

Best Practice - Women Empowerment

1. Title: Empowerment of Women

2. Objectives:

- To develop decision-making capacity among women.
- To create awareness of various government schemes for women empowerment.
- To encourage women's participation in education, employment, and social responsibilities.
- To instill self-confidence in girls and women.
- To educate women on health, hygiene, and domestic violence.
- To empower women socially and economically equal to men.
- To study factors influencing the social and economic empowerment of women.
- To identify challenges and constraints hindering the process of women empowerment.
- To promote women self-help groups for economic empowerment.

3. The Context: Women play a pivotal role in various aspects of society, including decision-making, cultural and religious activities, and household management. However, women face numerous challenges such as illiteracy, poverty, health issues, violence, and lack of decision-making power. In India, many women are less educated, live in poverty, face health challenges, and are often victims of violence and unequal rights. These constraints necessitate meticulously planned initiatives to create awareness of the importance of women in society and empower them in various spheres of life.

4. The Practice: Sanskriti University has implemented several initiatives to empower women:

- **Special Lectures and Workshops:** Conducting special lectures and workshops on topics like sexual harassment, women's rights, child marriage, and female foeticide. Resource persons from the Women and Child Welfare Department, Government of India, are invited to speak. A women helpline has been established to facilitate both students and employees to register their grievances.
- **Internal Complaints Committee and Women Council Committee:** The University has formulated an Internal Complaints Committee and Women Council Committee for

securing a safe environment in the university. A helpline for women is established to provide prompt integrated emergency services for reporting harassment, abuse, or any kind of help.

- **Mission Shakti Programme:** The Government of India has launched 'Mission Shakti' - an integrated women empowerment programme as umbrella scheme for the safety, security and empowerment of women for implementation during the 15th Finance Commission period 2021-22 to 2025-26. Under this program, several events like rangoli competitions, free health and blood checkup camps, essay competitions on "Healthy Women Healthy Nation," poster-making competitions, and yoga sessions were organized exclusively for female students under the aegis of the Girls Health Club.
- **Mahila Sang Apradh Initiatives:** Collaborating with the Mahila Sang Apradh to address women's crimes, provide legal assistance, and create awareness about women's safety and legal rights.
- **Sukanya Shiksha Yojana and 10% Fee Relaxation for Girl Students:** The University has introduced Sukanya Shiksha Yojana, where 100 seats for admission in various courses are exempted from 100% fees for meritorious girl students. Every girl child seeking an admission in any of the courses as listed for scholarship will be given 10% relaxation of the total tuition fee for the 1st year only.
- **Health and Wellness Programs:** Initiatives like HPV vaccine awareness, nutrition & hygiene for good health, lifestyle management for boosting immunity of females, and domestic violence awareness programs are conducted to educate women on health and wellness. Quarterly wellness programs are organized for female staff, focusing on health check-ups, fitness sessions, and mental wellness workshops.
- **Free Distribution of Pads and Supplements:** The University provides free distribution of sanitary pads and nutritional supplements to female students and staff to ensure their health and hygiene needs are met.
- **Free Delivery Services in Ayurveda Hospital:** Female students and staff can avail free delivery services at the university's Ayurveda hospital, promoting accessible healthcare for women.
- **Female Security at Main Gate:** The main gate of the university is secured by female security personnel to ensure safety and equality.

- **Canteen Run by Women:** The University's canteen is operated by women, promoting economic empowerment and entrepreneurial skills among female staff.

5. Evidence of Success:

- **Rising Admissions and Retention:** Sanskriti University has experienced a notable increase in female admissions over the past five years, reflecting the growing confidence and trust among female students in the institution’s commitment to their empowerment and development. The percentage of female admissions has steadily climbed from 33% in the academic year 2018-19 to 44% in 2022-23. This upward trend underscores the effectiveness of the university's initiatives aimed at making higher education more accessible and appealing to women. Additionally, the recruitment of female faculty members has also seen a significant rise, indicative of the university’s dedication to creating an inclusive and supportive work environment. The retention rate of female faculty has similarly improved, starting at 20% in 2018-19 to 29% in 2022-23. This increase in both the recruitment and retention of female faculty members highlights the university’s commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive atmosphere that not only attracts but also retains talented women in academia. These trends collectively demonstrate Sanskriti University’s success in promoting gender equality and empowering women within its academic community.

Female Admissions and Faculty Retention at Sanskriti University

Academic Year	Female Admissions (%)	Female Faculty Retention (%)
2018-19	33%	20%
2019-20	35%	23%
2020-21	38%	24%

Academic Year	Female Admissions (%)	Female Faculty Retention (%)
2021-22	40%	26%
2022-23	44%	29%

This table illustrates the rising trends in female admissions and faculty retention at Sanskriti University, highlighting the institution's commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women in both student and faculty populations.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

- **Resource Persons:** Difficulty in securing suitable resource persons for events due to their pre-occupation with other organizations.
- **Mobilization Challenges:** Challenges in mobilizing students and faculty for various competitions, webinars, special lectures, and seminars due to academic commitments.
- **Logistics Issues:** Transportation and logistics issues, particularly in rural areas, as many resource persons hesitate to come to the university due to the non-availability of transport and other logistics.
- **COVID-19 Restrictions:** Organizing awareness programs in villages during the COVID-19 period was challenging due to restrictions and health concerns.

7. Notes: Best Practices for Other Institutions:

- Establish internal committees and reservation policies to support women empowerment.
- Implement fee exemption schemes and job reservations for women.
- Promote self-help groups and provide vocational training opportunities for economic empowerment.
- Collaborate with government agencies and NGOs to enhance awareness and support services for women.
- Introduce health and wellness programs to ensure the well-being of female students and staff.

Conclusion: Sanskriti University's commitment to women empowerment has led to the successful implementation of various initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and inclusion. These practices serve as a model for other educational institutions to emulate, highlighting the importance of continuous improvement and evidence-based strategies in promoting women's empowerment and overall well-being.