

Gender Equity Initiatives at St Xavier's College

Advancing Gender Equity and Empowerment at St. Xavier's College, Thumba

The Women's Studies Centre (WSC) at St. Xavier's College, Thumba, exemplifies the institution's unwavering commitment to gender equity and empowerment. Through its dynamic initiatives, the WSC seeks to address critical challenges faced by women, inspire community engagement, and foster a culture of inclusivity. These programs align seamlessly with the college's vision of empowering marginalized communities, nurturing holistic development, and creating a just and equitable society.

1. International Yoga Day Celebration: Women Empowerment through Yoga

The celebration of **International Yoga Day** on **June 21, 2023**, embodied the college's vision of promoting physical and mental well-being as a foundation for empowerment. Held at the **Stan Samy Auditorium**, the program showcased how yoga serves as a transformative tool for women to develop resilience, mindfulness, and self-confidence. By emphasizing the mental health benefits of yoga, the event highlighted its role in empowering women to overcome stress and societal challenges, fostering their overall growth. This initiative resonated with the college's broader goal of enabling individuals to lead balanced and fulfilling lives while contributing positively to society.

2. Workshop on "Shero Home Food"

The **Shero Home Food Workshop**, organized on **July 21, 2023**, was a hallmark of WSC's efforts to enhance women's economic empowerment. By equipping women with entrepreneurial skills and knowledge to transform their culinary talents into sustainable businesses, the program aligned with the college's mission of uplifting marginalized communities. The workshop also reflected the institution's dedication to fostering self-reliance and economic independence among women, particularly in coastal regions. By empowering participants to explore opportunities in the food industry, the workshop contributed to building a stronger, more resilient community.

3. Mental Awareness Program

Mental health is an essential aspect of personal and social well-being, and the **Mental Awareness Program**, held on **September 11, 2023**, tackled this critical issue head-on. In collaboration with **Jeevan Jothi**, a renowned mental health organization, the program created a safe and supportive environment for discussions on mental health challenges. The session equipped students with coping mechanisms and practical strategies to navigate mental health issues, thereby addressing a key aspect of holistic development. This initiative reinforced the college's vision of fostering individuals who are mentally strong and socially responsible, ensuring they can contribute meaningfully to their communities.

4. Awareness Program on Gender Equality

The **Awareness Program on Gender Equality**, conducted on **January 16, 2024**, underscored the importance of dismantling gender-based prejudices and fostering respect and fairness for all. Partnering with the **Department of Women and Child Development (WCD) of Kerala** and the **Kerala State Women's Development Corporation (KSWDC)**, the program educated participants about their rights and responsibilities in building an egalitarian society. The session aligned perfectly with the college's core value of promoting inclusivity and justice by encouraging students and faculty to challenge societal stereotypes and work toward a future where gender equality is a lived reality.

5. Awareness on Menstrual Cups and Menstrual Hygiene

Addressing a crucial yet often overlooked issue, the **Awareness Program on Menstrual Cups and Menstrual Hygiene**, held on **March 20, 2024**, was a significant step toward ensuring women's health and well-being. Conducted in collaboration with **SBI Pallithura Branch (RBO III)** as a CSR initiative, the program distributed **300 menstrual cups** while promoting sustainable and hygienic menstrual practices. By focusing on menstrual hygiene education, the event empowered women with knowledge and resources to make informed decisions about their health. This initiative also emphasized environmental sustainability, aligning with the college's mission to integrate ecological consciousness with community empowerment.

6. Fabric Painting Workshop

Art and creativity can be powerful tools for self-expression and empowerment, as demonstrated in the **Fabric Painting Workshop** held on **March 18, 2024**. This engaging session encouraged participants to explore their artistic talents while learning valuable skills in fabric painting. Beyond fostering creativity, the workshop served as a platform for women to build confidence and develop a sense of achievement, contributing to their personal and professional growth. This initiative echoed the college's vision of nurturing the talents of individuals and providing them with opportunities for self-discovery and development.

Alignment with the College's Vision

The Women's Studies Centre's activities reflect the holistic ideals of St. Xavier's College, Thumba, by addressing critical aspects of gender equity and empowerment. Each program is thoughtfully designed to align with the college's mission of serving marginalized communities, fostering inclusive growth, and promoting ecological and social justice.

Through its diverse initiatives, the WSC ensures that students and community members are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to challenge societal norms and

drive positive change. By addressing mental health, economic empowerment, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and artistic expression, the WSC exemplifies the college's commitment to creating a society where all individuals can thrive.