



ACHARYA INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

NAAC Re-accredited 'A+' and Affiliated to Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University)
Soladevanahalli, Bengaluru-560107

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Report Submission: 21/05/2026

Semester: EVEN

Academic Year: 2025–26

Venue: AIGS, AI011F49 - LH

Date: 15/05/2026

Time: 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Duration: 1 hour

TYPE OF EVENT: ALUMNI TALK

EVENT NAME: TALK ON PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

Target Audience: IV Semester BA Psychology

Number of Participants: 31

Objectives:

- To enhance awareness and understanding of LGBTQ+ identities, concepts, and the challenges faced by the community.
- To promote empathy, inclusivity, and respectful attitudes toward individuals of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations.
- To educate participants on the mental health, social, and legal issues related to LGBTQ+ individuals and the importance of ally ship.

Program Introduction: The Department of Psychology organized an Alumni Talk on “Psychological Challenges of the LGBTQ+ Community” on 15th May 2026 at 10:00 AM for the 2nd year BA Undergraduate Psychology students. Ms. Karen Ann Mathews, Consultant Psychologist at The Alternative Story, was invited as the Resource Person for the session. As an alumna and practicing mental health professional, she brought valuable practical insights into affirmative mental health care and LGBTQ+ wellbeing. The program was coordinated by Ms. Susan Maria Baby, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology.

Theme of the Event: The alumni talk on “Psychological Challenges of the LGBTQ+ Community” focused on understanding the emotional, social, and psychological struggles experienced by LGBTQ+ individuals in contemporary society.

Resource Person:

Ms. Keren Ann Mathews, Consultant psychologist with experience in counselling. Psychotherapy and community mental health.



ACHARYA INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

NAAC Re-accredited 'A+' and Affiliated to Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University)
Soladevanahalli, Bengaluru-560107

Detailed Report:

The Department of Psychology organized an engaging Alumni Talk on “Psychological Challenges of the LGBTQ+ Community” on 15th May 2026 at 10:00 AM for the 2nd year BA Undergraduate Psychology students. The session featured Ms. Karen Ann Mathews, Consultant Psychologist at The Alternative Story, as the Resource Person. Being an alumna of the department, her presence created a meaningful bridge between academic learning and professional mental health practice.

The programme commenced with a warm welcome by the students, followed by an introduction to the objectives of the session. Ms. Susan Maria Baby, Assistant Professor and programme coordinator, formally welcomed the gathering and introduced the guest speaker, highlighting her professional experience in affirmative mental health care and counseling.

Ms. Karen delivered a highly engaging and thought-provoking session that explored the psychological realities faced by LGBTQ+ individuals. She discussed the emotional impact of social stigma, discrimination, internalized shame, identity confusion, and family rejection, emphasizing how these experiences can contribute to anxiety, depression, trauma, and lowered self-esteem. She also explained the concept of minority stress and how systemic prejudice can significantly affect mental wellbeing.

The session incorporated real-life case examples and practical reflections from therapeutic settings, enabling students to better understand the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ clients. Ms. Karen also addressed common misconceptions surrounding gender identity and sexual orientation, encouraging students to challenge stereotypes and adopt a more inclusive perspective in both personal and professional contexts.

A particularly insightful segment focused on the role of psychologists in providing affirmative therapy, building trust, maintaining cultural sensitivity, and ensuring non-judgmental communication. Students actively participated in discussions, asked thoughtful questions, and reflected on the ethical responsibilities of mental health professionals when working with marginalized communities.

The talk proved to be both educational and personally reflective for many participants, broadening their understanding of inclusive psychological practice. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks, expressing sincere appreciation to Ms. Karen for sharing her expertise and valuable professional insights.



ACHARYA INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

NAAC Re-accredited 'A+' and Affiliated to Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University)
Soladevanahalli, Bengaluru-560107

Overall, the alumni talk was highly impactful, equipping students with greater awareness, empathy, and professional sensitivity toward addressing the mental health needs of the LGBTQ+ community

.PHOTOS:



Orientation Program by the Center Manager



Showing the records and Histories of the residents



ACHARYA INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

NAAC Re-accredited 'A+' and Affiliated to Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University)
Soladevanahalli, Bengaluru-560107



Students giving residents handmade cards



Cultural programs by the students



ACHARYA INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

NAAC Re-accredited 'A+' and Affiliated to Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University)
Soladevanahalli, Bengaluru-560107



Group Photo

Outcomes:

- **Enhanced Awareness of LGBTQ+ Mental Health Challenges:**Students developed a clearer understanding of the psychological difficulties faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, including stigma, discrimination, identity conflicts, minority stress, anxiety, and depression.
- **Improved Sensitivity and Inclusive Perspective:**The session helped students cultivate empathy and a more inclusive attitude toward individuals from diverse gender identities and sexual orientations, reducing misconceptions and stereotypes.
- **Understanding of Affirmative Mental Health Practice:**Participants gained insights into affirmative counseling approaches, ethical considerations, and the importance of creating safe and non-judgmental therapeutic spaces.
- **Exposure to Real-World Professional Practice:**Through case examples and practical experiences shared by the resource person, students were able to connect theoretical concepts with real-life psychological practice.
- **Encouragement for Social Advocacy and Professional Responsibility:**The programme inspired students to recognize the psychologist's role in promoting mental health awareness, inclusion, and advocacy for marginalized communities.



ACHARYA INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

NAAC Re-accredited 'A+' and Affiliated to Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University)
Soladevanahalli, Bengaluru-560107

Conclusion:

The Alumni Talk on “Psychological Challenges of the LGBTQ+ Community” was a meaningful and enriching learning experience for the undergraduate students. The session successfully created awareness about the unique psychological and social challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals while fostering empathy, inclusivity, and professional sensitivity among future psychology practitioners. Through practical insights, case-based discussions, and reflective dialogue, students gained a deeper understanding of affirmative mental health care and the importance of creating safe, respectful, and non-judgmental spaces for all individuals. The programme served as an important step toward promoting inclusive psychological education and encouraging socially responsible mental health practice.

Audience Feedback Summary:

