- **Dr. Batool Fatima**
  Assistant professor, Section Head NCDs and Mental Health, Department of community Health Sciences, Aga Khan University
- **Mr. Adeel Saeed Mir**
  Group chief strategy and technology officer (Alsons)

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

INTERDISCIPLINARY PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Q&A











REMARKS BY CHAIRMAN, SMHA



SENATOR DR. KARIM AHMED KHAWAJA
CHAIRMAN, SINDH MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

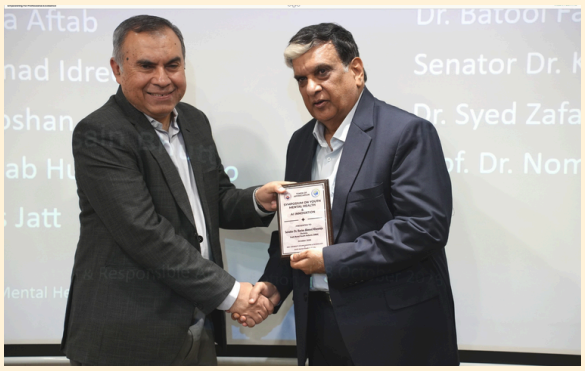
VOTE OF THANKS



PROF. DR. NOMAN AHMED
PRO VICE CHANCELLOR, NED UNIVERSITY

GLIMPSE OF THE EVENT



























TAKING THE PULSE: KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SYMPOSIUM

- Clinical Understanding: Catching It Early Changes Lives

Takeaway: Clinical, social, and educational environments all play a vital role in shaping youth mental health.
Future Roadmap: Recognizing the signs early on makes a profound, lasting difference in long-term outcomes.

- Tailored Care: A Multi-Pronged Approach

Takeaway: Mental health support is far from one-size-fits-all.
Future Roadmap: Recovery often thrives on a custom combination of therapy, medication, lifestyle adjustments, and digital tools.



TAKING THE PULSE: KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SYMPOSIUM

- Precision & Progress: Harnessing AI for Mental Health

Takeaway: Artificial intelligence is fundamentally transforming mental health care, enhancing our ability to understand, track, and assess psychological well-being.

Future Roadmap: Detailed academic and professional courses on AI and mental health must be actively offered to prepare the workforce to use these tools effectively.

- Reducing Burden through Technology

Takeaway: Evidence-based diagnostics and digital platforms are breaking down barriers to early support and lightening the load for both patients and providers.

Future Roadmap: Structured digital health training opportunities are essential to bridge the gap and empower psychiatrists and psychologists.



TAKING THE PULSE: KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE SYMPOSIUM

- System-Level Momentum: Shaping the Future with AI and Innovation in Sindh

Takeaway: True progress requires structural backing and forward-thinking institutional frameworks.

Future Roadmap: The initiatives and strategic roadmap championed by the Sindh Mental Health Authority (SMHA)—integrating modern AI solutions and policy—demonstrate how services and training can be powerfully strengthened across the region.



“WHEN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND COMPASSION WORK TOGETHER, NO YOUNG PERSON HAS TO STRUGGLE IN SILENCE.”