

WDC Report 2022-23

Promoting a gender-just society through our academic and field-based programmes has been a major thrust of the College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan. The **Women's Development Cell** of the College plays a major role in this regard. of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan plays a very important role.

The Women's Development Committee (WDC) actively promotes gender awareness and equality through its planned activities each year. Every year, the committee organizes various initiatives to promote gender awareness and sensitization through a series of events, workshops, and activities. The Women Development Committee includes representatives from various stakeholders: Faculty Representatives; Representatives from Non-Teaching Staff and two female students. The WDC team for the year 2022-23 comprised of the following members:

1. Dr. Saman Afroz (Convenor & Faculty representative)
2. Ms. Roshni Alphanso (Faculty Representative)
3. Ms. Maya Barsing (Non teaching staff representative)
4. Ms. Swati Kerkar (Non teaching staff representative)
5. Ms. Vaibhavi Kulkarni (Student representative)
6. Ms. Ichcha Shinde (Student representative)

The first program organised by the Women's development cell in the year 2022-23 was **Friendship Day**, which was organised on 10th August, 2022. A talk was organised by the committee on the theme of Friendship, Infatuation and Love by Ms. Sunila Bhise. Besides, the students from across classes were asked to prepare a Role play or a Dance Drama on the above theme. The idea was to help students understand the true meaning of Friendship, Love and Infatuation. Also, it was felt that students from across the genders should be encouraged to be friends. The program started with the student performances where in the students beautifully presented their expressions for friendship, love and infatuation through creative dance forms. The judges for the competition was Dr. Sunila Bhise, the resource person of the event and Dr. Anita Panot, faculty member CSWNN. This Interclass competition acted as a good base for Ms. Sunila Bhise's talk. Ms. Sunila Bhise, who works as a free-lance counsellor has several years of experience of working with children, adolescents and

women. She has gained nuanced understanding of friendship, love and infatuation by looking at the life of several people whom she has counselled. Through her talk, Ms. Sunila conveyed her knowledge and insight with the students. She initiated the session by defining and distinguishing the three terms: Friendship, Love and Infatuation. She established a connection on how knowing these feelings is greatly influenced by one's sexuality. She made a further correlation of it with students' professional growth by essentially outlining the advantages of comprehending emotions to assess the client's relationship with their partner and family members for effective interventions. Ms. Bhises talk was well appreciated by the students as it was laced with several examples which students could relate to. The talk was followed by a Question and Answer session by the students, where in they clarified their several doubts related to the theme of the talk. The event concluded with students tying Friendship Bands to each other.

The next program organized by WDC was **12th Kranti Jyoti Savitri Bai Phule lecture series**. The lecture was organized on 4th January 2023 on the theme: **“The relevance of Savitri Bais work to Social work practice”**. The resource person was Dr. Shewli Kumar, Associate Professor and Chairperson, Women Centred Social Work, School of Social Work, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. In her talk Dr. Shewli explained as to how feminism is not an ideology to consider as some rocket science of men bashing, but a judicious act of demanding equality in basic and advanced right. Highlighting the life and contributions of Savitri Bai, Dr. Shewli touched upon the intersectional feminist approach experienced and demonstrated by Savitribai where she sowed the seeds of equality with so much of ease and without actually using any technical terms for it. Dr. Shewli explained how Savitribai experienced and fought against discrimination not only on the basis of gender but also for other aspects like caste and class. Final crux of her lecture was that as social workers we need to be aware of these multiple layers of discrimination and particularly while working with women, we need to develop this lens of intersectionalism and work with more sensitivity.

The last event organised by WDC for the year was celebration of **International Women's Day 2023** on 15th March 2023. The celebrations for this event was based on the IWD theme for 2023 which is **“Digital: Innovation and technology for gender equality”**. The celebrations for this event started from 8th March 2023, where in students of different classes were made to take oaths of Equity for women,. The oath was announced on central announcement system by the WDC faculty representatives and all the students repeated the oath after them. The event also incorporated the

Embrace Equity campaign which was the IWD campaign theme for the year. The students were requested to pose in the Embrace equity pose and post their pictures in social media, and also share it with the WDC team. A collage was made on the theme and presented on the main day of the event, which is 15th March, 2023. As a pre event a poster making competition was organised on 14th March 2023 on the IWD theme of Embrace equity, in which students from across the classes actively participated. With these pre-event activities the students were geared up to celebrate the main event on 15th March, 2023. On the day of the Event an Inter class Role play competition was organised on the theme of DigitAll. The competition was a platform where issues like online abuse, gender discrimination in online form and their respective solutions were highlighted by the students through their creativity. The participants creatively used the lyrics from Bollywood songs and reformed them into messages to curb online abuse of Women. The judge for this competition was Mr. Juran Lopes who is an activist and an expert in Role play. Mr. Juran Lopes was accompanied by Mr. Maxwell. Both the resource persons shared their observations from the students performances. Mr. Juran also gave students some tips on Street play performances and emphasised how street play can be used as an effective medium for social awakening. During his talk he also performed some songs and made the students sing the same. The winners of the street play and poster making competition were then given trophies and book prizes. Over all, the celebrations of the International Womens day program which started on 8th March, 2023 culminated with a bang on the final day of the event on 15th March, 2023.