



ACHARYA INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(NAAC Re-accredited 'A+' Grade and Affiliated to Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University)
Soladevanahalli, Bengaluru-560107

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Report Submission: 30/06/2026

Semester: EVEN

Academic Year: 2025–26

Venue: AIGS, Seminar Hall

Date: 18/05/2026

Time: 09.00AM - 4.00PM

Duration: 07 hours

TYPE OF EVENT: WORKSHOP

EVENT NAME: WORKSHOP ON COUNSELLING SKILLS

Target Audience: II Semester MSc Psychology

Number of Participants: 23

Objectives:

1. To help students understand the basics of counselling and its importance in daily life.
2. To develop effective communication and active listening skills among students.
3. To encourage empathy, self-awareness, and positive interpersonal relationships.
4. To equip students with skills to manage stress, emotions, and personal challenges effectively.
5. To improve students' confidence in handling peer-related and academic issues.
6. To promote mental health awareness and emotional well-being among students.

Program Introduction:

The Department of Psychology organized a Counselling Skills Workshop on 18th May 2026 with the objective of enhancing students' understanding of basic counselling techniques and interpersonal communication skills. The workshop was coordinated by Ms. Keerthi P and attended by 23 students of II Semester MSc Psychology. The session was conducted by Dr. Maxim Pereira, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Kristu Jayanti University, who shared valuable insights on effective counselling practices, communication skills, empathy, and stress management. The program aimed to provide practical exposure to counselling methods through interactive sessions, role plays, and group activities, while also promoting mental health awareness, emotional well-being, and personal growth among students. .

Theme of the Event:

The theme "Foundations of Counselling Skills" focused on providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the basic principles, techniques, and values involved in the counselling process. The session emphasized the importance of effective communication, active listening, empathy, and non-judgmental



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interaction in building healthy helping relationships. Students were introduced to essential counselling skills such as observing verbal and non-verbal cues, responding with sensitivity, and maintaining confidentiality and professional ethics. The theme also highlighted the significance of emotional awareness, self-understanding, and supportive guidance in addressing personal, academic, and social challenges. Through interactive discussions and practical activities, the workshop enabled students to develop confidence and gain foundational knowledge necessary for effective counselling and interpersonal support.

Detailed Report:

The Department of Psychology organized a Counselling Skills Workshop on 18th May 2026 for the students of II Semester MSc Psychology. The workshop was coordinated by Ms. Keerthi P and attended by 23 students. The session was facilitated by Dr. Maxim Pereira, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Kristu Jayanti University. The theme of the workshop, "Foundations of Counselling Skills," was designed to provide students with a strong introductory understanding of basic counselling techniques and essential interpersonal helping skills that form the backbone of effective psychological practice.

The workshop commenced at 9:00 a.m. with an engaging rapport-building activity. This initial exercise was carefully designed to create a safe, welcoming, and interactive learning environment. The resource person encouraged students to introduce themselves and participate in informal group interactions that helped reduce initial hesitation and anxiety. Through structured ice-breaking exercises, students gradually became more comfortable with one another, which set a positive tone for the rest of the session. Dr. Maxim Pereira emphasized that rapport building is the foundation of any counselling relationship, as it fosters trust, openness, and psychological safety between the counsellor and the client.

Following this, the resource person provided a detailed orientation to the field of counselling psychology. He explained the role of counselling in supporting emotional well-being, facilitating personal growth, and helping individuals cope with psychological and social challenges. The students were introduced to the ethical principles that guide counselling practice, including confidentiality, respect for client autonomy, non-judgmental attitude, and professional boundaries. The importance of ethical sensitivity in handling client issues was highlighted through simple explanations and real-life examples, helping students connect theoretical principles to practical situations.

The core focus of the session was on developing foundational counselling skills. Dr. Maxim Pereira systematically introduced key skills such as rapport building, attending behaviour, active listening, questioning techniques, empathy, paraphrasing, reflection of feelings, and effective verbal and non-verbal communication. Each skill was explained in detail with demonstrations and illustrative examples. For instance, attending



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behaviour was demonstrated through appropriate body posture, eye contact, facial expressions, and attentive silence, showing how counsellors communicate interest and presence without words. Active listening was highlighted as a critical skill that involves not only hearing the client's words but also understanding underlying emotions and meanings.

To strengthen conceptual understanding, the workshop included multiple interactive demonstrations and role-based activities. The resource person actively involved students in practicing basic counselling responses, showing how different types of questions (open-ended and closed-ended) influence the depth and direction of client sharing. Students observed how empathetic responses and paraphrased statements help clients feel understood and validated. The emphasis on non-verbal communication helped participants become more aware of their own body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions during interpersonal interactions.

In addition to skill demonstrations, the workshop incorporated case-based discussions. Various hypothetical counselling scenarios were presented to the students, covering emotional distress, academic stress, interpersonal conflicts, and behavioural concerns. Students were encouraged to analyse each case from a counselling perspective, identify key issues, and suggest appropriate counselling responses. These discussions helped them develop critical thinking skills and understand how theoretical counselling concepts are applied in real-life situations. The interactive nature of these discussions encouraged active participation, peer learning, and reflective thinking.

A significant experiential component of the workshop involved triad practice sessions. Students were divided into groups of three, where each participant took turns playing the roles of counsellor, client, and observer. This structured activity provided hands-on exposure to the counselling process. The "counsellor" practiced applying core skills such as listening, empathy, and questioning; the "client" shared simulated personal concerns; and the "observer" evaluated the interaction and provided constructive feedback. This method allowed students to experience counselling from multiple perspectives and develop a deeper understanding of the dynamics involved in helping relationships. It also helped build confidence in communication and enhanced their ability to respond empathetically and appropriately.

The observer feedback component proved particularly valuable, as students learned to identify strengths and areas for improvement in counselling interactions. Constructive feedback discussions helped participants refine their communication style and develop greater self-awareness. The exercise also encouraged reflection on emotional responses, listening habits, and interpersonal sensitivity.

Towards the end of the session, a collective reflection was conducted where students shared their learning experiences and insights gained from the workshop. Many participants expressed that the practical activities



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significantly improved their understanding of counselling skills compared to theoretical classroom learning alone. They reported increased awareness of the importance of empathy, patience, and non-verbal communication in building effective helping relationships.

Overall, the workshop was highly engaging, experiential, and informative. It successfully achieved its objective of introducing students to the foundational aspects of counselling skills while providing them with practical exposure through interactive exercises and role plays. The session enhanced students' self-awareness, interpersonal sensitivity, and communication competence. It also laid a strong foundation for further training in counselling and psychological practice. The workshop proved to be a valuable learning experience that will benefit students in both their academic development and future professional roles in psychology and allied fields.

PHOTOS:



Demonstration of the counselling session



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Role play of a counselling session



Students practising on each other



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Resource person giving feedback to the students on the session



Group photo



Outcomes:

- Students gained a clear understanding of what counseling is, its purpose in promoting emotional well-being, and its role in helping individuals cope with personal, academic, and social issues.
- Participants developed awareness of core ethical guidelines such as confidentiality, non-judgmental attitude, empathy, respect for client autonomy, and maintaining professional boundaries in counselling practice.
- Students were introduced to and began practicing essential counselling skills, including rapport building, active listening, attending behaviour, questioning techniques, paraphrasing, and empathetic responding.
- The workshop helped students enhance both verbal and non-verbal communication skills such as eye contact, tone of voice, posture, and reflective listening, which are essential in effective counselling interactions.
- Through triad practice sessions (counsellor–client–observer roles), students were able to apply theoretical concepts in simulated counselling situations, improving their practical understanding and confidence.

Conclusion:

The Counselling Skills Workshop on “Foundations of Counselling Skills” was a valuable and enriching learning experience for the II Semester MSc Psychology students. It effectively combined theoretical inputs with practical exercises, enabling students to understand and apply basic counselling skills in a structured setting. The interactive sessions, demonstrations, case discussions, and triad activities helped enhance their communication skills, empathy, self-awareness, and interpersonal sensitivity. Overall, the workshop successfully achieved its objective of providing foundational training in counselling skills and served as a strong base for future learning and professional development in counselling psychology.

Audience Feedback Summary:

