

A Report

on

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2020

Gendered Contours Of The Pandemic: Reinventing Public Policy And Leadership Transformation

Organized by

Policy Centre and Gender Lab of Miranda House, University of Delhi In collaboration with P.G. Department of Gender Studies and Sarala Devi Centre for Gender Research, Rama Devi Women's University

24th August-7th September 2020

Introduction

Policy Centre and Gender Lab, Miranda House, University of Delhi in collaboration with Department of Gender Studies and Sarala Devi Centre for Gender Research at Rama Devi Women's University organized 15 days Faculty Development Programme (FDP) on "**Gendered Contours of the Pandemic: Reinventing Public Policy and Leadership Transformation**" from **24th August to 7th September 2020**. The intended target of the FDP were faculty members working in a college / University (temporary/ contractual/ Adhoc/ regular/ permanent). It strived to delve deeper into the stated themes and provide an open platform for the participants to learn and imbibe some of these key issues related to gender and policy implementation during pandemic. The participants had a great opportunity to familiarize with the listed topics from both conceptual as well as empirical perspective. It marked the initiation of participatory knowledge dissemination between the two institutions who jointly ventured to bring out a holistic transformation in higher education.

Objective/Major theme

The 15 days Faculty Development Programme with a set of Key Note addresses and plenary /parallel sessions on each day had been designed to ensure enriching and learning experience for the participants by providing them with the contours of varied experiential learning and lived engagement both as individual and in group. A diverse panel of experts on Gender discourses, administrators, grassroots and local-self-government leaders successfully addressed the critical issues related to the emerging leadership during the COVID pandemic and the need for reinventing

public policy and their application for gender justice to realize long-term outcomes. The FDP also covered wide ranging sub themes related to the major theme throughout its sessions.

Subthemes

Subtheme I: Pandemic and Leadership

1. Feminist leadership and the pandemic: Dimension and Challenges
2. Leading from the front with agility and humility
3. Delivering through Diversity: An opportunity for structural policy transformation
4. Need for Transformational Gender leadership

Subtheme II: Pandemic and Policy

1. The Pandemic and Policy implementation
2. Gendered engagement in decision-making of the governance and policy making bodies
3. COVID-19: How leaders can create a new and better normal for protecting the rights of women and girls, inclusive policy and collective wellbeing.
4. Call for a 'feminist' COVID-19 policy and economic agenda.

Subtheme III: Pandemic and Health Concerns

1. Democratizing public health delivery System and Gender Diverse Community Engagement in a long term
2. Access to sexual and reproductive health services during COVID-19
3. Engagement with transgender's rights, mental health, happiness and wellbeing.

Subtheme IV: Pandemic and Economic Concerns

1. Allocation of budget and investment in multidisciplinary research negotiating with gender during and post pandemic.
2. Equality in the post-pandemic era: gender, agriculture and food security in the marginalized communities and extreme climatic region.
3. Leading women-owned microenterprises and business innovation capabilities
4. Matters concerning Gender equality in COVID-19 specially the response to disruption of livelihood, loss of wages and exercise of women's rights

5. Work-family balance

Subtheme V: Pandemic and Digital Education

1. How is the COVID-19 crisis reshaping digital transformation agendas?
2. Digital mode of education and evaluation for unlocking new frontiers

Subtheme VI: Pandemic and Inclusivity

1. Narratives of gendered impact of migration during COVID-19 Global Pandemic
2. Creating lasting impact: women-led localized responses to COVID -19
3. Need for an intersectional approach (gender, transgender, women with distress and disability) to a pandemic? Gender disaggregated data and counter narratives
4. Support mechanism to arrest gender-based violence during COVID-19

Format

The FDP featured one keynote session everyday along with one plenary or two parallel sessions. It kicked started with an inaugural ceremony culminating with a valedictory and a concluding ceremony hosted by the two institutions respectively. There were 10 keynote sessions and 12 plenary/parallel sessions, 04 virtual field visits, 10 group and 02 individual presentations made by the faculty participants. Each session ended with an open discussion with and interventions by the participants. They also submitted their feedback at the end of each session and added their insightful remarks for the same. The participants were duly informed about each session via a WhatsApp group as well as regularly intimated via email.

Sessions' report

DAY 1: Inaugural Ceremony on 24.08.2020

The inaugural ceremony opened with the welcome address and a brief introduction to the FDP shared by **Dr. Jyotirmayee Acharya, Professor and Head, Department of Gender Studies and Sarala Devi Centre for Gender Research, Rama Devi Women's University**. She briefly introduced the theme and subtheme of the programme to be deliberated upon by the distinguished set of panelists throughout. She highlighted the objectives and expectations of the same. In her welcome address, **Dr. Hena Singh, Coordinator, Policy Centre and Gender Lab of Miranda**

House expressed her delight in organising such a fruitful programme which had taken the shape of a resolution to bring about productive recapitulation of gender sensitive areas. She briefed about the contribution and collaboration of Policy Centre and Gender Lab of Miranda House in the dissemination of diverse range of knowledge and training throughout the pandemic which the FDP is one of a kind. She also defined the objectives of the programme which were constructed keeping in mind the pandemic which had widened the gap existing in gender further exposing vulnerabilities of several kinds. **Dr. Bijayalaxmi Nanda, Acting principal, Miranda House** expressed her delight at joining hands with a regional university working for women's education and to build bridges and be a part of the learning endeavour. She also expressed her sincere gratitude for the programme to have taken shape out of the MoU signed between Miranda House and Ramadevi women's University and formally welcomed the esteemed guests for the ceremony. She stated that the programme endeavors to address the intersections of gender in the society. Quoting Gayatri Spivak's notion of strategic essentialism she highlighted the need to come together despite having different ways of dealing and opinions. In her opening remarks **Dr. Madhusmita Pati, Dean , Humanities & Social sciences, RDWU** strongly endorsed the conceptual framework for the FDP given the pandemic we are living in. The underpinning structures of gender gap have resurfaced in the current times due to the intersecting crisis. Keeping this in mind the FDP provides a forum for more discussions and explorations which may be needed. In his message to participants, **Prof. Balram Pani, Dean, University of Delhi** was equally elated at the initiative taken by Miranda House together with Ramadevi women's University in organizing this FDP which is crucial for the upgradation of faculty members all over the country despite physical restrictions and congratulated the entire team. He also wished a successful completion of the event in achieving its well thought out objective. In his address, **Prof. P. C. Joshi, Honorable Pro VC, University of Delhi** applauded the initiative taken by Miranda House, Policy Centre and Gender Lab in collaboration with RDWU in taking up a challenging but most relevant theme for the FDP. Retracing his own connections with Odisha , Sir reasserted the need to address the suffering of women during crisis and disaster whenever it has occurred. He further stressed the importance of having an effective policy implementation in this regard thus cementing the position of this Faculty Development Program in sensitizing others beyond the premises of the event. In her opening remarks, **Prof. Padmaja Mishra, honourable VC, RDWU** urged the beneficiaries of this FDP to understand the concept from a holistic point of view. No crisis should

be wasted rather it should be converted to an opportunity for learning. Since it affected every category, it also brought out the ways in which different sections suffered differently. So the implications must be clearly realized in the view of those vulnerabilities. Critical skills of designing correct policy, collecting ground reality, ways to evaluate the impacts must all be kept in mind. The keynote speaker of the day, **Prof. Asha Hans, President, Sansriti** opened her speech with a reflection on the new normal which is being perceived differently these days. The pandemic has challenged the hierarchical way of thinking, the way we deal with insecurity, and the way we work. It has created more hostile environment for women in particular whether in family or those working on daily wages, the migrant workers etc. She referred to the Disaster Management Act of 2005 and the Epidemic Diseases Act of 1897. It is the federation of government policy which makes a huge impact. The plight of the migrant workers during the pandemic was a reality check for such systems both at the state as well as central level. She also highlighted the three major concerns that is inequality in wealth distribution, the collapse of informal economy, and the fault lines of the society, they all have brought to light the pre existing gaps of gender inequality. She also stated how the media has also been not upto the mark when it comes to giving it coverage and considerable attention to such issues. Violence in public and private spaces, online community structure and plight of the migrant workers, economy of health remained other concerns which she addressed in her presentation. Though the chances of recovery looks bleak at the moment there are certain macro issues that needs to be dealt with care and concern and one can negotiate with it tactically. Several positive could also be recognized during the situation which she spelled out too. In an age of Globalization for the first time perhaps we realized the importance of local. The session ended with the vote of thanks offered by **Dr. Aliva Mohanty, Assistant Professor, Department of Gender Studies, RDWU.**

DAY 2: 25.08.2020

Subtheme I: Pandemic and Leadership

keynote Session

The keynote speaker for the day was **Dr. Avantika Banerjee, Deputy Chief (Compliance) , New York.** She delivered her talk on “Converting Challenges into Opportunity: A Real world Narrative”. The narratives were based on her own life. She highlighted the theory v/s personal

space, the importance of gendered cultural nuance, desensitization, role models and representation. She further stated that anything that creates hindrance in achievement is not healthy; so, we need to promote a culture where women stand for each other. Our society teaches women to remain anonymous and work behind the scene. She further highlighted how expectation and limitations contribute towards gender gap, how to push boundaries and implicit limits and regulate our own capacity voluntarily. She spoke about competency likeability dilemma where women are judged and labelled. Focusing on masculine and feminine stereotypical traits, she conveyed how the society differentiates between male and female. For her, bias leads to unconscious inequality. There should be equality in workplace, law and democracy. Women should work in active collaboration while engaging and participating together. Major focus should be on communication and transparency, women standing with each other, incremental changes and investing in relationship.

Plenary session

Dr. Ananta Kumar Giri, Professor at the Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai, India was the first resource person for the session. He spoke on “Corona Presents and the challenges of Trauma, Transformation and Creative Leadership”. He gave a nuanced explanation of the viral epidemic. In his view, a pandemic is basically a matter of health and diseases. We need to focus on the multiple unfoldment of V’s- Virus, Vaccine, Veracity and Victory. Other than that leadership and empathy are key skills that need to be fostered to bring about unity and solidarity. He explained the topic by giving various indigenous and international examples that made the deliberation even more impactful. In the time of COVID-19, Prof Giri highlighted the need for the creation of a kind of inter-multi-trans disciplinary knowledge-base for effective transformation and creative leadership.

Dr Jyotirmayee Acharya, Professor and Head in the Dept of Gender Studies, Rama Devi Women’s University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha was the next resource person to deliberate upon the stated subtheme. Prof. Acharya presented her deliberations on “Transformational Leadership”. She focused on the awareness of self as a part of larger whole in the present moment through generalization and cultural legacy. Her talk stressed on understanding, gender sensitization, and stereotypical image of leadership. She also highlighted the psychosexual construct of greater leaders (masculine and feminine traits) along with organization demand in the diverse and

changing workplace. She further added how policy decision in an organization is essential for minimizing gendered discrimination, gendered increased awareness, pyramid of management position, equal education and opportunity.

DAY 3: 26.08.2020

Subtheme II: Pandemic and Policy

Keynote Session

Ms. Indrani Mazumdar, Former Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi was the keynote speaker for day 3. She addressed the participants on the topic "In the Shadow of Pandemic: Of Policies, Politics and Gender." In her speech she highlighted the issues of Social safety net, access to health services for the development of migrant women and the role of 3 D's i.e. Diversity, Development and Democracy which are important for formulation of gender responsive policy. Significance of SHG bank linkage programme will strengthen the economic sustainability of lower socio economic group of women, Visibility of women in employment along with the ground realities of Adivashi Women Migrant were some of the most important issues raised by her. She also stressed on the need for the reformulation of policy measure for them since poor understanding of gender disaggregated data affects the proper designing of gender responsive policy formulation. So it is high time for one and all to think over the incorporation of gender equality at the policy making level of our country .

Parallel Session I

Shri IAS Niten Chandra, Secretary, Central Information Commission, Govt. of Odisha expressed his joy to be a part of the event. He applauded the initiative of collaboration which in turn shows the concern to upgrade the standard. He attempted to give a national perspective and policy response to the pandemic. Looking at the statistics we find that all over India in just a short span of time, India saw large casualty. The rapidity with which the govt has responded to this calamity is praiseworthy. Under the National disaster management act all the decision have been taken who looked at different areas to deal with. The ministry of health and the ministry of home affairs is taking lead in issuing guidelines, along with ministry of women and child development. Role of the latter was further highlighted in his presentation . The gradual relaxation in lockdown

was imposed. Building awareness among people remained the primary concern for the ministry other than taking care of other requirements. IEC campaign being one of them. The ministry of women and child development came out with a number of instructions. The National Commission Of Women have taken cognizance for migrant women workers too. It is also operating in one stop centers in collaboration with other central bodies issuing helpline numbers for the needy. Jan Aushadi Sugham app is made available by the ministry of chemical fertilizers to set up more than 6200 Jan Aushadi Kendras in the nation. Its main purpose is to indicate the location of such kendras which supply the reproductive and sexual protection product for women.

Dr. Satish Agnihotri, Professor, Emeritus, IIT, Mumbai, Retired Secretary to Govt. of India spoke on both bureaucratic and public policy in pandemic. He critiqued cooperative federalism and gave comparative analysis of several neighboring states in terms of steps taken to tackle the crisis. We are staring at a scenario where we have rising number of cases. The relative velocity between different countries and India are worrisome. A crisis where the causes are uncertain it is difficult to have a radical evidence based decision. The weaker is more vulnerable. It is here that he posed a question – Was the implementation of decision sensitive to gender, location etc? low case areas and high case areas need different policies and strategies. It may even require a deeper reshuffling of law and order. He gave statistical data between the neighboring states of Odisha and Kerala showing the resource allocation in disaster. The coping strategy must be looked at from the perspective of two downturn- health downturn and economic downturn, which should be asking the question- are we gender sensitive and child sensitive? Both in letter and in spirit the strategies need to be implemented properly.

Dr. Astha Khatwani, Joint Secretary, WCD, Govt. of India highlighted two aspects were – policy for women and policy by women. It makes a lot of difference to have women as policy makers specially in the context of women related concerns . There is an element of empathy. She added her own anecdotes sharing the contours of the theme. Beti Padhao Beti Bachao was another milestone and a consistent support in this regard. It has lot of flexibility in its delivery at grassroot levels too. This has been sensitively designed. Cross cutting issues like maternity benefit act, wage, aanganwadi and its reaching out to the others is very crucial. There has been a clear reorientation in terms of communication and distribution in the virtual world. However, there is a gap between

what should be done and what is doable which needs to be taken care of for further implementation of policies.

Parallel Session II

Prof. Swarnamayee Tripathy, Department of Public Administration, Utkal University, Vani Vihar was the first resource person of the plenary session. Prof. Swarnamayee Tripathy focused on the topic “Covid-19, public policy and women”. She stressed on different things like impact of pandemic on children’s education, families and communities, contours of public policy during covid-19, specially the impact of pandemic on women pertaining to domestic violence, inevitable job-loss for women, increasing care work and insufficient reproductive health care. She also focused on gender contours of the public policy, women’s participation in policy making as a goal, and gender issues and public policy.

Dr. Namrata Singh, Teacher-in Charge, Department of Political Science, Miranda House was the second resource person for the session. Dr. Namrata Singh’s topic for presentation was “Gender and Disaster: Policy Interventions”. She spoke about impact of disaster on women. Disaster whether man made or natural do not discriminate, but humans do. Socio economic conditions often lead to different impact on even demographically and geographically similar communities. And often the intensity of the impact is inevitably more on vulnerable groups especially so for women. Dr. Singh highlighted that disasters reinforce, perpetuate and increase gender inequality, making bad situations worse for women. As a 2007 study conducted by London School of Economic shows, taken a sample of up to 141 countries over the period 1981 to 2002, natural disasters and their subsequent impact, on average, kill more women than men or kill women at an earlier age than men related to women’s lower socio-economic status (Neumayer and Plümper, 2007). Linking it to the current covid disaster and its gendered impact in India Dr. Singh quoted there is a war in our homes — more than 8,500 women were killed by their spouses and their family member and 1,03,272 cases of domestic violence were reported in 2018 (NCRB 2018). Domestic violence is a reality that existed prior to COVID-19, and has intensified as a result of the lockdown, because women are locked in with their abusers 24x7, their housework and care work responsibilities have increased and all the stress and tensions are released on women,” said Anuradha Kapoor, Director of Swayam, an NGO in Kolkata. Meanwhile, the potential contributions that women can offer to the disaster risk reduction imperative around the world are

often overlooked and female leadership in building community resilience to disasters is frequently disregarded. The way forward is to understanding and addressing the different needs of men and women in Disaster Risk Management and promoting women's empowerment for broader resilience strengthening and changing approach to disaster management, disaster management structure in India and National disaster policy. She highlighted the significance of reformulating gender responsive disaster management policy.

DAY 4 : 27.08.2020

Subtheme III: Pandemic and Health Concerns

Keynote Session

Prof. (Dr.) Kailash Chandra Mishra, VC, Sri Sri University, Director, Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management, Delhi, Academic Coordinator, S P Jain Institute of Management and Research was the keynote speaker of the day. He spoke about the tidal money being made in the Western countries, Shrinking of employment and consumption of resources . There is thus a supply shift and a looming danger of a vicious circle arises too. Many well managed countries are run by women. Where as some are only run for economic benefits. To address some of the loopholes is to enable a sort of rethinking strategy or a think tank process where people reflect back on the failed strategies. Government and banks need to work in such a way which allows economic growth and pace of development. Highlighting the facts as provided by several outlets he indicated that there has been heavy loss of salaried jobs. A survey by a govt sponsored organisation as discussed by him showed that in India around 47% of population work for the total population that is a dependent ratio of a double rate or 2+. Out of this 47% around 23% are from organised sector. Some are self employed. Rest are casual labour who are also the most vulnerable section. Hence the govt must ensure that the rest 75% must be kept at sustenance level to begin with. Strategic spending needs to be considered along with the patterns of recovery from the Pandemic

Plenary session

Dr. Sruti Mohaptra, Founder & Chief Executive of Swabhiman spoke on “Pandemic and Health Concerns of Women” and stressed on the fact that women are at a greater risk of the impact

of pandemics like Covid19. Her presentation was revolved around the unmet health concerns of general women and women with disabilities found their struggles exacerbated during the COVID pandemic. She made the point that inequities that were endemic before were heightened manifold due to lack of clear and accessible information and several barriers to exercise their agency, livelihoods, nutrition, education with severe impact on their mental health and emotional well-being.

Prof. Sanghmitra S. Acharya, Professor, Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health, School of Social Sciences, JNU presented on “Women of Substance- Fighting the Shadow of Pandemic” and remarked that women are affected by the pandemic in more than one way in their varied roles. As a spouse, they have experienced a 50% hike in spousal violence as evident from the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) during the lockdown period. As mothers of school-going children, they are shouldering the additional burden of ensuring the ‘learning time’ in front of the screen. The so-called family time during the lockdown has added additional work for those engaged in gainful employment. She articulated her view that most countries including ours did not pay any heed to the WHO warning regarding the pandemic. In our case, by the time we took serious cognizance, the frontline workers were transformed into ‘warriors’, albeit without the ‘armaments’.

Prof. Purendra Prasad, Head, Department of Sociology, University of Hyderabad, the third resource person for the day made the point that despite significant advances in medical knowledge and profession in India, the health care scenario continues to present exacerbated inequality, discrimination, and inaccessibility to a large majority of people. His presentation on “Democratizing Health Care in India: Reflections on Gender Diverse Community Engagement” emphasized that a large proportion of India’s poor more particularly women have very little access to basic health care. Access is not merely about physical infrastructure and resource availability but it is to do with social and political concerns. Discrimination against women, lower classes, and caste groups in health care services is a common example of durable inequality in social access. Prof. Prasad pointed towards the fact that the history of health care provides insights into how systems of categorical inequalities get reproduced consistently in India. Durable inequality depends heavily on the institutionalization of categorical pairs such as super-specialists/physicians, doctors/nurses, paramedical/ASHAs.

DAY 5 : 28.08.2020

Subtheme IV: Pandemic and Economic Concern

Keynote Session

Dr Bijayalaxmi Nanda, Acting Principal, Miranda House was the keynote speaker for day 4. Her presentation was titled “How to safeguard the Health and Rights of women and girls : the pandemic impact”. Revisiting of the feminist principles remain the underlying pertinent requirement when one looks at the public-private dichotomy, equality difference, sexual division of labor, intersectionality, and gender beyond binaries. She also explained the impact assessment ranging from social, economic, political & cultural factors and Safety net shrinking. She went on to highlight how women in different roles and walk of life face certain challenges such as for Women at home – Productive and Reproductive labour; Women working from home- traditional and contemporary; Women and food security: eat the last and eat the least; Women and girls : sexual and reproductive health; Women in the frontline; Women and girls: education and employability; Women in hospitality; Women as migrants. She further suggested some of the measures to ensure sustainable transformation and emancipation for the same. This included a reasonable policy planning and advocacy, leveraging education – public health awareness for adolescent girls, strengthening of the ICDS Systems , monitoring of health deliverables to women and girls, emphasis on employability and support systems for women suffering from domestic violence, emphasis on laws associated with protection of women : Child marriage, domestic violence and sexual harassment at workplace. She accentuated the need for research in higher education bringing gender issues into the mainstream research concerns and bringing more women as researchers. Supporting the gender research for a greater cause, Policy implications and advocacy, Relying on social dialogue and participatory research, Emphasis on rigor in research methodology while negotiating on oral narratives, case studies and group discussion will all help in retrieving the voices of women and girls. Research on declining child sex ratio and violence and some of its preliminary findings show the intensification of son preference , Invisibility of the crime of gender biased sex selection, Laxity on unethical medical practice, Sex-selective abortion , Child marriage , Gender discrimination and violence. This goes a long way to call for the inclusion of the integral link between girl-child and women and the need for strategic essentialism as also supported by Syncretic feminism.

Parallel Session 1

Dr. Annapurna Devi Pandey, Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Santa Cruz spoke on the predicament of Indian immigrants especially H1-B workers and H-4 EAD workers during the Pandemic. She also brought out the interconnections between the migrant workers in India during the Pandemic. Based on her research Dr. Pandey highlighted the problems the H-4 visa holders have endured after moving to the United States: professional setbacks due to the loss of their careers back home; loss of their mobility and identity; and, above all, total economic and social dependence on their spouses. Dr. Pandey used case studies to make the participant understand the gravity of the perilous situation of the immigrants especially women (93%) due to the pandemic.

Dr. N. Neetha, Acting Director and Professor at the Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS), New Delhi was the next resource person who made a presentation on "Deepening of a Crisis in Women's Employment". She highlighted the trends and patterns of inclusion and exclusion in female employment across social groups. Based on data (NSS) there are glaring evidences of increasing social inequalities in female employment, alongside worsening gender-based segregations. The characteristic features of the structure of the female workforce in India were often highlighted as an increasing feminisation of the urban workforce (on account of increased work participation for urban women); feminisation of agriculture (on account of an increased share of women workers in the primary sector); decrease in secondary-sector employment; and an increase in tertiary-sector employment. Given this the employment question among women deserves critical attention. The pandemic has further aggravated the matter. The loss of jobs is bad for men but it is worse for women. The gender based inequality in employment is deepening and its impact will be highly detrimental to women. Dr. Neetha added that due to sharp economic and social differentiations more so during the pandemic under consideration, a nuanced understanding of the issue is warranted, and it can be possible only through intensive micro-level research.

Dr. Hena Singh, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Miranda House & Deputy Dean, Student Welfare, University of Delhi, Miranda House brought to the fore the positive judgment of the Supreme Courts order on coparcenary rights to women. This judgment is epochal because it brings to fore the progressive change in the attitude of the courts. It now appears

to be upholding principles of substantive justice for women both in theory and practice. The judgement reiterates the idea that women are born as equals, and that it is the patriarchal mindset and embedded customary practices and traditions that accord them an inferior status. The coparcenary rights are birthrights free from limitations imposed by the dates of any legal notifications. However, Dr. Singh pointed out that while the delivery of the judgement is one thing, its proper implementation quite another. Drawing examples from her own state, Bihar, Dr Singh pointed out there are areas where women are still addressed by their village names or more commonly as someone's wife. Family histories have conveniently wiped out any references to women, and what their lives were like, what became of them, and how they managed to survive in the absence of support from husbands and children. Thus, the path to true equality is still a mirage and the pandemic is making any step towards this a herculean task.

Parallel Session 2

Dr. Urmimala Das, Former, Director, Centre for Women's Studies, Berhampur University, Bhanja Vihar, Odisha delivered her talk on "Gender Equality matters in COVID-19 response to disruption of livelihood, loss of wages and exercise of women's rights". In her deliberation she highlighted the issues relating to the need for an understanding gender equality, significance of gender parity during covid-19, impact of covid-19 on work, income, livelihood of women and wage discrimination. This pandemic has created threat for workforce which affects their livelihood and sustainability and vulnerability of migrants, domestic helpers and frontline workers. So the role of government is highly important to provide economic support to the vulnerable group of the society.

Dr. C. Aruna Chinappan, Director, Centre for Women's Studies, Pondicherry University delivered her talk on "COVID-19 and Economic Impact: Where do Women stand?". In her deliberation she stressed on the issues like the impact of Covid-19 on employment, earnings, health and economy. It has also increased food insecurity and economic vulnerability. It also affects the informal sector of the economy, services, transport etc. It further affects the fundamental necessities of casual, self-employed workers, Dalits etc. So the strategic response should be carried out to deal with social, economic, health aspects of vulnerable and migrant population of our country.

DAY 6: 29.08.2020

Subtheme V: Pandemic and Digital Education

Keynote Session

Dr Vibhuti Patel, Former Professor, Advanced Centre for Women's Studies, School of Development Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai campus was the keynote speaker for the day. In her engaging presentation, she highlighted the best practices pertaining to digital education. The key dimensions as highlighted by her were communication, dialogue, technology, relief resources and need for appropriate policy. She further stated that as fewer people have access to online platform and are unable to continue education due to reverse negotiation, parents are getting young adolescent girls married instead of investing on their education. There are visible contemporary challenges in higher education for which a new formula should be implemented. She focused on the importance of psychological support and counselling to students, which is the need of the hour. She gave a nuanced explanation of how the major shift in educational system post pandemic has challenged 191 countries and 6 billion people overnight. She stated that every person has the right to education and online education should be made assessable and acceptable. Education is the most important matter in which investment is a fundamental necessity. Education is an entitlement and it enhances development and levels deprivation.

Plenary Session

Dr Sanghamitra Mohanty, Former president, Odisha Bigyan Academy and former Vice Chancellor of North Odisha University pointed out the concerns regarding the unplanned and rapid move to online learning -with no training, insufficient bandwidth, and little preparation. She further added on the demerits in absence of proper pedagogy and without concern for digital well-being and how it results in poor user experience and ultimately that is inconducive to sustained growth. Thus, it is obvious that the hidden transition from face-to-face to online teaching has come with major challenges and raised many concerns regarding the future of higher education. According to her, encouraging the educational system is the main challenge during the pandemic. Constant psychological comparison between past and future is making things vulnerable. Study from home is very important as the future generation depends on that. Acceptance and usage of the technology is essential to make things systematic everywhere. She elucidated with real life

experience sharing that now it is important to deal with the current situation effectively even though we know no human can be replaced by technology, but we need to focus on creative change in content and books by making them attractive. Also, the examination system needs to be remodelled along with pedagogical changes. She critically reflected on the National Education Policy by focusing on the application of artificial intelligence, need for good connectivity, technology-oriented teachers, multi-disciplinary research spreading across university and place, gender neutral course curriculum design, psychological impact of student and teacher, blended learning, health concern etc. For her, education should focus on Student Centric Education and Problem Centric Research.

Dr. Putul Sathe, Associate Professor in the Department of Research, Centre for Women's Studies, S.N.D.T. Women's University, Mumbai, in her presentation, highlighted how COVID-19 crisis is reshaping digital transformation agendas. Focusing on the UGC notification of April 2020 she stated online education is a long-term strategy as 25-40% of syllabus will be completed online, E-Resources will be provided. She further elaborated on historical background focusing on Liberalization-Privatization-Globalization linkage, education as a right unlike other services, and completely free and high-quality education to be provided by state as answer to challenges faced by information Revolution. She also focused on enabling document- creation of open and distance education to meet the expanding demands in the higher education sector, creating of ICT infrastructure and ICT planned pedagogy, creating of online resources to cater large number of students and learners with special needs. Further, digital education uses innovative tools and technologies referred to as TEL – Technology Enhanced Learning, Blended and Online Learning. She concluded by saying that we need to focus on transformative inclusive pedagogy and not merely on a tech-savvy education.

Dr Sarita Supkar, Reader in the Dept of Economics, Rama Devi Women's University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, in her extensive and timely deliberation, highlighted the benefits of digital learning. Her focus areas were flexibility, offering wide selection of programmes, enabler of teaching and learning from anywhere in the world, offering customised learning experience and presentation of more equitable participation. She further highlighted the Digital Education in Indian Context which covered the current scenario when everyone is putting in effort for digital education through various platforms, and the challenges faced in the traditional education system

which included: outdated teaching method, shortage of teachers, inadequate student teacher ratio and insufficient teaching resource. Digital education, for her, also had challenges which included scarcity of power supply in rural areas, lack of internet service to name a few. She emphasised on Blended Learning which involved both instructors and learners, provides a road map and proficient way of teaching learning. Even though online teaching cannot be replaced by physical classroom entirely but plays a major role as accessories to classroom teaching and compliment that space. Gross investment in education sector for enhanced capacity building measures for teachers and creating technical infrastructure for online education must be increased. She finally added that the new age education system is preparing itself to the learning needs and challenges of both teachers and students. In short online teaching method could be seen as a close substitute for classroom teaching where as in the long run it could compliment and promote socially inclusive space for learning.

Dr Bikram Keshari Mishra, Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology in Ravenshaw University, Odisha added an interrogative approach to the discourse on pandemic and digital education. By quoting Max Weber, Dr. Mishra Pointed out it is now a dispute between formal rationality and practical rationality while talking about digital mode. Dr. Mishra addressed the question if the online mode only a substitute for offline from multiple dimensions. To him whatever digital mode we may take is just a temporary solution. Nothing can replace the autonomous agency called a teacher. He also pointed out on the effectiveness of digital education for students with differing IQs and differing cognitive standards. In a very thought-provoking way by giving various grassroot examples Dr. Mishra expressed his concern over its inclusivity and making virtual mode a norm without ensuring that every student is equipped with a much-needed digital infrastructure.

DAY 7: 30.08.2020

The day began with an open discussion cum interactive session between the representative organizers from both the institutions and the faculty participants. The major areas of discussion and clarifications were concerning the topics for the faculty presentation to be held, group division criteria and assessment of the same. The participants came up with their requests and doubts and it was satisfactorily addressed by **Dr. Hena Singh**, coordinator, Policy Centre and Gender Lab,

Miranda House and **Dr. Jyotirmayee Acharya**, Head, Department of gender studies, Ramadevi Women's University.

Subtheme VI: Pandemic And Inclusivity

Parallel Session:1

Dr. Aliva Mohanty, Associate Professor , Department of Gender Studies , Rama Devi Women's University remarked in her presentation titled “Women Migrant Workers: Continued Challenges During COVID-19 Pandemic” that around 8.5 million women migrant domestic workers on insecure contracts are facing income loss and much greater risks of abuse and exploitation, particularly those who cannot return home owing to travel bans and border controls. Dr. Mohanty also emphasized the importance of Psycho-Social Support to the Women Migrant Workers. Thus, there is a need to remind them that they have made their place with their efforts, acquired the trust of their employer, sent remittances to their families, and therefore deserve all respect. Make them realize their importance in the community and appreciate their contributions to society.

Dr. Satyapriya Rout, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology , University of Hyderabad opened his presentation on “Gender Inclusive Pandemic Preparedness and Response: Women-led localized responses to Covid-19” by quoting Charles Hummel, President of Barrington College, Rhode Island, USA from a booklet titled *Tyranny of the Urgent*, which has emerged as a business classic and popular guide to time management and productivity. Hummel argued that there is a tension between urgent things and things that are perceived to be important, and most often, we prioritize the urgent. Our greatest danger is letting the urgent things crowd out the important. The current situations of ‘gender concerns in Covid-19 pandemic’ is not entirely unsimilar from the anecdotal reference made by Hummel. Dr. Satyapriya Rout concluded his presentation by raising pertinent questions such as: Does the pandemic response consider the differing roles and lived experiences of men and women? Do the policy responses to Covid-19 aim at maintaining the status quo or promoting a gender transformation?

Dr. Skylab Sahu, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Miranda House discussed the socio-economic status of sex workers, the discrimination, stigma, and invisibility faced by the sex workers in India in her presentation on “Invisible Identity and Exclusion: The

Corona Pandemic and Sex Workers in two Mega Cities of India”. She has highlighted the susceptibility faced by sex workers during the pre-and post-COVID-19 period. Dr. Skylab Sahu’s presentation was based on both secondary and primary data analysis of two cities i.e., Bangalore and Kolkata. Dr. Skylab Sahu concluded her presentation by remarking that sex workers have been adversely impacted by the Coronavirus, most of them could not get any customer and live in penury in wants of relief and support during the pandemic.

Parallel Session 2

Dr. Bidyut Mohanty, Head, Women’s Studies, Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi in her presentation argued that the onset of covid has created several crises namely, economic ,political social as well as cultural including that of the disease itself. The prevailing model of market economy complicated the situation. The mindless declaration of lock down without giving any warning created havoc in the cities. The factories, industries closed immediately leaving the migrants to run helter and skelter. They wanted to come back to their own villages but there were no transport facilities nor the companies and the contractors paid them any money. The migrants started coming on foot. En route the communities got organized and extended all types of help. In this situation women migrants in general and those of belonging to marginal sections of the society suffered most in terms of livelihood, loss of earning, burden of care economy neglecting their own health, last but not the least their dignity. On the other hand, the inhabitants of the certain section of the tribal society become insulated from the virus because of their eating and living habits which does not create any imbalance in the Nature. From this it is inferred that the present market driven model has led to the emergence of the covid and created several other crises. The magnitude of inequality in all respect has accentuated. Hence, we argue that if a locally designed sustainable model of development could be formed where the villagers decide how to best use their resources, what to produce and distribute equitably, storing for the future and finally selling the surplus in the market. In this case the market does not dominate but is made to serve the interests of the local people. That can be the fundamental basis of an inclusive system. In this, women play the role of the agency rather than objects. Thus women could achieve the dignity and honour since they the main repository of the traditional knowledge system, including medicine and food habits. That may explain why many tribal people were immune to Covid until they were exposed to the outsides. Covid compels us , particularly women to think boldly about alternatives.

Anita Ghai, Professor, School of Human Studies, Ambedkar University, elaborated on Disability- the discourse as invisibilised space with the people with disability as invisibilised too during this pandemic. New forms of discrimination have emerged related to the access to online mediums, access to health care, lack of data on what is the impact on disabled people, new forms of violence, access to relief funds. Other neglected category is caregiver of disabled which are mostly women without support and resources. She emphasized on the need to create and acknowledge the epistemology of disability discourse as knowledge discourse and redefine some key concepts in social sciences. One can also study the impact of Govt. responses and policies like online education or Open book examinations on people with disability to evaluate how useful it has been to them, whether they have been able to avail this. We must also pay attention on providing access to alternative options and the need for special provisions. She summed up her presentation by reiterating the importance of providing visibility to the disability discourse in order to understand structures of oppression and multiple forms of discrimination which have been normalized. Need to expand the discourse on citizenship to make it more inclusive and expansive opening up new spaces for marginalized like disabled people n more so disabled women.

DAY 8: 31.08.2020

Subtheme VI: Pandemic And Inclusivity

keynote Session

Prof. Mary John, Centre for Women's Development Studies, New Delhi made a nuanced explanation of the women and the pandemic and its intersectionality with the physical space, gender and power relationship. She pointed out three vectors. Firstly the paradox persuasiveness of rape from known .According to NCRB data 98% of rape victims knew their perpetrators. The Nirbhaya incident like a milestone has gravitated the nature of violence against women in the Indian society. The lock down situation leads to a very disadvantageous physical space for women. Across the world the rising data of domestic violence is clear marker of this limitation. Secondly, according to Prof. John a positive vector was the statistical proof of young women as part of higher education where inequalities have been narrowing especially in the context of Delhi University. However as third vector she pointed out that this positive parity in higher education is not reflected in employment sector. The disparity is even more in urban areas in comparison to rural area. Two

major sector of employment in urban area were the domestic workers and primary school teaching. The pandemic will further reinforce these fault lines. Despite the fact that women are not a homogenous group, in locked down pandemic there has been a disproportionate increase of women's work at home across the world. However, the lockdown has also changed the gender power relationship within families wherein men are also sharing the responsibility of household chores and looking after children. As far the state's role in pandemic was concerned she pointed out that it requires a strong state. Authoritarianism is the necessary response to deal with pandemic and its ensuing policies. Pandemic has and will further aggravate the multiple fault lines and state and policy will have to play more positive role to bridge these chasms and to bring genuine change.

Plenary Session

Prof. Aparna Rayaprol, Department of Sociology, University of Hyderabad began with an example to supplement her ideas on home, homelessness and migration. Woman with a child crossing a border complex and imbedded within the crisis exacerbated by the cause of disaster compelled her to ask question if physical distancing is for the privileged alone. Are we talking about class, community and the marginality when one thinks about inclusivity? Pandemic is exclusive. On the premise of medical health care accessible via online mode which helps the privileged class it becomes more imperative to understand and seek inclusivity. A woman working as care giver and migrant has to go to work and deal with the issues of the vulnerable individuals. Frontline workers who are female are often exposed to abusive home environment. She can't afford to stay home. There are several other stratified issues which make invisible visible some of these gender studies. Issue of institutions asking everyone to go home, the public private divide and patriarchy has all contributed in the same. She also highlighted the issues of exclusion of a student in pandemic and eventual dependency on data access. Teachers are also struggling with the loss of classroom spaces. Othering of people, race and gender are constantly in play. WFH: work from home has posed new challenges for women sharing the house work too not having enough space or emotional and mental distancing. Domestic violence is exacerbating.

Prof. Rukmini Sen, Professor and Director, Centre for Publishing and Professor, School of Liberal studies, Ambedkar University elaborated on some of the crucial concepts in continuation of the pandemic discourse, to begin with she analyzed the concept of Home "stay home, stay

safe” or do gaj ki doori. Referring to the March advisory 2020 released by govt. she countered this concept both in terminology and imagination. Home becomes a site of tension itself. She touched upon the South Asian feminist discourse related to domestic work and gendered division of labor. Referring to Betty Friedan and Vibhuti Patel she discussed the roles performed in home who may be doing all the work at home doing care and nurturing work but that very space also became prime site for employment work. All had gendered ramifications. With school work there is also a substantial increased care work for female academics. Women perform 9.8 percent care work than men in India and the precarity of domestic workers is even worse. Pay related nurses and ASHA workers have all gone to tackle the blurring zones of public and the private space. Pandemic has given space for more engendering discussion of pandemic highlighting the need to recognize the value of unpaid care work and household work. There has been a twofold increase in complaints filed against violence since the lockdown as also reported by NCW. There is a steady rise in concerns on sustained restraints on mobility. Leadership becomes all the more important with female leaders, in this context, emerging as a modern sultana in modern days. Compassion care and meticulous preparedness remains key factor in female leadership in this unforeseen situation. Protocols based on the participation and preparedness can go a long way .These concepts and framework can be included in the way we pedagogically deal with pandemic.

Prof. Nupur Ray, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Kamla Nehru College, Delhi University had focused on some of the major considerations surrounding women at disadvantage in all sectors as an impact of pandemic. She reiterates the question if this pandemic is patriarchal in the way it is operating in the structures of power. The intersectionality perspective has given tools in a community which remains on corner that is sex workers further pushed the discourse towards a key issue of what bodies matter and which lives matter more. Lot of meta narratives are coming through the current dismantling of ideas and binaries. Some of these need to be revoked, invoked and debated upon. Substantive idea of equality, justice, freedom being one of them. One needs to look at them through a lens of gender justice. She referred to Amartya Sen’s *Capability Approach*, and John Rawls’ *A Spirit of Justice*. Capabilities approach which defines human development. Nussbaum went on to theorize a substantive approach of justice. Ten capabilities : life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination and thought; practical reason,; emotion; affiliation; other species; play; control over environment; political and material.

These all have contributed to compare and assess spaces of exclusion. She goes on to extend two robust arguments : a robust shift from male centric to women centric and women bodies and spaces as her own. To what extent we see a threat and violation specially no source of income for the sex workers. They face heavy loss of livelihood. At times, they can't even have access to pds, bank account, outside the ambit of govt relief programme. The idea of bodily integrity is also continually questioned in their vocation with them being tagged as the carrier of disease, vector of impurity, disease etc. violence and resistance. In a space of vulnerability they are not visible at all. To them this purity and impurity discourse continues at home with little concern over their bodily health.

DAY 9: 01.09.2020

Subtheme VI: Pandemic And Inclusivity

keynote Session

Prof. Krishna Menon, Professor and Dean, School of Human Studies, Ambedkar University was the keynote speaker for the day. According to her, during the pandemic we need to revisit and unravel political ideas to understand its impact on different groups and communities. She spoke about Diversity and Inclusion: gendered perspective which reveals the gaps, limitations and forms of exclusion. Pandemic has been a leveler but also a revealer. She believes that there is a strong need to include experiences of the marginalized and the displaced and a more inclusive response. Speaking about the migrant community she argued that in a way we are all migrants with the only difference being that of class difference and a small section is in formal labor. The pandemic showed no 'space' for migrants. we are in this together but in a similar way where discrimination and indifference exist and there is a need for empathetic response. She also covered the areas of work such as domestic work, care work, work from home all have merged and go unpaid and unnoticed. She firmly believes that we need to create more viable livelihood options. Social (physical) distancing has proved very difficult for socially isolated domestic helps, garbage collector and other daily wage earners. Even for big families living in smaller homes are bound to live in closer contacts thus running a high risk of the disease. When it comes to taking precautions such as washing hands regularly one is confounded with a very dire situation where the marginalized don't even have access to clean drinking water. These are some very real life problems with very little solutions in sight. Adding to this pathetic situation is the spread of

misleading piece of information regarding health responses where misinformation such as men are getting more affected and remain more vulnerable or the fatalities of covid fatal to men but in reality women are not getting tested enough and there is lack of ample and accurate information on their health check, transparency and policy response. Therefore, there remains a need for global solidarity and an understanding towards the interconnectedness of life. The rich need to help the lesser privileged and take more responsibility. we are all connected and should be responsible to each other. Gendered discourses and knowledge dissemination are again important in academia, governance and policy making should drive and engage gender sensitive policy responses for the same.

Parallel Session: 1

In her presentation on “Inclusivity in Livelihood Programmes: Rethinking Rural Women’s Livelihood in the Post COVID Scape” **Prof. Navaneeta Rath, Director, School of Women’s Studies Utkal University, Vani Vihar** pointed out that Structural arrangements and Cultural practices bring discrimination and burden to women. Women bear the disproportionate burden of COVID19. Livelihood issues are acute during the pandemic and necessitate to look beyond the pandemic in general and for women in particular. She drew attention to the Rural Women and Exiting Issues of Livelihood where she mentioned that out of a total of 11 million jobs that were lost in 2018, women lost 8.8 million jobs. There is a conspicuous missing of women in the workforce. De feminization of rural labor is recorded by various enumerating agencies. Women accounted for no more than 25% of the labor force in 2011-12, declining from 33% in 2005.

Dr. Sambit Mallick, Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences IIT, Guwahati in his lecture on “Pandemic, Technology and Social Exclusion” interrogated two stereotypical tendencies in not merely social sciences but also natural sciences: (a) technology predates modern science, and (b) technology is autonomous, unmediated by any other external influence molds society to fit its patterns. Dr. Mallick also highlighted that technologies should be evaluated not merely in terms of their productivity, efficiency, and environmental effects but also in terms of the ways in which they embody power and authority. Recent pandemic in the form of COVID-19 in more senses than one has reiterated this point.

Dr. Shikha Singh, Associate Professor, Dept. of Life Sciences, Rama Devi Women’s University, BBSR in her presentation on “Moms are not ok: COVID-19 and maternal health”

pointed to the fact that the Covid-19 crisis is disproportionately affecting women and girls. The health risks of mild and asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infected women face in pregnancy have not been investigated in detail. As of May 2020, there have been more than 5 million confirmed cases worldwide with daily confirmed cases around 90,000. Assuming that 80% of confirmed cases are asymptomatic and mildly symptomatic as recent reports suggested, there are already close to four million people worldwide in this category. Dr. Singh made the point that the significance of ACE2 in the infection of SARS-CoV-2 is clear. Current shreds of evidence are mainly derived from animal studies. Future studies may consider distinguishing the function of the soluble and membrane-bound form of ACE2 in the viral invasion, early and late stages of the infection.

Parallel Session 2

Dr. Upasana Mahanta, Global Jindal University, Delhi, carrying forward the keynote argument, built her arguments on the questions of law, citizenship, marginalization, impact of pandemic on vulnerable. The focus should be on the legal framework and social welfare framework and where to locate the migrant workers within this. The migration pattern in India saw steady rise from rural to urban as per the referred 2011-2016 data. Female migrant workers were worst affected by this. Due to marriage, education, covid etc. Increased feminization, gender impacts on migrant workers and a significant number of people migrating from rural to urban are women, almost 70 percent of them are women in these migrant though may not be migrating for the same reason. Economic reasons, employment, either employed in man skilled workers at construction sites, lockdown extension and sudden announcement led to sudden loss in unorganized and informal sector. The unemployment rate disproportionately affected the workers. Large number of women were also affected by the perception of being looked at as virus carriers particularly the health workers. Relief measures benefit were minimal for the stranded workers and migrant workers. However, there has been no systematic report on the migrant mortality crisis, humanitarian crisis or anything which raises questions on the efficacy of measures. She quoted two legislations of govt of India invoked in the wake of the pandemic- 1897 epidemic disease act, disaster management act 2005. It mandates several guidelines and relief as for the shelter's inert state movement, and social security . Two bills have also been passed. But only time can tell proper implementation of these bills and acts.

Anita Tagore, Kalindi College, University of Delhi presented on “Gender politics and the Courts in India: Problematizing the idea of inclusivity”. In her lecture she stated that law is neither apolitical nor parliamentary in nature. It also becomes exclusive at times. She dealt with the question of exclusion in judicial adjudication in the violence of past five month of the pandemic, second cases of inclusion during the same period. There has been a systematic eraser of judiciary and a conflicting pull between the idea of justice and fairness defining the contours of justice. Gender orthodoxy has always been a grey area adding a sense of discomfort on adjudication on the idea of violence against women. Misogyny runs in a sublime fashion in judicial matters. An oscillation happens between the procedural and substantive ideas. She also quoted three examples in this regard. A Judgement which came out in August 2020 by Madhya Pradesh court which granted bail to a rape convict on a peculiar premise. It had no reasonable rationality behind it. It diluted the perverseness of the crime. Also questions the judgement which made it negotiable. The court hence became a discursive side. June 2020 also had a judgement bringing forth a normative debate on how a rape victim must behave after being ravished. The unbecoming of an Indian woman and her virtue was questioned by Karnataka high court. The historical precedents were discussed. Regressive views on the same challenges the idea of victims’ right to live with dignity. Question of Indian womanhood and Judgements get misconstrued in the newspaper. Case about property rights of daughters and Mangalam vs Raju case were also the point of her argument where claiming property as co parcener is another contentious matter.

Shruti Mam, Miranda House, University of Delhi spoke on “Pandemic and its impact on Girl’s Education”. This pandemic is not just a public health challenge but has also disrupted social systems and protective structures internally and externally. UNESCO has estimated that globally 90% of students are out of school because of COVID19, Out of which 743 million are girls and more than 112 million are in developing countries. It is further predicted that lockdown and school closures will make 10 million girls out of school before the pandemic is over Challenges, consequences, complexities. Some of the efforts to minimize impact of Pandemic as highlighted by her were PM E -Vidya , Yukti web portal, Manodarpan, Educational TV channels. She further suggested the 3 Cs to fight Pandemic: courage, compassion, commitment. Educational budget needs to be protected and increased. Funds from “Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao” can be utilized, Free

skill trainings to be provided to girls, CSR Funds to be directed towards Pandemic response, From silence and submission to sensitivity and solidarity.

DAY 10: 02.09.2020

Keynote Session

Prof. Asha Sen, Department of English, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, USA was the distinguished keynote speaker for the day reflecting on the plight of the immigrants and give a nuanced speech from a comparative perspective. Her presentation had a lot to do with the US and the overlapping potential studies between other nations within the parameter of Gender Studies. She read out from a letter titled “Dearest Maa: letters from an immigrant daughter to her mother back home”, which was loosely based on her own personal life, published in a newspaper when she began her presentation on not only Covid-19 but also gender concerns among the immigrants. The letter spoke about the precarious conditions of international students who occupy a large number of those US based institutions and who were asked to go back home due to the Pandemic. Their predicament resonated a lot with other students who may have suffered. The trajectory of such immigrant students isn’t very easy and is often full of loss and disappointment. Given the huge anti immigrant sentiment in the US the letter tried to evoke a sense of empathy for the same. The letter very pungently portrayed the struggles, the pangs and desires of an immigrant student who was compelled to be separated from her family back in India and certain difficulties posed a challenge for her to secure a stable identity in the US too. The never ending waiting continues and she even gave a brief account of verisimilitude between the US immigrants and those of Mexican Labour section . Her letter received an overwhelming response by people from all walks of life, of every age group and vocation. She also expressed regret over the rising internalized racism prevalent not only in the US but South Asian countries too. Quoting black lives matter outrage in the US where violence is escalating at a startling rate is all very disheartening. She went on to refer to a book by Isabel Wilkerson which talks about race as caste. Immigration shows that race is a flexible indented category. When one talks about immigration policy one needs to understand that race has to be situated in history and looked at with all its contours. With the emerging transnational collaboration between India and the US there remains a ray of hope in these testing times and online medium stands a potential chance to be a prospective in joining the two. She briefly discussed an article brought out by the women’s studies consortium at her university in

Wisconsin which discussed about the logistics of survival and the difficulties before women in covid and which also advocates the need for an interdisciplinary training for organizing social change. She concluded with a brief account of how her university is reaching out to local communities and the parents, and students during these days to protect the more vulnerable and to enable an effective system of evaluation.

Virtual Field Visit

Both the field visits began with a video tour of the respective agency /organization showing the ground realities and anecdotes followed by the deliberations made by the representatives of both the places.

Padma Shri Sabarmatee Ecology Restoration and Biodiversity Conservation Advocate, Founder Member Sambhav, Nari Shakti awardee Nayagarh, Odisha stressed on the fact that Food and health remain primary concern during lockdown and emerged as the most important necessity of mankind. Agriculture labour is often categorized as unskilled work. She cited few experiences from the field where her team had to distribute relief materials to certain villages where the Indigenous people and their families used to grow their vegetables on their own out of fear of getting in touch with anyone during the Pandemic. Since the covid arrived during the summer time many tribal people who were living in summer crops were left at nothing to grow. Even with the arrival of rainy season there could hardly be any relief in some parts. Under such crucial circumstances one needs to ask if agriculture can continue to provide employment sufficient for the mass number of people. At times in the lack of proper nutrition and uneven distribution of food supplies different section suffers. So we need to maintain a balance in environment. They used to organize biodiversity fairs where people from rural areas will gladly come with their ideas and exhibition of plants and homegrown vegetables . She also emphasized that biodiversity becomes important when we see that if we eat variety of food each week it not only has health implications but also maintains balance in the environment. The ecological system needs to be taken care of. Can govt use more helping hands offered by the farmers in creating more food spaces? Can they engage them in more productive way? – were the important questions raised by her towards the end.

Ms. Uppali Mohanty, Senior Researcher, Centre for Youth and Social Development, Gangadhar Meher Marg, Bhubaneswar, Odisha gave a PowerPoint presentation on “Rapid Survey : Impact of Covid-19 on women and girls in Odisha”. It posed certain pertinent questions related to the crisis such as what are the effects of imposed restrictions on women’s livelihood, health, economy and social status ; what are the constraints faced by girls in pursuing education; and the effects of pandemic on girls in accessing health related services such as those if reproduction. Her presentation was based on four rapid independent survey conducted in parts of six districts covering 702 girls and women and 228 school going children. Some of the major findings of the survey showed considerable increase in violence against women, negative impact on livelihood, emerging health concerns among adolescent girls and women, worrisome figures of inaccessibility among girls education,

DAY 11: 03.09.2020

Keynote Session

Prof Vidhu Verma, Professor, Center for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University gave her presentation on “The pandemic as a great leveler: the challenge of intersectionality and inclusivity” and began with the idea of technological barbarism. do we see this as a militarization of the polity? Or does the panic translate into a leveler? Can Pandemic be looked as a leveler? She enunciated several arguments to this effect. Lockdown conditions have been highly gendered, classed, exclusionary so far. The pandemic has raised question for equal human work and primarily there are has been a continuous debate over more access to reproductive services, tackling domestic violence and, economic impact which has reversed the age long debate on gender rights of equality. It has increased the inequality. Apart from the need to address gender gap, there is also an alarming need to address certain political scenario which are also threatened with the growing number of mobilization restriction, limitations, emergency constraints, it is only in the public realm that one can see how we have eliminated the condition of vibrant public space. We also need to rethink how gender gaps emerged and need a neo theoretical framework we need consent of public too. Mam highlighted some of the lessons of pandemic which also include quite a few positive ones too. One may feel gratification that millions of people have now realized the meaning of solidarity and the crisis has brought to our collective consciousness the plight of lesser paid workers, disparage unpaid labor

since ages. It raised fundamental questions on labor. Which work is more important, what measures must be part of future laboring society. What work precludes leisure and play and work-keeping which in mind, our reliance, mutual dependence on others must be cherished. It has exposed the crisis of capitalism. In the economic structure and the increasing precarity of the situation at the collapse of the global economy we have come face to face with the scathing division between essential work vs non essential one. The next lesson is the challenge of the neo liberal strategy to minimize the role of state. With the shift to privatization a new opportunity towards greater sustainability can be realized soon. Referring to social commodity as per feminist theories she stated that certain inequities existing prior have been further amplified. Occupational gender segregation creates a gap. Referring to UNDP data an report of World bank note policy she said that we now need to formulate policies which talk about interlocking factors. Greater consultation could be built between departments, differential connect could be constructed , the institution response could prove more deliberative in this regard too. We may as well extend a helping hand of support to self help groups, shelter home, and special health care for nursing mother since the intergenerational impact of the Pandemic is yet to be known.

Virtual Field Visit I

Dr. Deepa Prasad, State Programme Co-ordinator, UNFPA, Odisha

She delivered her talk on “Gender and Health: Activities of UNFPA during COVID-19 Pandemic.” In her deliberation she addressed the sexual, reproductive and mental health issues of women and also highlighted the role of UNFPA in tackling such challenges. Very strategically UNFPA has undertaken the steps to overcome the health problems of girl children, adolescent girls, pregnant women, nursing mothers and elderly women etc.

Virtual Field Visit II

Smita Khanijow, (National Thematic Lead) ACTION AID

She elaborated on the excellent work done by ACTION AID with the communities since pandemic. ActionAid has been rigorously responding to the massive humanitarian crisis brought about by COVID-19 pandemic by reaching out to disadvantaged communities across states who

have been impacted disproportionately. The main areas/programmes covered under the same have been the following:

- a) **Awareness Building and Sensitizing:** In the immediate aftermath of the outbreak, together with state governments and local administrations, with support of our partners and community leaders ActionAid started sensitizing communities on the need to maintain hygiene and take precautionary steps to prevent the spread of the virus.
- b) **Distribution of Dry Ration Relief:** Working with volunteers, community-based organizations, movements, directly and with the help of local administration, as on July 31, 2020, they have been able to reach over 68,67,218 individuals with much-needed relief materials. They belong to vulnerable communities and groups across more than 235 districts in 23 states and one Union Territory, including people dependent on informal economy, Dalits, Muslims, particularly vulnerable tribal groups, de-notified tribes, nomadic tribes, people living with HIV and people with disabilities; with a focus on women and children among them. They have directly supported nearly 23,55,346 individuals with relief materials, such as dry ration, cooked food and sanitation supplies among other forms of relief and facilitated access to government relief and schemes for another 46,16,799 individuals.
- c) **Relief in Transit Hubs for Migrant Workers:** In the wake of livelihood losses amid the COVID-19-induced distress, as lakhs of jobless migrant workers started to return from the cities they were working in to their villages, their teams enabled registration for their safe return home. Also, together with their volunteers and allies, they started 'Relief in Transit' hubs on highways and roads across ten states of the country to provide migrants on the road with water, food, footwear and first aid during their journey back home.
- d) **Worker Facilitation:** ActionAid is working in partnership with state governments of Bihar and Jharkhand for setting up worker facilitation centers in destination cities. They have been engaged on the programme from last two years and have created nodes for migrant worker facilitation in many states. These centers bridge the gap between the Government's existing programmes and intended beneficiaries by helping in identification and registering workers and act as first referrals on livelihood, health and any state welfare measure. These centres were planned in 24 cities in around 9 states.

- e) **Livelihood Linkage and Re-generation:** In the light of the huge reverse migration, their teams across states have started facilitating work for the return migrant workers in their respective villages under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Post the unlock 3 by the government action aid is working to develop a livelihood re-generation plan for women workers, especially migrant women workers.
- f) **Campaigns:** The focus of the campaigns in last few months have been to highlight the challenges and demands of the poor and marginalised communities affected by the pandemic. These campaigns have been through online petitions, tweetathons and postcards. Through these campaigns they have shared on ground issues faced informal workers (#MainBhiShramik tweetathon on 1st May), demands of adolescent girls on Menstrual day. A recent campaign is for seeking support for Domestic Worker through by giving a missed call. Online forums were used to build discourse and support for these campaigns.
- g) **Research and Documentation:** Action aid brought out a series of documents titled 'Isolate. Don't Abandon', capturing their recommendations pertaining to the most vulnerable groups, for consideration of the Union and State Governments and the district administrations. These notes aim to highlight the vulnerabilities of informal workers, vulnerable communities, women and children, and to secure immediate as well as long-term support for them. Many of these were accepted by the state and central government in their relief efforts. They have initiated a longitudinal National Survey on Informal Workers in the month of May. The first round reached to more than 11,000 migrants across 18 states. The first-round study findings under the report titled 'Workers in the Time of COVID-19' brings out the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on informal sector workers and their families.
- h) **Policy Advocacy Efforts with Govt authorities and Commissions (NHRC, NCW, NCRPCR, Minority Commission, SC/ST commission etc):** Action Aid was empanelled by Nitti Ayog to provide inputs on developing relief response and time and again share our suggestions from the ground reports. More recently, their Executive Director, Sandeep Chachra, was invited by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) as a member of the committee constituted by them on 'Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on human rights and future response'. The committee would assess the impact of the pandemic on human

rights of people, especially the marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society, and would suggest a response on the basis of which NHRC would issue a necessary advisory to the Union and State Governments. The Delhi Minority Commission recently awarded Action Aid as the 'Best NGO' for their relief efforts in New Delhi.

DAY 12: 04.09.2020

There were group presentations made by the faculty participants. **Group 1** and **Group 4** delivered on **Pandemic And Health Concerns**, **Group 6** on **Pandemic And Leadership** and **Group 8** presented on **Pandemic And Digital Education**.

DAY 13: 05.09.2020

Keynote Session

Dr. Minati Panda, Professor, Cultural-Critical Psychology and Education and former chairperson the Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, JNU delivered her talk on *Women and Inclusion: National Education Policy 2020 at the time of Pandemic*. This talk critiqued the concept, inclusion popularized by the UN organizations in school education discourse and also the time of the introduction of NEP 2020 from a gender lens. She has also highlighted the issues relating to feminist perspectives of intersectionality in the education system and factors affecting inclusivity in school education in general and tribal school education in particular. Drawing from her research areas, she narrated the field experiences from tribal students of Saura community in this regard. She also highlighted the fact that the restructuring of the pedagogy is essential for inclusion of women in the education discourse.

Group presentations by the Faculty participants continued on this day as well. **Group 3** and **Group 2** presented on the subtheme **Pandemic And Economic Concerns** and **Group 7** deliberated upon the subtheme of **Pandemic And Policy**, ending with **Group 5** presentation on **Pandemic and Inclusivity**.

DAY 14: 06.09.2020

The day featured two group presentations by **Group 9** and **Group 10** on the subtheme **Pandemic And Digital Education**.

This was followed by the valedictory ceremony hosted by Ramadevi Women's University. **Prof. Dr. Jyotirmayee Acharya**, Head, Department of Gender Studies, Ramadevi Women's University welcomed all the distinguished guests of the valedictory. She also presented a brief report of the 15 days faculty development programme. Then a few faculty participants gladly came forward to share their valuable feedback with the all. In her valedictory address, the Guest of Honour for the day, **Dr. Bijayalaxmi Nanda**, Acting Principal, Miranda House reflected upon some of the key takeaways from the FDP. She said that the programme has all along been a learning experience in trying to achieve what it aimed to achieve through the 15 days event . Our main aim was to bring about an innovative solution for a sustainable growth. The FDP successfully looked at the idea of Transformational leadership and the significance of looking at the potentiality and possibility of feminist leadership. She also quoted and elaborated upon the concept of transversal feminist practices by Pnina Werbner and Nira Yuval- Davis' work where one is engaging not just in a continuum but all forces coming together. She stressed on the notions of learning together which may face resistance, feel chaotic in the beginning but eventually it will succeed to break hierarchies and to bring about a democratic system where all were engaged as equal. She praised the innovative articulation of the faculty participants. The process of continuously evaluating our ideas and practices enabled the power hierarchies to be challenged even in the way the FDP was managed and the way we looked at intersectional, diversity, skill building ideas within the group. We also need effective gender auditing of our own practices. Equality may seem like oppression to the privileged and it is here that she brings in the idea of a dialogic community which must look at the factors of age and gender. We must strive to put an end to intergenerational gatekeeping. We need to get rid of tokenism allowing younger generation to speak up and equally participate. Also, we must adhere to best practices which strive to look at gender as a holistic approach. Talking about women in all its heterogeneity and endorsing Alison Assiter's idea of two kinds of communities- Constitutive Community and Epistemic Community she raised some thought provoking questions - Can we all become an epistemic community which recognizes the existence of plurality of voices? Hearing the voices of all involved in an endeavor to seek perfection equally paves way for us to be in a position to judge our own ways of treating others and dealing even in our own closed circle. The Chief guest, **Prof. (Dr.) Madhumita Das, Vice-chancellor, Fakir Mohan University, Balesore, Odisha** congratulated all the members of the organising team of the FDP who ensured that all participants could join together to address

the issues of gender and pandemic. She presented her ideas on “Gendered Dimensions Of The Pandemic: The Implications Of Covid 19.” Mam spoke at length on gender inequalities, deepening existing inequalities in all walks of life, adverse impact of covid on women, domestic violence, and women leaders in the pandemic. She discussed the 12 critical concerns raised in the Beijing platform for action to draw parallel between the immediate crisis of the developing countries. Health concern, economic pressure and mental stress remain to affect women and girls during pandemic. She concluded her presentation by saying that the virus is not gender blind therefore, the response to it should not be either. She even discussed the role played by women in service sector and women self help groups who have come up higher in combating the disease. To end with , drawing from the examples of female leadership globally she insisted that there are a large number of advantages of the situation when women become leaders since they deal with more care, empathy and a collaborative approach. The Chairperson, **Prof. Padmaja Mishra, honourable VC, RDWU** was pleasantly surprised at the success of this event. Thanking the Principal of Miranda House, **Dr. Bijayalaxmi Nanda** on initiating this programme and begin the collaboration, she congratulated all involved in the success of the same. The enthusiastic involvement, the meticulous and well organized pattern has all been highly praiseworthy. She discussed about women as leaders in every area of life and how this transformation can be brought about. The process needs to be understood. Empirical approach is required over theoretical. Pandemic or no pandemic situation has always been tough for women, the new normal has to be constructed with collaborative efforts. However, there is a recession even in feminist movement. Specially during pandemic which has proved to be both a great leveler and a revealer also. She further applauded the importance of critical thinking that has been developed during the course of rich interventions in this FDP. We need to rethink on public policy. Why and how it has to be reinvented to tackle the gender gap brought forth by pandemic. The likeability and decision making capacity of woman are in conflict which she explained with an example. The individual traits must be polished and empowered. Women should participate equally in such events. Vote of thanks was delivered by **Dr. Aliva Mohanty from RDWU**.

DAY 15: 07.09.2020

Concluding Ceremony (Policy Center and Gender Lab, Miranda House)

The last day of the FDP was dedicated to the concluding ceremony hosted by the collaborating body, Policy Centre and Gender Lab of Miranda House. The session began with **Dr. Bijayalaxmi Nanda**, Acting Principal, Miranda House welcoming the keynote speaker and Chief Guest for the day, **Ms. Kamla Bhasin** Ma'am, a feminist, an activist, an author and a visionary; Guest of Honour, **Prof Rajeev Gupta**, Dean, Students Welfare, University of Delhi. **Ms. Kamla Bhasin** began her address by praising equality in Indian constitution and saluting the creators of our constitution. She praised the networking and collaboration across institutions in India such as this FDP. To her this remains a primary requisite for solidarity. Teachers play an important role in building a better future. And hopes that we become teacher whom students remember with love and gratitude. There is a dire need to upgrade ourselves with constant learning required to ensure quality. She reflected upon the theme of the FDP and highlighted the importance of social welfare policies, good hospitals, policies which make the difference given the conditions where suffering has increased due to the privatization of public health, education, transportation. The UN also reasserts that there has been a 20 percent increase in domestic violence, and homes have become spaces of work from home along with chores, offices, zoom classes etc. Growth of mental sickness and stress. The last one to handle all this are the women but the important question we should be asking at the moment is does the Pandemic affect everyone equally? The woman in Delhi suffer differently from that of the migrant worker who is left hungry, without income, transportation, without instructions thus proving that gender contours are different for Dalit woman, a working class woman etc. the endemic has shown intersectionality more clearly than ever . Citing example of America and Britain she further elaborated that leadership and transformative leadership is not just merely about managing things in the good old way. Leadership which transforms, changes the form of functioning, thinking, relating and striving to change the loveless system is what is required at the moment. Narrating an anecdote around 43 years ago in Philippines about a fishing community using the analogy of the waves of ocean for that of a good leader she said that the wave only rises when situation demands and merges with the water after situation settles. It also allows others to rise. It shouldn't be like hard bending stick. Similarly, democratic leadership is better than dictatorship. Most countries have selected to be democratic. An exemplary leader should also have emotional intelligence who understands the emotions of others and empathizes equally. Gentle and effective leaders are brilliant and they should seek to spread power of love and not love for power in every field. Mam ended her address by reciting a beautiful poem in Hindi dedicated

to women of South Asia “Hawao si ban rahi hai larkiya”. **Dr. Hena Singh**, Coordinator, Policy Centre and Gender Lab, Miranda House shared a brief report on the 15 days proceedings of this FDP. The FDP had an overwhelming response with over 244 registered participants, out of which 84 were male members. The team of experts, administrators, local self govt leaders together ensured an enthralling experience through the 15 days event. **Prof. Rajeev Gupta** appreciated the plethora of expertise covered during the course of the FDP. He reaffirmed the existing opportunities in this pandemic. One needs to look for them. As a matter of fact the covid has seen role reversal despite pertinent inequality around. Office became home and women have emerged as more efficient section in tackling with the added pressure. He also reiterated the need to notice those areas of inequality and continue striving towards achieving equity. There was also a wonderful **Video Presentation** encapsulating the key moments of the FDP along with the experience sharing by the faculty participants. **Prof. Dr. Jyotirmayee Acharya**, Head, Department of Gender Studies, Ramadevi Women’s University shared a few words too and was overwhelmed by listening to the eloquent speech of the keynote speaker. She briefly touched upon the legacy of Sarla Devi, the leading feminist figure and the founder of the first women’s organization in Orissa. She hoped that as an outcome of this event people would try to look at the local level networking and issues and not just the meta narrative. Then followed the two individual **Faculty Presentations by Dr. Chandrachur Singh**, Assistant Professor, Hindu College who focused on four theoretical points backed by data and statistical analysis raising certain key questions outlining a gender sensitive approach towards higher education. Education has been a social equalizer. There has been lot of impeding factors despite all the attempts and he stated that the pandemic, instead of being leveler, has become a site of interrupting inequities as well. The administrators have not been able to build epistemology. The way we have been implementing policies education became a key site for gender inequality. Hence, we need to relook into the issue of equity and access. He suggested two key points in his presentation. By having institutions of excellence, the institutions need sensibility to address these issues. One of the testimonials of such collaboration has been witnessed through the FDP where India’s number one college joined hands with the first women’s university of Odisha and ensured a collaborative and inquisitive experience. This collaboration needs to be further replicated by other institutions as well forging a collaborative approach to take the challenges head on. One also needs to navigate through the scope of education and try to understand the peculiarities of intersectionality. Has the curriculum

been designed that way to cater to the growing need for the same, to understand the need for intersectionality? Perhaps one needs a thorough perusal of the same and leaders should take note of it. **Dr. Rohita Kumar Mishra** talked about education, and the challenges of online mode of education. The proposed mode of learning had several pros and cons which were very well discussed and laid out in his PowerPoint presentation. He focused on lack of IT infrastructure, resources, training, investment, policy decision etc. He ended his presentation by suggesting ways to cope up with the same. The concluding remarks were graciously given by **Dr. Bijayalaxmi Nanda** who expressed huge delight at the culmination of the programme which added to the diverse learning of all the stakeholders involved. Taking example from her own life, she expressed hope for a better society where men and women shall share the duties at home. House chores have been divided in some households and it has shown a great number of men enthusiastically participating too. The session was moderated by **Ms. Sapna Kumari, Mentor at Policy Centre and Gender Lab, Miranda House** who concluded the session by offering vote of thanks. In the field of academics and knowledge it has been often witnessed that at the end of every elevating endeavor either you reach a closure summing up all the fruitful reflections or you get a contour to take up another route of learning and forge ahead with the recollections of the journey. The 15 days faculty development programme culminated towards the latter.

Outcome

- The FDP proved a huge success in terms of bringing together a plethora of ideas, interventions and reflections surrounding the Contours of gender in pandemic. An eminent institution as Miranda House joining hands with a regional University for the first time exemplified the transformative capacity of a collaborative approach in education and the role played by institutions in fostering a combined teaching learning process.
- The participants had the opportunity to familiarize with the listed topics from both conceptual as well as empirical perspective. They also had the opportunity to prepare a group presentation sharing their own experiences based on the themes, have interactive exercises and a virtual field visit.
- The faculty participants voluntarily presented on the chosen topics related to the subtheme. There were ten group presentations and two individual presentations. All were very well structured and relevant topics were chosen covering the health concerns and rights of

transgender community, identifying their mental condition and predicaments of the vulnerable in society, the rights for transgender, digital education, advantages and disadvantages, NEP, gender in technology and decision making, etc. They shared enthusiastic and reflective feedback for each session and it added to the collaborative efforts of the FDP.

- There were over 244 faculty participants who had joined us out of which over 80 were male members. They all represented a multitude of experiences and learning enthusiasm from several universities and colleges such as Patna University, Utkal University, Jamia, Christ university, Ravenshaw, Lucknow, Jammu etc.
- Resource materials from the panelists were sent to the participants for further clarity and knowledge of the wider objective of the programme.
- The FDP signified a stepping stone for the institutions in higher education who need to be encouraging partnership among each other. This is also in alignment with the objective of mentoring mission of NEP 2020 which has been designed to help bring an uplifting transformation in Higher education in India.

