**TWO DAY VIRTUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT – *Breaking the Bias***

Organised by

**Women’s Study Centre, UCW and Women Cell, UCW**

**Dates: 7th and 8th March 2022**

**REPORT**

**Day 1 Date: 7th March 2022, Monday**

10.00 AM – 10.45 AM :**INAUGURAL FUNCTION**

The Chief Guest of the inaugural session for the Two Days Virtual Conference was Prof. Limbadri, Chairman, TSCHE, Hyderabad. The Guests of Honor were Prof. G. Mallesham, Dean, Development & UGC Affairs, OU, Hyderabad and Mr. Shekhar Kammula, Indian Film Director, Producer & Screen Writer. The inaugural session began with the welcome address by Dr. V. Srilatha, Convener & I/c Director, Women’s Study Centre, UCW who emphasized on the significance of the conference. Principal of the College Prof. M. Vijjulatha, spoke about the importance of women being in innovation and entrepreneurship which is the need of the hour. She explained that as part of the SDGs, gender equality is crucial for the societal development. The Vice principal of the college Dr. B. Shailaja emphasized that more action than theory is needed to make gender equality possible. Chief Guest Prof. Limbadri sir explained about the law and constitution which also talks about equal rights and opportunities for women. Guest of Honor Prof. G. Mallesham elaborated on how the change should start at home and women should be treated with more respect and dignity. Mr. Sekhar Kammula, suggested that instead of judging women about their physical appearance and attire, men should be taught to treat them as equals. Instilling empathy and scientific temperament among youth is the need of the hour to achieve gender equality. The Inaugural session ended with formal vote of thanks by Dr. G. Vijaya Lakshmi, Convener and Coordinator, Women Cell, UCW.

10.45 AM – 12.15 AM - **Panel Discussion – I**

**The panel discussion - I had three eminent panelists.**

**Panelist 1: Prof. Aparna Rayaprol, Dept. of Sociology, University of Hyderabad** in her address spoke that gender equality is not always about boys vs girls but about breaking stereotypes. Men should be sensitized about the significance of the work done by women. Government should provide transport and proper toilets available at workplaces so as to enable more women have equal economic and work opportunities. She emphasized that enough research needs to be done for combining theory and practical towards achieving gender equality.

**Panelist 2: Prof. Ch. Beena,** Emeritus Professor, Dept. of Prisons, Telangana State Member, NALSA, spoke about how her migration from psychology to correctional studies has helped her learn more from prisoners. She suggested that girls should be extremely careful and cautious about new relations they get into. She quoted few examples to explain how important it is for everyone to have proper legal awareness and that there are many laws available for safeguarding the rights of mentally, physical challenged and girls.

**Panelist 3: Prof. Seema Kazi,** Associate Professor, Former Acting Director, Centre for Women’s Development Studies, New Delhi, gave her lecture on Muslim women and feminist movements. She evaluated certain anthropological studies by eminent people to emphasize on the fact that historical records of Muslim women’s education are very different from the societal understanding. She said that the need of the hour is to juxtapose this history with present scenario in giving equal opportunities to muslim women.

The panel discussion ended with question-answer sessions among the panelists and participants.

12.15 PM – 1.15 PM - **Invited Lecture – I**

**Dr. Nupur Kohli,** World Healthcare Leader & Advisor, Netherlands.

Dr. Nupur Kohli spoke on the topic “Women Leadership” where women should be seen as leaders and decision makers at all levels. She discussed about the various aspects of women leadership – social, economical, health wise, political, at home, in society and community, etc. She emphasized on equality in leadership which can be achieved with balanced outlook by the society and every individual of the society. She discussed about the challenges faced by the women in doing so and finding the right opportunities amidst challenges. Women have to understand the strengths and should fight for equality and equal opportunities. There is a need for more women leaders with characteristics like compassion, creativity and outgoing.

2.00 PM – 5.00 PM

**Technical Session – I**

**Topic -** GENDER EQUALITY-ISSUES/ FEMICIDE & VIOLENCE

The first Technical Session was held on the topic “GENDER EQUALITY-ISSUES/ FEMICIDE & VIOLENCE” wherein 10 papers were presented. The session from 1.45-3.15 pm had papers on concept of gender equality, gender sensitization, Social Construction of Gender – Uniform Civil Code and Gender Equality, Gender and Sexual Diversity: An Individual Perspective on third gender, Women Rights and Portrayal in English Literature, Online harassment, Masculinities which dealt on engaging man and boys for gender equality preventing female feticide and role of MSMEs in empowering women in India.

**Technical Session – II**

The Second technical session is a parallel session consisting of 14 papers in Hindi from 2pm and 4pm. Six papers were written on the work of the famous woman writer Manikayambha Mani. They discussed in depth on the characterisation of women and women issues in her work and how it impacted the society and the contribution to Hindi Literature. 4 papers are on Olga the popular feminist writer and the remaining papers are presented on womens equality, empowerment and its critique. The PG students also participated and Q & A were asked in the end.

**Technical Session – III**

Topic - **WOMEN ENTREPRENUERS AND LEADERSHIP**

The session started at 3.15 pm and ended at 5. 30pm. It consisted of 11 papers in English and 5 papers in Telugu. The English papers discussed on varied issues that included the Women Entrepreneurship role in Telangana Economy, Technology Revolution in women’s safety, Livelihood of coastal women in India, Investment behaviour of working women, Reservation, Representation, Reparation Of Oppression, political participation Women in leadership roles Justice for women and Women in Technology etc. The papers highlighted the importance of women in decision making and the obstacles in the decision-making process. The 5 telugu papers consisted of women writers and the women character in the literature. It was a very enriching experience the presenters brought the essence of empowerment has analysed and defined by the famous Telugu writers like Ranganaykamba, Volga, sulochana, etc and their popular books.

**Day 2 Date: 8th March 2022, Tuesday**

10.00 AM – 11.00 AM - **Invited Lecture – II**

**Prof. Rama Devi,** Professor, Department of Physiology, Gandhi Medical College, Hyderabad.

Prof. Rama Devi madam explained about the various factors that lead to health issues in women such as stress, social responsibilities, time bound tasks, work pressure, management of house hold chores, taking care of children and elders in the family, etc. In the process of satisfying the family members and societal members, a woman is subjected to great amount of stressed life and that leads to health deterioration. Moreover, women do not give much preference to her health requirements and health management becomes her least priority. Madam also focussed on various issues that arise due to stress in women such as depression, obesity, menstrual disorders, PCOD, headaches, etc. Management of health by women is very important by taking balanced and nutritious food and address the work related and family problems with planning and perfection.

11.00 AM – 1.00 PM - **Panel Discussion – II**

The Panel discussion – II had four eminent panellists:

**Panellist 1: Prof. Asha Shukla, Former Vice-Chancellor, Ambedkar University, Madhya Pradesh**

Prof. Asha Shukla madam opined that we are all humans and should be treated so irrespective of gender and that 90% of people from various religions and communities are not aware of Gender sensitized. Hence, every individual needs to be aware of Gender Sensitization through physical, emotional, intellectual and mental aspects. Policies should be framed by the Government to help achieve this kind of awareness and should be practiced at all the levels. Madam suggested that she has framed various modules on the topics such as Human trafficking, Human Rights, etc to help with the Higher Education Institutes in this aspect.

Panelist 2: **Tashi Choedup, Buddhist**

Tashi Choedup, a Trans-gender woman, presented an eye-opening address which was rather a concern for all third Gender community regarding the discrimination faced by them not only in the society but it begins with the educational institutions right from young age to the employment opportunities apart from the societal oppression and discernment. She explained about the various types of genders, difference between sex, gender and sexuality and need for globalization of sex. She opined that faculty should be sensitized first about the different types of genders, which shall help them change their mindset and attitudes towards the third gender members. She also explained about the existence of Hijras in the history and the remarkable role played by them and their contribution for development of society since ages.

**Panelist 3:** **Dr. B. Lavanya, Associate Director, UGC-HRDC, OU**

Dr. B. Lavanya madam discussed about the Breaking the Bias concept at the work place and the gender bias that exists in offices and organizations at various levels. Madam explained about the various types of Bias that exists in an organization such as conscious and unconscious Bias. The variation in the representation of women by breaking the glass ceiling can lead to gender equality. Madam explained various laws that helps us overcome the Gender discrimination at the work place.

**Panelist 4: Dr. P. Swathi, Head, Dept. of Psychology, OU**

Dr. P. S. Swathi Madam said that about 60% of the people experience Bias and male child is given preference in a family, men and women behaviour is different and glass ceiling effect is observed which prevents women rising to the higher levels through success. They are undermined by suggesting that women cannot handle situation. But it is the time to face the discriminating behaviour with courage, voice out or communicate gender issues with great self-esteem and self-confidence.

**Technical Session – IV**

**Topic - WOMEN MIGRATION AND CONFLICT AREAS**

The session started at 1.15 pm till 2.30 pm and had 10 paper presenters who spoke on Women, development, conflict areas and migration and how it impacted the life of women not only in India but also conflict countries. The presenters also presented on Globalization and its Socio-Eco Impact on Women in India, Violence against women in the conflict zones (Syria & Yemen), Indispensable role of women in environmental protection, Analysing the Women Empowerment in Kashmir, Gender and Migration Gender and land dispossession in India, deconstructing women’s role in the environmental discourse, etc

**Technical Session – V**

**Topic - Gendering COVID-19 Pandemic**

The session started at 2 .30 pm – 3.15 pm and consisted of 6 papers that dealt with various issues of Covid on Women’s Health, education, vaccination, impact on working women, Understanding the changes in household dynamics affecting women during theCovid-19 lockdown. The session was enriching highlighting the importance of women in society and negligence on the part of society and government in the facilitating the improvement and safety of women in general and in pandemic situation in particular .

3.15 PM – 4.15 PM **- Invited Lecture – III**

**Bhavana Gupta,** ELT Professional, Teacher Trainer with British Council, Founder, Learning Sutra-Lifelong learning

Bhavna Gupta delivered a lecture on the topic “Gender Bias – The Elephant in the room” with several examples and activity based discussion and made the session very interesting and interactive by posing questions to the participants. She explained about the topics such as Conscious and unconscious bias, role of National Education Policy – 2020 in which chapter 6 talks about ‘Equitable and Inclusive Education – Learning for all’, SDG 4 and 5 of 17 Sustainable Development Goals which discusses about Quality Education and Gender Equality.

4.15 PM – 5.15 PM **- VALEDICTORY FUNCTION**

The two-day virtual International Conference on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment – Breaking the Bias was organised by Women’s Study Centre and Women Cell, UCW. The valedictory session on 8th March, 2022 was graced by Chief Guest – Prof. V. Usha Kiran, Director, ICSSR, Osmania University, Hyderabad; Guest of Honour Mr. Pradeep, Telugu Film Actor, Producer and Writer. The Key Speaker was Dr. Rachel Brule, Asst Professor of Global Development Policy, Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University.

Dr. Rachel Brule elaborated about her extensive research on Women’s Representation and Resistance (in Haryana and Rajasthan) which shows that women’s political representation catalyzes effective claims to fundamental economic rights, in particular land inheritance. She discussed in detail about improvement of women inheritance with quotas, bargaining power strengthens with economic rights and political voice. She also highlighted about son’s refusal to take care of parents.

Shri K.V. Pradeep asserted that there is strong connect between power, responsibility and empowerment. While elaborating on his own personal experiences, he concluded that women empowerment is the collective responsibility of the society.

Prof. V. Usha Kiran in her address inspired the participants to take up extensive research studies on women empowerment and gender studies. She emphasised that bias is flowing from all the directions. In this context, it is significant to understand the overall development of women with specific reference to decision-making power. While focussing on SDG 5, Prof Usha also highlighted the role of technology in breaking the gender bias.

Dr. B. Shailaja, Vice-Principal commended the paper presenters and the organisers for successfully conducting the virtual conference. Dr. V. Srilatha, Conference Director presented the Conference Report and Dr. G. Vijayalakshmi, Conference Convenor proposed the Vote of Thanks. All the speakers expressed happiness on Osmania University College for Women being declared as First Women University of Telangana on the eve of International Women’s Day.

PHOTOS

 

 