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Handong Global University & FCCU Join Forces to Test Groundbreaking PTSD Chatbot in Pakistan



July 31, 2025

From **July 14–26, 2025**, a research team from South Korea's Handong Global University (HGU) visited Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) under their Global Rotation Project (GRP). Their mission? To clinically validate "Auntie Joy"—an AI Chatbot designed to support survivors of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)—within Pakistan's unique cultural landscape, focusing on a severely discriminated minority group

Hosted by FCCU's **Christian Trauma Care and Research Center (CTCRC)**, the team traveled to Murree to work with survivors of the 2013 All Saints Church bombing in Peshawar. Widows and orphans—those most impacted by the tragedy—participated in this critical study.

How the Research Worked:

1. **Pre-Test:** Participants completed baseline psychological assessments.
2. **Intervention:** For two weeks, they used "Auntie Joy" (locally known as *Auntie Mussarat* in Urdu) as a daily therapeutic tool.

3. **Post-Test:** Follow-up surveys measured changes in PTSD symptoms after using the Chatbot.



The picture shows an activity led by Mrs. Grace called the *Postcard Activity*, in which participants were asked to pick a postcard and explain why they chose that particular card. Afterwards, they were invited to place their postcard on a vine display, symbolizing that Jesus is the true vine

Back in Lahore, 15 FCCU student volunteers also tested the Chatbot's usability, providing feedback on its real-world performance.



Handong students interviewing Forman Christian College students, introducing them to a chatbot and collecting their feedback

Why "Auntie Joy" Matters:

"This isn't just technology, it's a pocket counselor for those who need it most," explains the team. The ChatBot offers:

- **Multilingual support** (Urdu, Punjabi, English, Korean at the moment and many more like Pushto, Sindhi and Baluchi in the near future)
- Calming techniques like guided breathing exercises and useful guide and advice as first-hand information and many more
- 24/7 accessibility via any internet-connected device, free of charge

Try it here: <https://ajoy.vercel.app/>

Here's how to use it:

1. Open the chatbot link
2. Click **"Start Call"**
3. **Unmute your microphone**
4. You can say please talk to me in Urdu

(Tip: Find a quiet space! Auntie Joy listens carefully but can be distracted by background noise.)

The HGU team departed back to S. Korea on July 26th, carrying not just data, but hope. Early observations suggest the ChatBot could change mental health access in regions with limited counseling resources, particularly to the poor and badly deserted

What's Next?

HGU team will analyze the pre/post-test results to refine "Auntie Joy's" cultural sensitivity and clinical effectiveness. This collaboration—powered by our institutions' MOU—proves innovation thrives when borders fade.

We look forward to many more partnerships that turn research into real-world trauma care.