



**Avinashilingam**  
Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women  
**University**  
(Estd. u/s 3 of UGC Act 1956)  
Coimbatore - 641 043, Tamil Nadu, India

# Women's Studies Centre Newsletter

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## From the Director's Desk

### Women and Entrepreneurship

Women entrepreneurs constitute only 10 percent of the total number of entrepreneurs in the country. Why is it so? Traditionally entrepreneurship has been men's foray. The fact that India has produced such exceptional women entrepreneurs, there is logic to believe that women do have the potential. When we think of women entrepreneurs, the names that quickly come to our mind are Indira Nooyi, Naina Lal Kidwai and Kiran Mazumdar Shaw and others who have made their mark internationally. Can more women be successful entrepreneurs even if they are not as famous as Indira Nooyi or the oft quoted powerful women in business?



It is indeed possible since women have the potential. Women who've struggled in their lives tend to have amazing inner strength, integrity and faith. They are passionate about what they do, humble and willing to learn, have the ability to handle criticism, persistent, willing to move beyond their comfort zone and possess many more traits that contribute to success. In spite of having the potential and talent, greater part of women have not reached the pinnacle of success since they are deprived of opportunities, information and education.

Here is an opportunity, the only one of its kind in Tamil Nadu. The UGC sponsored Women's Studies Centre of the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women will offer a new post graduate course 'M.A. in Women's Studies and Entrepreneurship' from the academic year 2016.

The course content looks at what the emerging women entrepreneur needs to know - 360° from Legal to Financial and Business Management, Small Business Entrepreneurship, Startup Entrepreneurship, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Family and Social Entrepreneurship. The course will help you to be an independent entrepreneur, partnership entrepreneur or how to successfully be part of your own family business. It includes information which every entrepreneur should know.

There are several self made entrepreneurs but with this postgraduate programme you can be a professionally trained entrepreneur, and will be able to take a fast track without much of a trial and error approach. In short you do not have to learn the hard way, but learn professionally through class room learning, entrepreneurship laboratory and placements in the business of your choice and interest! Do not miss this opportunity!

The Centre is teamed-up with highly qualified and internationally experienced staff with diverse expertise. You will have the opportunity to network with leading industrialists to guide you and interact with funding agencies to support you.





## Development of E-Content on Women's Studies

Women's Studies Centre is part of the e-content development project approved under the discipline of Home Science. This was granted by **e-PG Pathshala**: an MHRD Project under the **National Mission on Education through ICT (NME-ICT)**. So far **9** modules have been developed and recorded.

- Gender Difference, Stereotype and Bias
- Indicators and Status of Women Globally
- Women's Nutrition and Health
- Rights and Laws for Women
- Gender Roles, Power and Inequalities
- Approaches to Women's Development
- Women in Management
- Women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Medicine)
- Challenges and Rights of Women with Disabilities

## International Women's Day 2016

### Uniquely & Innovatively

International Women's Day 2016 was celebrated on **8<sup>th</sup> March 2016**. This year's International Women's Day was commemorated by organizing competitions for students through skit, elocution, collage and rangoli on the theme of **'Pledge for Parity'**. The competitions reflected high enthusiasm and imagination among the students.

Women's Studies Centre of the university organized **College Mela** to show case the creations and innovations by 33 Women Entrepreneurs and 3 Women Self Help Groups of Coimbatore and Avinashilingam **Krishi Vigyan Kendra** (KVK), through marketing and sales of their unique products under the 'Make in India' campaign. College Mela was inaugurated by the Honourable Chancellor **Padma Shri Dr. P.R. Krishnakumar**, the Vice Chancellor (i/c) **Dr. Premavathy Vijayan** and the Registrar (i/c) **Dr. A. Venmathi**. The Chief Guest of the programme was the leading Lady Advocate **Mrs. Udaya P.S. Menon**.

**Dr. Minnie Mathew**, Director of Women's Studies Centre in her Welcome Address, hoped that this year's international women's day theme 'gender parity' will create gender equal society around the world.



**Padma Shri Dr. P.R. Krishnakumar**, Chancellor delivered the Presidential Address. He portrayed women, personified as 'shakthi', with power within her. He recalled with deep gratitude **Dr. T.S. Avinashilingam** for instituting this great university for women empowerment and encouraged the staff and students to keep up the legacy and empowering more and more girls and women in the society.

**Mrs. Udaya P.S. Menon**, Supreme Court Advocate delivered the Special Address and spoke on the various provisions under 'The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013'. As a member of various 'Internal Complaints Committees and Local Complaints Committees', she shared the challenges in the implementation of the policy on 'Sexual Harassment at Workplace'. She also spoke of how her NGO, JWALA (Justice for Aggrieved Women through Legal Awareness) is working as a team towards providing justice to the aggrieved. She also stressed on the importance of a happy family for success at work and home.

**Dr. Premavathy Vijayan**, Vice Chancellor (i/c) felicitated the gathering and gave inspiration towards how to 'harness the power within us'. She fondly remembered the great efforts of **Ayya Avargal**, **Dr. T. S. Avinashilingam** and **Amma Avargal**, **Dr. Rajammal P Devdas** for upliftment of rural and poor women in society. She motivated all students to identify their inner potential and excel in the diverse opportunities provided by the university. She inspired students to 'dream high' and maintain a 'positive attitude' to become women achievers in the coming days.



On this occasion, the Chancellor and the Chief Guest proudly honoured four special Women Achievers of the year for their outstanding service to society. **Thirumathi V. Nanammal** for her commitment and efforts to empower women through Yoga. Nanammal who is 93 is the "Country's Oldest Woman Yoga Teacher". **Dr. K. Radhabai**, "An inspiring Professor of History", was awarded for her contributions towards 'Education and



Rehabilitation of Persons with Special Needs in Inclusive Education'. **Mrs. P. Rani**, was awarded for her extraordinary and brilliant work to protect the environment. "Wealth from Waste" makes her a committed environmentalist through social activities. **Mrs. H. Poomalai**, was awarded for her commitment and wonderful efforts to be a unique "Food Entrepreneur" and a pioneer in introducing functional foods in novel food products.

**Dr. Premavathy Vijayan**, Vice Chancellor (i/c) awarded prizes to students who won the international women's day competitions on this year's theme: "Pledge for Gender Parity". On this occasion outstanding NSS workers and NCC cadets of the university were also honoured and **Dr. Venmathy** the Registrar (i/c) gave away the awards.

### Workshop on Sexual Harassment

Gender sensitization workshops were conducted in **January & February, 2016** for 3000 students in campus 1. Following the pattern provided in Saksham, modules were developed for the workshops on gender, sexual harassment, etc. Through these workshops feedback was received from students regarding the problems they faced outside the university for which suggestions were offered.



### Gender Champions

Through the procedure suggested by UGC, we have selected ten students as Gender Champions.

#### Achievements of the Gender Champions

- ✱ They took an active part in conducting competitions for the International Women's Day 2016. The theme was "Pledge for Parity". The competitions were Collage, Rangoli, Skit and Elocution.
- ✱ They helped in organizing gender sensitization programmes in the campus.

They brought up issues of sexual harassment taking place outside the university based on which we have initiated strong action by writing to the 'all women police station' to which they have responded very positively.

The gender champions are being oriented to create blogs where they would like to express gender concerns and solutions.

### Introduction of M.A. in Women's Studies and Entrepreneurship

#### Board of Studies

In order to introduce M.A. in 'Women Studies and Entrepreneurship', the Board of Studies was held on **6<sup>th</sup> May 2016** for approval of the syllabus that was prepared by the Women's Studies Centre. The meeting was Chaired by **Dr. Minnie Mathew**, Director, Women's Studies Centre. The External Experts were, **Dr. K. Velumani**, Professor & Director, Centre for Women's Studies, The Gandhigram Rural Institute-Deemed University, Dindigul & **Dr. K. Manimekalai**, Dean of Arts, Professor & Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi. **Mrs. U. Gowri**, Assistant Professor & **Mrs. Sayani Das**, Assistant Professor, Women's Studies Centre were also present. The M.A. course on 'Women Studies and Entrepreneurship' was approved at the Academic Council meeting held on **28<sup>th</sup> May 2016**.

### Participation of Staff Members in Academic Meetings

- ✱ **Dr. Minnie Mathew**, Director gave the Valedictory Address at the **One day National Conference on "Empowerment of Women in India: Within or Beyond the Parameters of Law?"** on **29<sup>th</sup> January 2016** at the Women's Forum (CWS, WAHAP CELL, SRISHTI) of PSG College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore.
- ✱ UGC sponsored two day National Conference on **"Recent Trends in Adolescent Nutrition and Reproductive Health Care"** organized by the Department of Food Science and Nutrition, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women on **4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2016**. **Dr. Minnie Mathew** delivered a special lecture on **"Future Perspectives for Adolescents in India"** on **5<sup>th</sup> February, 2016**.
- ✱ **Mrs. U. Gowri**, Assistant Professor, delivered a **Guest Lecture on "Opportunities in Social Work Profession"** organized by the **Department of Social Work, Vidyasagar College of Arts and Science, Udumalpet**, held on **4<sup>th</sup> February, 2016**.
- ✱ **Mrs. U. Gowri**, Assistant Professor, presented and published a paper on **"Social Security Measures to Women Construction Workers - The Role of Social Work Professionals"** in GLOW 16 - a one day International Conference on **"Contemporary Issues of Women Challenges and Responses"** held on **9<sup>th</sup> February 2016**, organized by the Department of Social Work, Holy Cross College, Trichy.



- ❖ **Dr. Minnie Mathew**, Director is a Member of the Advisory Committee for the ICSSR Project entitled "Economic Cost of Domestic Violence against Women in Selected Rural and Urban Slums in Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 executed by the Department of Economics, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore.

- ❖ **ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology, Cochin along with Society of Fisheries Technologists (India)** organized a one day National Seminar on "Advances in Marine Natural Products and Nutraceutical Research" held on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2016. **Dr. Minnie Mathew**, Director was invited as a Chief Guest and she delivered a talk on "Nutraceuticals for Persons with HIV".

- ❖ **Mrs. U. Gowri**, Assistant Professor was invited as a Chief Guest for the Valedictory Function held on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 organized by the Social Work Association of Kongu Arts and Science College, Erode and she addressed the students on "Employment Opportunities in Development Sector".

- ❖ **Mrs. U. Gowri**, Assistant Professor participated in the One day "Industry Interaction Workshop on Human Resource Management - Issues and Challenges in Trans Cultural Environment" organized by the Department of Social Work, Bharathiar University in association with NIPM on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2016.

- ❖ **Faculty Development Programme: Dr. G. Sheefna**, Research Associate participated in the Two Day Faculty Development Programme on "Gender Sensitivity for College Teachers" organized by the Department of Women's Studies, Bharathiar University on 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2016.

- ❖ **UGC Sponsored Seven Day Workshop on E-Content Development**, was organized at the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore from 18<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2016. **Ms. Sayani Das**, Assistant Professor was invited as a Resource Person for a session on "Development of E-content Module: Experience Sharing from e-PG Pathshala (NMEICT, MHRD) Project" on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2016.

- ❖ **Dr. Minnie Mathew**, Director submitted a paper on the university initiatives on "Gender Friendly Policies in Higher Education, for the ICSSR National Workshop Institutions" held on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at the Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli.

## Publications

- ❖ **Edited Book (In Press)**

**Dr. Minnie Mathew & Ms. Sayani Das** (eds.) [ISBN]; 'Drive for Equal Access: Access & Participation of Women & Girls to Health & Nutrition, Education & Training, Science & Technology, Full & Decent Employment'; Partridge International (Penguin & Random House Company). ISBN: Soft cover 978-1-4828-5760-3 & eBook 978-1-4828-5759-7.

**Dr. Minnie Mathew**, Director prepared a chapter on 'Nutritional Therapy in HIV' for the Manual on Clinical Nutrition prepared by the International Confederation of Dietetic Associations.

- ❖ **Journal Article**

**Das, Sayani** and Anusree T.V. (2016). Occupational Health Problems of Women Workers in Textile Industry. In: V. Saradha Ramadas (edited). Research Highlights: 25<sup>th</sup> Year Issue. Shanga Verlag, Coimbatore: India. Pp. 167- 177. ISBN: 978-93-85604-02-7.

## Research Projects

- 'A study on compliance to provisions of the sexual harassment of women at work place (prevention, prohibition and redressal act, 2013) with focus on private organized sectors of Coimbatore District' submitted to ICSSR for funding.
- 'Sampada': E-Project Turning Challenge to Empowerment for Women Entrepreneurs. This project will be in collaboration with DRDA and an NGO AAGNE (Association for Augmenting Green Natural Environment). A tripartite MoU has been signed by the agencies.

## Forthcoming Events

- ❖ Short Term Course on Legal Literacy
- ❖ Digital India Programme
- ❖ World Rural Women's Day
- ❖ National Girl Child Day
- ❖ Celebration of International Women's Day

## Editorial Board

**Dr. P.R. Krishna Kumar**, Chancellor  
**Dr. Premavathy Vijayan**, Vice Chancellor (i/c)  
**Dr. Minnie Mathew**, Director

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