

Life Skills Train the Trainer Program

Empower Yourself for a Better Tomorrow

Loreto College, Kolkata

16 June 2025 – 20 June 2025

Report

A five-day **Life Skills: Train the Trainer Programme** titled “**Empower Yourself For a Better Tomorrow**” was organised by Loreto College, Kolkata, in collaboration with the Indian Association of Life Skills Education, Chennai, from **June 16 to June 20, 2025**. This initiative was the first of its kind, tailored for capacity building of a group of educators as Master Trainers in life skills education. The programme was graced by the august presence of two distinguished life skills educators, Dr. A. Radhakrishnan Nair, President of the Indian Association of Life Skill Education, and Dr. Gauri Hardikar, Vice President of the Indian Association of Life Skill Education, as resource persons. The programme was designed to equip educators with the tools, techniques, and insights needed to effectively facilitate life skills learning among students, by bringing together a diverse group of enthusiastic participants from various educational institutions across Kolkata and West Bengal, including teachers from Loreto Day School (Dharamtala, Bowbazar, Elliot Road), Loreto Convent, Asansol, Loreto Rainbow Home, Carmel Primary School, Deshopriyo Park, Carmel Convent High School, Durgapur, DPS Megacity, The Heritage School, St. Augustine Day School for Girls, The Assembly of God Church, Our Lady Queen of the Mission, Park Circus & Saltlake, St. Paul’s Cathedral Mission, Jyotirmoy School of Education, Uddami Foundation, Anando Trust, sisters from Loreto Provincialate, Loreto Sealdah, Loreto Residency, St. Agnes Loreto Day School, Lucknow, as well as, faculty from colleges including Loreto College, Kolkata and Rani Birla College, Kolkata. The workshop was conducted from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM each day. It featured a rich blend of conceptual learning, experiential activities, and collaborative exploration, aimed at empowering teachers to become transformative facilitators of life skills.

This 5-day program covered five broad themes relevant to the ten core life skills, including self-awareness, emotional regulation, stress management, empathy, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, creative thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking.

As key learning outcomes, participants developed a heightened sense of introspection and emotional awareness. They learnt the skills of communicating with clarity, respect, and purpose, both inside and outside the classroom. Additionally, participants could develop the ability to think analytically, ask purposeful questions, and make sound judgments based on logic and reflection. Furthermore, they could gain valuable insights into practices that promote emotional regulation, maintain composure and fortitude, and achieve resilience in the face of emotional setbacks, many of which are essential for ensuring personal well-being and classroom harmony.

At the end of the program, an MoU was signed between Loreto College and the Indian Association of Life Skill Education, paving a concrete path for future collaboration on diverse aspects of promoting life skills education. Besides, the program helped set a firm vision on transforming Loreto College into a centre for advanced studies and research in life skills.

The entire programme was a deeply impactful professional development initiative that went beyond traditional teacher training, paving the way for a more empathetic, emotionally intelligent, reflective, and future-ready approach to education. In an increasingly complex and dynamic world, this workshop reinforced the belief that education should extend beyond academic content to nurture human values, social responsibility, and emotional resilience. These qualities will undoubtedly spread across classrooms and communities, empowering generations of students with essential life skills to succeed.

Snapshots



CATCH YOURSELF STEP IN CURIOUS STEP OUT CONFIDENT

■ CARE WITHOUT CARRYING

- EVERY EMOTION IS IMPORTANT
- LOVE THY SELF
- LIFE SKILLS CAN BE LEARNT
- LEARN TO READ NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION
~ BODY NEVER LIES
- 5 W'S OF CRITICAL THINKING
- LIFE SKILLS NEVER WORK IN ISOLATION

↑
KEY
LEARNINGS



■ Hands on training.

- Football activity on IPR.
- Activity on effective communication.
- Activity on locating area of feelings in our body.



STRATEGIES
WE LOVED!!

GROUP - 5

16.6.25 - 20.6.25



LESSONS ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Teachers get training in life skills

JHINUK MAZUMDAR

■ **Exercise:** A teacher gave out verbal instructions as to how to make a diagram. While some participants in a workshop drew a diagram of a house as the teacher instructed, there were others who struggled and came up with a different figure.

■ **Lessons learnt:** The exercise taught the participants in the workshop that there could be various perspectives. The teacher has to acknowledge all perspectives and simultaneously reach out to every student in the class. A lesson in effective communication.



Teachers attend the life skills workshop at Loreto College

Calcutta: Loreto College conducted a life skill training for teachers and counsellors of various schools and NGOs to enable them to deal with classroom situations and foster inclusive and safe spaces that support student development.

The five-day training of the trainers was on some core life skills like self

awareness, critical thinking, creative thinking, stress management, problem solving, decision making, empathy, effective communication, coping with emotions and interpersonal relationship.

"These skills help navigate and thrive in various aspects of their lives. For a teacher to effectively im-

part life skill training to students, they have to be empowered themselves," said Sister A. Nirmala, teacher-in-charge, Loreto College.

"The teacher has to integrate these skills while imparting the curriculum and day-to-day transaction," said Sister Nirmala.

The five-day training, held from June 20, was attended by 47 teachers, counsellors and research scholars on the college campus.

The session was in collaboration with the Indian Association of Life Skill Education conducted by A. Radhakrishnan Nair and Gauri Hardikar.

"Life skills is an enabling education. It enables a person to perform to his maximum potential, to face the challenges and problems in day to day life, to withstand those problems so that they are develop a positive and adaptive behaviour and adjust to the environment," said Nair, president of the association.

In the training, the participants were given different situations to enhance their critical thinking, problem solving and other skills.

Hardikar, the vice-president of the association, said normally teaching is limited to knowledge which is used to take an examination. "But when we teach life skills we are teaching them how to live life. If we have to do that we have to use things from daily life," she said.

It included giving the group a situation where an individual has to decide whether they will allow a family member to take an

Air India flight after the crash at Ahmedabad or a 18-year-old girl from an underprivileged home having to convince her parent to let her study instead of marrying.

"Teaching math and science is actually enhancing critical thinking skills but we don't build that connection between learning math and science and applying those critical thinking skills. That gap is filled when I teach life skills and that is the application. These are transferable skills not limited to one situation," she said.

The training gave them to reflect both about their strengths and weaknesses.

"I am unable to stand for myself," one teacher said. "My body language should give an impression that I am soft spoken and not weak," another one said. "I am not a good public speaker," a third teacher said.

"Acknowledging and sharing one's vulnerabilities would help one to understand the other person, the student, and be more empathetic. Unless one reflects a situation remains as an experience and does not become a learning," Sister Nirmala said.

Sudipta Majumder, a participant who is a research scholar at Calcutta University, said that the session created self awareness.

"It helped me to understand things like effective communication through activities. Life skill training cannot be theoretical but has to be based on activities and experiences," he said.

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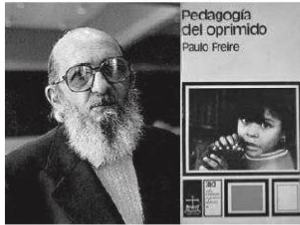
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Focus

Part-5 Great Thinkers Who Shaped History

Paulo Freire - 5



By Francis Sunil Rosario

Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter

One of McLaren's edited texts, Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter, expounds upon Freire's impact in the field of critical pedagogy. McLaren has also provided a comparative study concerning Paulo Freire and Argentinian revolutionary icon Che Guevara. Freire's work influenced the radical math movement in the United States, which emphasizes social justice issues and critical pedagogy as components of mathematical curricula. In South Africa, Freire's ideas and methods were central to the 1970s Black Consciousness Movement, often associated with Steve Biko, as well as the trade union movement in the 1970s and 1980s, and the United Democratic Front in the 1980s. The radical doctor Abu Baker Asvat was among the many prominent anti-apartheid activists who used Freire's methods. Today there is a Paulo Freire Project at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg and Abahlali base Mjondolo a radical movement of the urban poor, continues to use Freirian methods.

In his introduction to the 30th anniversary edition of Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Donald Macedo, a former colleague of Freire and University of Massachusetts Boston professor, called the book a revolutionary text, and said that people in totalitarian states risk punishment for reading it. During the apartheid period in South Africa, the book was banned. Clandestine copies of the book were distributed underground as part of the "ideological weaponry" of various revolutionary groups like the Black Consciousness Movement.

In his 1989 book Life in Schools, Peter McLaren emphasized that the teacher's politics are foundational to the pedagogy articulated in Freire's book. Building on McLaren, others said that the fourth chapter is the lynchpin holding the project together, and that the emphasis on the first two chapters severs Freire's method from his ideology and his politics from his pedagogy. The reasons for its neglect stem from the chapter's explicit concern with the revolutionary party and leadership, which Derek R. Ford argued flows from the Leninist conception of the party. Tyson Lewis similarly said that "Freire himself clearly saw his pedagogy as a tool to be used within revolutionary organization to mediate the various relationships between the oppressed and the leaders of resistance."

In a 2009 article for the conservative City Journal, Sol Stern wrote that Pedagogy of the Oppressed ignores the traditional touchstones of Western education (e.g. Jean-Jacques, Rousseau, John Dewey, or Maria

Montessori) and contains virtually none of the information typically found in traditional teacher education (e.g., no discussion of curriculum, testing, or age-appropriate learning). On the contrary, Freire rejects traditional education as "official knowledge" that intends to oppress. Stern also wrote in 2006 that heirs to Freire's ideas have taken them to mean that since all education is political: "leftist math teachers who care about the oppressed have a right, indeed a duty, to use a pedagogy that, in Freire's words, 'does not conceal—in fact, which proclaims—its own political character'".

Freire's work was one inspiration for Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed.

Paulo Freire Institute

In 1991, the Paulo Freire Institute was established in Sao Paulo to extend and elaborate upon his theories of popular education. Its director is UCLA Professor Carlos Torres, the author of several Freirean works, including the 1978 A praxis educativa de Paulo Freire. In 1999 PAULO, a national training organisation named in honor of Freire, was established in the United Kingdom. This agency was approved by the New Labour Government to represent some 300,000 community-based education practitioners working across the UK.

The Paulo and Nita Freire Project for International Critical Pedagogy was founded at McGill University. Here Joe L. Kincheloe and Shirley R. Steinberg worked to create a dialogical forum for critical scholars around the world to promote research and re-create a Freirean pedagogy in a multinational domain. After the death of Kincheloe, the project was transformed into a virtual global resource.

Freirean literacy methods have been adopted throughout the developing world. In the Philippines, Catholic "Basal Christian communities" adopted Freire's methods in community education. Papua New Guinea, Freirean literacy methods were used as part of the World Bank-funded Southern Highlands Rural Development Program's Literacy Campaign. Freirean approaches also lie at the heart of the "Dragon Dreaming" approach to community programs that have spread to 20 countries by 2014.

Awards and Honours

Kling Baudouin International Development Prize 1980: Paulo Freire was the first person to receive this prize. He was nominated by Mathew Zachariah, Professor of Education at the University of Calgary. Prize for Outstanding Christian Educators, with his wife Elza UNESCO Prize for Peace Education 1986 Honorary Doctorate, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, 1996, along with Augusto Boal, during their residency at the Second Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed Conference in Omaha. Honorary Degree from Claremont Graduate University, 1992 Honorary Doctorate from The Open University, 1973 Inducted, International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame, 2008. Honorary Degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago, 1993.



Loreto College Hosts 5-Day Train the Trainers Programme

By Dr. Suparna Ghosh

Loreto College, Kolkata, in collaboration with the Indian Association of Life Skills Education, Chennai, recently organized a 5-day workshop on "Life Skills: Train the Trainer Programme" from June 16 to June 20, 2025 under the aegis of Indian Association of Life Skills Education. This initiative was first of its kind being tailored by a group of teachers trained in Life Skills under the able leadership of Sr. Dr. A. Nirmala, Teacher-in-Charge of Loreto College. The programme was designed to equip educators with the tools and techniques necessary to facilitate life skills learning among students effectively.

A Unique Collaboration

The workshop brought together a diverse group of 47 enthusiastic participants from various educational institutions, NGOs across Kolkata and West Bengal.

Resource persons Dr. A. Radhakrishnan Nair, President, and Dr. Gauri Hardikar, Vice President of the Indian Association of Life Skills Education, played a pivotal role in shaping the programme.

Comprehensive Curriculum

The 3-day programme conducted from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM each day, covered five broad themes relevant to the ten core life skills, including:

1. Intra-personal Skills: self-awareness, emotional regulation, and stress management
2. Interpersonal Skills: empathy, effective communication, and interpersonal relationships
3. Cognitive Skills: creative thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking.

Through a rich blend of conceptual learning, experiential activities, and collaborative exploration, participants developed a heightened sense of introspection and emotional awareness. They gained valuable insights into communicating with clarity, respect, and purpose, both inside and outside the classroom.

Key Takeaways

The workshop empowered participants to:

1. Think analytically and make sound judgments based on logic and reflection.
2. Practice emotional regulation and maintain composure in challenging situations.
3. Develop resilience to emotional setbacks and ensure personal wellness.

The programme concluded with the

signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Loreto College and the Indian Association of Life Skills Education. This partnership paves the way for future collaboration on promoting life skills education and transforming Loreto College into a center for advanced studies and research in life skills. This programme marked the beginning of a meaningful sojourn towards more empathetic, emotionally intelligent, reflective future-ready education.

By investing in the growth and development of educators, institutions can foster a culture of lifelong learning. This approach not only enhances teaching skills but also creates a positive impact on student learning outcomes.

Effective professional development strategies include:

1. **Creating Learning Networks:** facilitating collaboration and knowledge-sharing among educators
2. **Recognizing and Rewarding Learning:** celebrating achievements and showcasing innovative teaching practices
3. **Leading by Example:** demonstrating commitment to ongoing education and professional development.

The workshop reaffirmed the importance of education going beyond academic content to nurture human values, social responsibility, and emotional resilience. By empowering educators with essential life skills, we can create a ripple effect that benefits generations of students, enabling them to thrive in an increasingly complex and dynamic world. With institutions like Loreto College taking the lead, the future of education looks promising.

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