



FROM THE EDITORS

Since the Beijing Declaration and the adoption of the Platform for Action in 1995, gains have been made with regard to gender equality but much still gender inequalities are pervasive, globally. The recently concluded 16 days of Activism to end violence against women campaign (25 November – 10 December 2020) organized by United Nations, exposes the prevailing reality.

Gender equality is fundamental to human development and is a basic human right. The Goal 5 of Sustainable Development once again reminds us that for progress to be sustainable, countries need to mainstream discussions on gender in every policy and programmes and adopt a rights-based approach to implementation.

This issue of SDG Samvaad focuses on SDG 5 and invites readers to reflect on the need to talk about gender equality, even today and why and how can we bring about a change in the mindset and practice. This issue also implores everyone to question the constructs of gender and think beyond the gender binary. Unless we raise our voice and demand our rights, change will not happen.

Through this issue we have attempted to create a space for critical thinking on gender and inequalities, with a belief our collaborative efforts will lead to a more equitable future.

We hope you enjoy reading this Issue.

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IN FOCUS



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GENDER EQUALITY AND SDG

Gender Equality is Crucial for Achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)



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Gender equality or the equality between men and women is a basic human rights goal. While Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) enshrines the need for achieving gender equality, global progress has been staggered and further deteriorated due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Latest estimates reveal that it will take almost 136 years to reduce gender gaps in education attainment, political empowerment, health and economic participation and opportunities.

SDGs outline aspirational goals for a shared global vision which focuses on people, planet and prosperity. However, the implementation and translation of SDGs at both national and global levels need to take into account that women and girls comprise about half of the total global population and should be made equal stakeholders in the process of sustainable transformations for a just future.

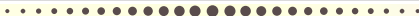
Presently, a little over 40 per cent of the total indicators (104 out of 246 indicators) under the UN Global Indicator Framework address gender issues.

Many of the gender-related indicators or indicators that have a gender-related term such as men, women, girls or boys, are focus on people-related goals such as SDG 3, 4, and 5 dealing with health, education, and gender-equality. Mention of gender related indicators is limited among the SDG 16 and 17 on addressing peace and partnerships, and economic prosperity related SDG 8 and 9.

Another pressing concern is the widespread data gap, even for the SDG which have gender related indicators. Data is available for merely 35 out of the 104 gender-related indicators spread across 9 of the 17 SDGs. More alarmingly, gender concerns remain conspicuous by its absence on bio-diversity and planetary boundaries related goals across SDG 6, 8, 12, 14, and 15.

For instance, women and girls are primarily responsible for the collection of water for domestic uses in about 80 per cent of the households which do not have running water. Lack of water, hygiene and sanitation facilities are likely to negatively impact girls and women by placing a greater burden of unpaid work on them resulting in higher drop-out rates from schools, increased health risks and sexual violence.





Studies in India reveal that young girls enrolled in schools perform better in mathematics and reading skills due to reduction in time spent on fetching water. Mere technocratic implementation of SDG 6 without integrating issues of gender might limit its gains for women and girls. Women contribute to the global value chains both as producers and consumers.

However, SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production invisibilises the role of women through a gender-blind approach towards production processes that devalue women's unpaid and hidden contributions to production processes. Economies of the Global North often outsource critical processes of production and recycling of production to countries in the Global South. Poor women form a critical part of these global value chains working as cheap and flexible labor but do not find voice and agency in defining and shaping sustainability for SDG 12.

Similarly, SDG 13 on climate change fails to recognize the role of gender in addressing ecological transformations. Climate change is more likely to adversely impact women who tend to be poorer and more vulnerable than their male counterparts. Moreover, as climate change reduces profitability from agriculture, men tend to out-migrate while women become custodians of agricultural farms

often working degraded lands under harsh climatic conditions such as soaring temperatures.

Discriminatory gender norms and patriarchal values make women less capable to cope and survive during natural disasters. Research abounds on the gender differences in casualties during natural disasters such as floods and cyclones in societies with pronounced gender inequalities in social and economic rights.

The above examples offer compelling insights for the need of urgently addressing gender concerns across SDGs that have failed to consider gender. Achieving equality between sexes is crucial for not only for people related SDGs on health, poverty, and education, but has broader linkages to all other SDGs which presently remain limited in their vision for integrating gender concerns.

A focus on gender equality across SDGs can be seen as both 'an enabler' for facilitating better conditions for achievement of the SDG and 'an accelerator' to ensure that global targets for reaching all SDGs are met within the allotted timelines. With less than a decade to achieve the global commitments on sustainable development a gender focus across SDGs is crucial to ensure that women, girls, indigenous and vulnerable communities, people with disabilities, elderly and youth are not left behind.



GENDER AND GOVERNANCE (B-SCHOOL)

Women at Leadership Positions in Business Schools in India : **Some Revelations**



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Despite the increasing number of women students in management schools there is a much lower proportion of women faculty at the higher level of academic positions. The NIRF ranking of higher education institutions in India was announced recently in September 2021. One of the criteria to attain this ranking for the institutions is gender inclusion, which is further divided into 50% women students and a startling mere 20% women faculty. Such a low requirement threshold itself contributes towards the lack of impetus to have women at decision making positions of higher education institutions. An analysis of women's presence at top positions in Indian business schools was conducted as a part of a study at Goa Institute of Management. Not surprisingly, it was found that only 13% women constitute leadership positions at India's top 75 NIRF ranked B-Schools.

A deeper analysis indicated that only 5% women make up for roles at the governing body level and at the administrative level, women's presence is only 9%. There have been enough discussions, in the recent past, about the reasons of missing women at the decision-making positions. Such discussions have been focusing on the glass-ceiling at the workplace and glass walls at home. Here, glass ceiling refers to invisible barriers for women to go up in the hierarchies of an institution, which are largely managed by men and glass walls at home refer to the direct or indirect burden of household responsibilities, which keep on deflecting them from taking responsibilities at the workplace. However, as push factors have failed to bring women to decision making positions, it is time to talk about some pull factors that are instrumental to bring about a change.





Firstly, underrepresentation of women at leadership positions in management schools should be a concern especially when the number of female students to these institutions are on the rise. When the student population in the business schools are getting gender diverse, it remains imperative to have a balanced governing board and administrative body. Gender homogeneous leadership would pose a limitation to the diverse nature of ideas and experiences for institutions, to handle issues pertaining to diverse group students.

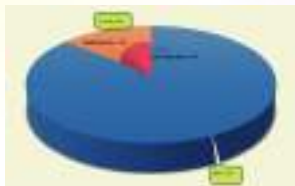
Secondly, it has been studied that there are certain experiences which are unique to men and women in their gender performativity and roles. Hence, both respond differently, pose different queries, and see different perspectives and solutions to situations.

Thirdly, one of the main objectives of business schools is to prepare students to compete in the global market, which is increasingly getting diversified at all levels of hierarchies. Hence, a diverse higher education system is important to provide innovative ideas of learning to students and enable them to sustain in groups of people with diverse gender realities. This is also crucial to substantiate students' ability to compete in the global job market.



We must recognize the fact that the recent COVID-19 pandemic has also added to the issues and concerns of higher education, both for students and teachers.

Men and Women Ratio at Leadership positions in NIRF ranked Management Institutions in India



Against this backdrop of having diverse student population on one hand and increasing flux in the higher education, due to pandemic, on the other, substantial efforts are needed to increase and influence women's equity and diversity in management institutions' leadership positions. Higher education recently woke up to a new situation to handle health crisis among students, staff and community around them. It has become further imperative to have diverse strengths, perspectives, and solutions to this unfolding situation. Every institution has its gendered concerns and gendered solutions. Business schools should not run away from this reality anymore, especially, when we are already standing in the middle of a health crisis at the global level that itself is diverse in nature. By excluding women faculty members from decision making positions, diverse solutions for the issues pertaining to diverse student groups, will always be a distant dream.



GENDER IN MANAGEMENT

Embracing Gender Diversity at a B-School



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Two conversations:

Student: During my admission, when I learned that the campus had a pride walk, I knew this was where I wanted to study.

Part-time student: My 12-year-old daughter is passionate about LGBT issues, and she identifies as an ally. I'm an ally too. While I'm happy for her, her granny disapproves. I've told my daughter that she'll have to speak up for what she believes in.

While these were snippets of two separate conversations with students, demonstrating their enthusiasm, foresight and care, it also reflected the effect of having conversations around gender and sexual diversity within our educational and workspaces. When our personal lives merge into our digital social media profiles, when anecdotes from different lived realities are shared, when varied groups of people work together, there are a lot of different life stories available.

When our personal lives merge into our digital social media profiles, when anecdotes from different lived realities are shared, when varied groups of people work together, there are a lot of different life stories available. The private versus the public seems to merge, allowing for more nuanced ways of understanding people.

Over the years, people from different genders, sexualities, castes, and classes are comfortable with themselves and visibly navigate and negotiate their identities. Moreover, there is an expectation in most work cultures to bring our “whole selves” to work.

While focusing on diversity, foregrounding specific diversities to the exclusion of others can be a slippery path. For example, as gender equality attains critical attention through Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),





our inquiries into (the performance of) genders (including sexual orientations) need critical introspection. There seems to be resistance towards acknowledging a plethora of genders that exist. Often transgender, non-binary or cis-gender folks who transgress gender norms are more often on the receiving end of bullying, stigma, policing, and shame—as they do not conform to stereotypical expectations.

Having conversations within our institutions are a way of bringing about awareness and support. Also, identities are mostly viewed from a singular lens, while we simultaneously inhabit different intersectional identities in reality. In our campus, while a woman from a non-English speaking tribal community studies along with a non-binary bisexual student from a low caste community, both of them, in their ways, negotiate each of their identities differently. If SDGs are to be truly meaningful, they need to be inclusive, non-binary and wholistic of the different dimensions of being human.

To work towards gender diversity, all people need to voice their differences, vulnerabilities and marginalization because it brings a different perspective to the fore.

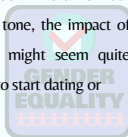
We often navigate social spaces assuming that we have a shared reality, but that is not the case. Some of us Might Not:

- Be interested in being partnered.
- Feel comfortable wearing particular clothes.
- Have an emotional or financial support system in times of necessity.
- Be able to present ourselves or perform in ways that are expected of us.

Sharing different perspectives enable us to envision multiple alternatives for different people.

The focus is not reiterating this difference on everything we do, but disrupting categories for understanding or boxing people and thereby breaking down stigma for other people. Pedagogically, by sharing different narratives from multiple vantage points, we allow for commonly held beliefs or stereotypes to be broken down. Fostering a spirit of empathy by engaging with multiple viewpoints is a process involving time, effort, patience and care. Yet it also builds confidence in people and brings about greater cohesivity in teams.

Eventually, we are expected to be mindful of our language, our choice of words, our tone, the impact of our words. For example, while it might seem quite common to suggest another person to start dating or





getting married or grooming themselves, it can be discomfoting for the other. A world where there are fewer clones of ourselves is undoubtedly a more colorful one to inhabit.

Creating diverse environments is a commitment, a slow evolution rather than a pet project. It does not happen merely by comprising classes or teams with different backgrounds. We would also need to make efforts at making people feel included and comfortable in their skin. It might also include acting when needed, respecting people and their needs to thrive in their educational or workplace.

Some ways of practicing gender diversity in the classroom are:

1. **Implementing Fair Practices:** Everyone likes to be treated fairly and valued for who they are. Allowing everyone to share their points of view and speak from their vantage point allows different positions to be voiced and critiqued. Most importantly, making people feel safe to make errors without being judged creates a healthy space for growth.

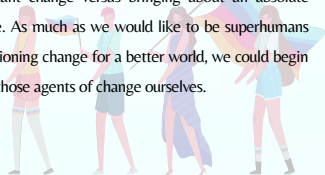
2. **Learning from Different Sources:** There are constantly newer stories through articles, films, documentaries, television series. Series like *Sex Education* (2019),

Transparent (2014) and *Made in Heaven* (2019) have depicted different genders and sexual identities. Articles on *In Plainspeak* — Tarshi and *Agents of Ishq* depict myriad perspectives on sex and gender.

3. **Being an Ally:** It helps show our support to different people and causes through our presence, or speaking up for a cause that affects people's lives, or letting others figure for themselves how to be in this world. It might mean amplifying the voices of those who are in difficult situations—or standing up for others, even when we feel scared.

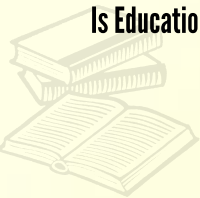
4. **Being an Ally:** It helps show our support to different people and causes through our presence, or speaking up for a cause that affects people's lives, or letting others figure for themselves how to be in this world. It might mean amplifying the voices of those who are in difficult situations—or standing up for others, even when we feel scared.

Through all our efforts in enhancing an inclusive and diverse culture, we can perhaps take tiny steps of significant change versus bringing about an absolute change. As much as we would like to be superhumans championing change for a better world, we could begin being those agents of change ourselves.



GENDER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Is Education a **Bane** or a **Boon** for Indian Women in today's world?



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Women must be given equal right and opportunity, free from any discrimination and violence. Gender equality is the most pressing need as per UN women's global report on gender equality because it is integral to other dimensions of sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Gender equality can be addressed by empowering women, as it will help to stop any discrimination, end violence against women such as trafficking, domestic violence, child abuse, etc., value unpaid care and domestic work, give decision-making power to women, and ensure sexual and reproductive health. Therefore, to promote gender equality, it is crucial to ensure that women empowerment.

India is a growing economy, wherein service sector is playing a leading role (Bosworth and Collins, 2008). Along with the economic growth, there has been a sharp decline in the fertility rates and growth in the literacy rate of women (Pieters, 2010).

Considering the positive impact on gender parity in education and decrease in fertility rates, it is imperative for female labor force participation (FLFP)

to escalate, but the puzzling truth is that women are withdrawing from the work force (Rami, 2020). According to the World Development Indicators (World Bank, 2020), the FLFP rate of India has been 19.9% in 2020, which is below the world average (50%). So, it is crucial to examine whether education is a bane or boon for Indian women in today's world.

Education is seen as a means of increasing employability, educating women not only increases equal opportunity of employment but also augments social and economic returns (reduce fertility rate, increased income level of a country, etc.) (Klazen, 2019).

According to the All India Survey on Higher Education 2018-19 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Government of India, there has been a substantial increase in the total number of women gaining higher education. The survey has pointed out that around 69.6% women have M.Phil degrees and 41.8% women have PhDs.



However, in India, the present scenario shows an inverse relationship between female education and FLFP. The paradox can be examined from four angles, i.e., the association of education with marriage market, social norms, demand of educated women in the labor market, and quality of education.

In the marriage market, educated women have better prospect; earlier during 1987, women with primary education were accounted highly, but with the passage of time, the demand for more educated women has augmented (Klasen and Pieters, 2013).

Though educated women are demanded for marriage, social norms are adverse because married women are primarily expected to be caregivers. According to the National Sample Survey, 2011-2012, around 90% of women not working are mainly engaged in domestic duties. Social and cultural norms foster behaviors that propagate inequalities along with disseminating imbalances through power concentration in the hand of patriarchal nature of society.

Women also need to bear the burden of gender-specific tradeoffs that they encounter from the complex choices they have to make at work, family, and social life (UNDP, 2019). In addition, there is possibility of transition in jobs that were previously available to women mainly because of automation.

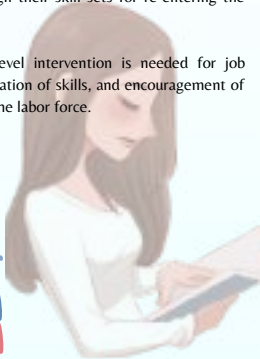
A new McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) report, The future of women at work: Transitions in the age of automation (PDF-2MB), has found that women need to learn new technologies as well as update their skillsets to be part of the workforce.

In addition, the updating of skillsets will not only help them to be more productive, it will also fetch them better pay and reduce the gender wage gap, which also plays a crucial role in keeping women away from the workforce.

Hence, the quality of education needs to be aligned with the requirement of the job market. Probably, the transition in the job market along with misalignment in the education received and the gender wage gap are the vital reasons behind recent job stagnation and high unemployment of women, as the socio-cultural norms have their pre-existing influence on the present situation of women employment. From the above discussion, it can be stated that gaining higher education cannot be the sole enabler of employment for women.

To add to the above factors, COVID 19 has further aggravated unemployment of women, as the trends of automation and digitalization have accelerated during the crisis, thus making it more crucial for women to realign their skill sets for re-entering the work force.

Hence, policy level intervention is needed for job creation, upgradation of skills, and encouragement of women to join the labor force.



GENDER AND MEDIA

Issues with the Ideal Body-Image



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The Idea of the Ideal-Type

How often do we come across media-portrayals that makes slenderness cool or sexually enticing? To put it differently, market has its ways of strategically classifying anything that does not confirm to the idea of an 'ideal'—as undesirable and unacceptable. The text and the imagery of commodity-messaging, relentlessly establishes and normalizes a certain kind of ideal body-type, which then is circulated as a reference to be emulated.

It demands several routines of management and regimes of consumption to shape-up the body according to certain ideal standards: such as ideal-weight, ideal-size, ideal-shape, ideal-tone, and ideal-complexion. And it requires a host of products and services to be consumed, such as: fitness training, dieting, cosmetics, drugs, equipment, medical and surgical interventions, etc.

The Gap between the Ideal and the Real

You may make me pause at this point and ask, what is so problematic about any such objective to achieve an ideal-type?

What is so wrong is desiring to look better and better? The first problem lies in the fact that any 'ideal' is fundamentally elusive. It is simulated. It is short-lived. So, no matter which ideal-type you target and no matter how you design your chase, it is loaded with the under-stated narrative of perpetual inadequacy, dissatisfaction, and displeasure with one's own body.

No amount work done on the body is good enough to reduce that gap between the desired ideal and the real achieved results, because commodity and its image constantly invents new problems with the body, and ironically offers new solutions to these problems through consumption.

An Ideal that is Digitally Manipulated

Secondly, ideal-types are hardly real. In the era of digital manipulation, such ideal-types are products of software tools and commands that make bodies flawless. Any represented body on your screen or on the hoarding is thoroughly edited and mediated. The ideal-body-type is nothing but a work of sophisticated layers of digital manipulation.





For example, Photoshop is loaded with tools like 'liquefy filter' or 'magic wand' that can reshape the image of the body instantly. It can airbrush the aging and sagging and edit-out any excess. It can easily tone the body-image—locating the aspirational ideal-type far away from the real body—and by making it more and more unattainable.

Shaping and Showing after the Removal of Unwanted

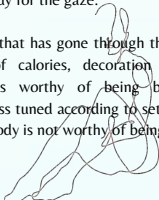
The third issue with the ideal-type is that beauty products and its imagery tend to fragment the whole body into specific parts, so that each part can then be separately attended and exhibited.

Body is reduced to an obsessive-narcissist-project of cosmetic artifice. For example, VLCC's permanent laser hair reduction (see image 1), clearly distinguishes between 'small parts' and 'large parts'.

Small parts include: upper lip, side lock, chin, cheeks, neck, beard line, underarms, cleavage, midriff, ears, hands, fingers and feet. Large parts include arms, chest, legs, back (full), back and shoulder, chest and abdomen and full face.

The tagline reads: "Flaunt your body all year long". It is very apparent that the act of displaying is the impetus behind the beauty-product-intervention. It prepares the body for the gaze.

As if, the body that has gone through the restrain on food, denial of calories, decoration of cosmetic interventions—is worthy of being beautiful and successful. Unless tuned according to set standards of idealness, the body is not worthy of being exhibited.



Thus, the body is a consuming agent, and also a site for consumption. The body requires constant shaping up before showing off. A direct correlation is drawn between shaping the body and shaping one's life. A laser-hair-removal-clinic-ad says (see image 2): "This summer, show some skin".

The body is show-worthy only after removal of a range of things are posed as problematic or undesirable, such as: unwanted hair, unwanted scars, unwanted moles, unwanted birthmarks, unwanted signs of aging, etc.

Consuming and Producing the image of the Ideal-type

With so much of emphasis on the body through mutual gaze and self-surveillance, body has become a site of restraint and control. The exterior self is exposed to cosmetics, clothing and surgery, and the inner-self goes through constant monitoring.



Figure. 1

Bodies have become sites of discipline and pleasure. Bodies are pleasurable only when disciplined and after they are shaped according to certain ideal-types. In that process of constantly getting re-shaped, the body consumes images of ideal-body-types in order to modify the body accordingly.





Simultaneously, the body also circulates images similar to that ideal-type by photographing the worked-upon-body to be consumed as images. It is a classic case of conversion of the image-consuming-self into a visual-commodity.

Comparative-body-analysis and Self-shaming

The idea of an ideal-body-type is frustratingly compelling. It culls the desire to constantly get into all sorts of comparative-body-analysis between one's own body and far-away bodies that are made to appear more desirable. Apart from the spree to post before-after body-images, such a body-project can only lead to a series of perpetual dissatisfactions and disappointments around one's shape, size, and color.

A series of gripping anxiety brews as we look into the mirror, or we allow ourselves to be judged on measurable terms—either for instant validation, or for a need for never-ending enhancements.

Measuring, sizing, shaping, toning are prescribed interventions to be tried and tested on one's own body in order to live up to the standards of the established ideals of perfect and proper.

The tangible body and the subjective idea of beauty are simultaneously objectified and are left open for endless improvements. While realizing the unreal-body and while normalizing the unachievable-body, the beauty-industry makes us forget a basic physiological fact: that bodies come in all shapes and sizes. The definitive definition of the ideal-body that is propelled, sustained and marketed by the nexus of visual and popular cultural machinery—makes us participate in the process of self-shaming even if we do not realize it.

Feminism can only provide a politically-correct moral-critique of this from a distance, as we internalize the ideal-type in our everyday lives, and as we often forget the fact that femininity is beyond inch-tapes that provide objective readings of various body-parts.



Figure. 2





GOOD PRACTICES

Women on the Wheels: Sakha Cabs



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Cab services have taken a prominent place in the public transportation of cities in India. However, a cab journey by women in the night hours have always been a concern for herself and her family members. However, Delhi city provides some respite to women travelers as it is having a unique cab service called Sakha.

It is unique because the cabs under Sakha are driven by women drivers in any hour of the day. I got an opportunity to interact with the women drivers at Sakha to know their journey from a school drop-out to a chauffeur under a cab service provider.

There has been a very peculiar relation between women and transportation. With a concern of safety and security, women have always been either dependent for transportation and travel or they are cautious and scared for being harassed during their travel through a public transportation.

Damini, is 24 years old 10th passed girl, who had no resources and environment at home to continue with her education. She got to know about an NGO called Azad foundation through one of its workers. Azad foundation is a professional feminist organization that provides livelihood with dignity for resources to poor women living in urban areas in India.

Damini, informed that she got to know about the driver's training program run by Azad foundation, which places women with Sakha cab services after providing them with the trainings on driving skills and self-defense skills. After getting these trainings for 10 months, Damini has just started working with Sakha in 2021. Sakha Provides variety of services that are quite inclusive in nature.

Along with intra-city cab services, Sakha has its cab counter at the airport and New Delhi Railway station. The trained women drivers at Sakha can be hired as personal chauffeurs especially for elderly and children. Sakha also has special services for differently abled people called Swayam Sakha, through which one can book a cab with a wheelchair access.



Aarti, works at the airport counter of Sakha as a cab driver. She informed about the shift-based work at Sakha, where morning shift is from 6am to 2pm, day shift is from 2pm to 10pm and night shift is from 10pm to 6am. She also added that the women drivers never felt unsafe at any shift because they have 15 to 20 Sakha cabs parked at the airport at their designated place, which is a place with security and surveillance.

Purnima also informed that their pick-up from and drop-off to their homes are also managed by one of them. One of these women drivers is given the duty to drop every one after the duty and take the cab to her home. The pick up is also managed by the same woman the next day.

Both the drivers informed that their cabs have a panic button to provide any help or assistance in any kind of emergency.



Figure. 1



Figure. 2

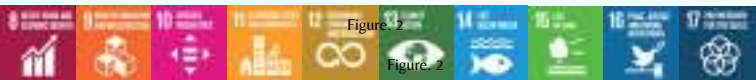
Sakha has been providing a safe ride to women in the Delhi city for more than a decade. It also provides services to corporate clients with their flexible and tailor-made transportation solutions for female employees at the corporates. The drivers informed that by getting this opportunity to work at Sakha, they now lead a more dignified life, which is free from any dependency.

The family members of these women drivers supported their employment of being a cab driver as their economic contributions are valuable given the financial condition of their families. When asked about their marriage plans, one of them laughed it out and said "let us roam around a little bit then we will think of marriage."

Figure. 2

Figure. 2

Figure. 2



GOOD PRACTICES

Women and Entrepreneurship: **WE-Nurture**

The Atal Incubation Centre at Goa Institute of Management (AIC-GIM) has been set up under the aegis of the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) of the NITI Aayog. The mission of AIC-GIM is to aid startups, stimulate their growth and facilitate their success through a holistic support system. AIC-GIM provides entrepreneurs access mentors, support for investment, access to industries and networking with growing startup ecosystems.

'WE-nurture' launched in 2021 is a quarterly program for nurturing women micro-entrepreneurs with the help of corporate partners. Every quarter, AIC-GIM will have a startup cohort of 10 women micro-entrepreneur who will receive the pre-incubation services and support. The aim of AIC-GIM is to nurture 40 Women Entrepreneur Venture, annually through this unique "WE-nurture" program.



AIC-GIM is playing a pivotal role in nurturing and supporting Women Micro-Entrepreneurs through an unique initiative known as "WE-nurture". This initiative is a Pre-Incubation Program to support Women Micro-Ventures and help them to scale up their ventures.

Due to the pandemic many women turned entrepreneurs for the first time and at the same time the pandemic has also made some women led ventures vulnerable. Hence these ventures require assistance and support during these critical times.



Most of these Women Led businesses are small and informal in nature and hence with WE-nurture program our objective is to build resilience and give them resources to scale up. The 'We-nurture' program kicked off with promising women entrepreneurs who not only

sustained their own business during the pandemic but have also provided livelihood to rural women and farmers in many ways.

AIC-GIM also launched WE-nurture program for Self Help Groups of Assonora Village(Goa) during the #ESGStartupWeek.

Women and their ventures

Earthpositive	Sucheta Bhargava began this venture for empowerment of women farmers and to provide wholesome, healthy food to the people. All and other materials used by Earthpositive to prepare food products are procured from women farmers.
Ekudgandh Ganes	Vishal Chaudhari started a waxing business with the purpose of making a positive environmental contribution due to her concerns. In April 2021 they launched Ekudg, Ekudg promotes and supports local, natural, seasonal, fresh and chemical free produce as well as local enterprises. Safe festival, Thursday Community Bazaar are some initiatives under Ekudg.
Medini	Tanya Dinker founded Medini with an aim to develop a platform for rural women to showcase their organic products. She also plans to form co-ops for holistic Wellness of women.
Jana Hygiene	Rafael Chavira's 'Jana Hygiene' manufactures cost-effective and biodegradable, pocket-friendly sanitary napkins for protection of the environment.
Ecotopia	Mayur Bhat's "Ecotopia" is contributing towards a greener environment by manufacturing charcoal briquettes from shell (which is abundantly available in Goa) instead of using wood.
Ecoearth	Mia Malik and Dr. Neha Bhagwat founded Ecoearth - a multi-product, multi-brand E-commerce Site, which promotes products made by Goan women entrepreneurs.
Empire	Skinner-Mandori's initiative provides customers with home-made, ready-to-eat, easy pantries in eleven different authentic Goan curry flavours without any added preservatives.
Fresh	Priya Patel, founder of 'Fresh' sells a range of long-lasting green tea cookies that is processed with natural edible oils. These are naturally preservative-free with no toxic dyes and no non-recyclable packaging.





Inputs provided by Snehal Galvanker
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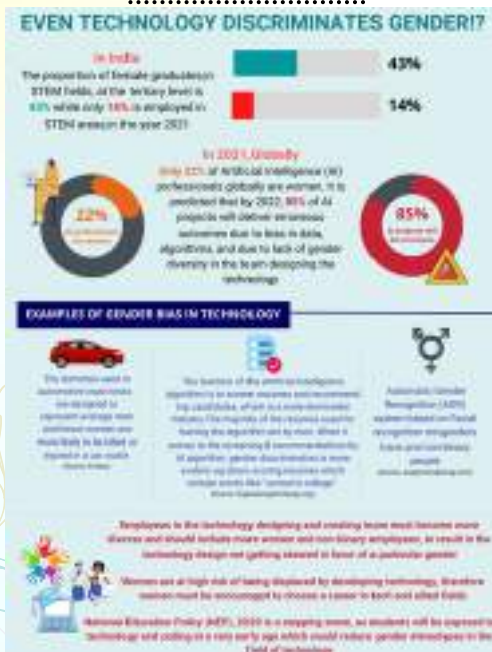


GENDER AND TECHNOLOGY



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Students' Speak: Bridging the gap one step at a time with SDG 5



"I'm not the woman president of Harvard, I'm the president of Harvard" These words by Drew Gilpin Faust, former President, Harvard University, reflects a reality and mindset, which is sadly still prevalent. And this problem, faced by billions of women around the world, is just the tip of the iceberg. There are more systemic inequalities faced by women and other genders, globally which silence their voices, scar their lives and are a brutal attack on their rights to life and dignity. SDG 5 is a reminder for all of us that despite the progress made towards reducing gender-based inequality, there continues to exist a range of inequalities which impact the lives of all forms of gender and make their life and living, even more complex. While working on this issue, the team could relate to the various inequalities flagged by the contributors through their articles.

We have all experienced and continue to be subjected to varied social norms that define our lives (personal and professional). Through this issue of SDG Samvaad, our endeavor has been to revisit those issues, introduce multiple perspectives to view them and induce in our readers a sense of critical thought process which would enable them to question social norms and gender stereotypes.



THE GLOBAL GOALS

MEET THE TEAM

Disclaimer: All views expressed in this issue are solely of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinion of CSSA.

We invite students, faculty, industry and the government to share their good practices on SDG 3,4,5,8,10,12, 17

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