



## WOMEN HARASSMENT PREVENTION CELL

### ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY

(Accredited with A+ Grade by NAAC (CGPA: 3.64) in the Third Cycle and Graded as Category – I University by the MHRD-UGC)



### Prof. K. MANIMEKALAI

Coordinator, Women Harassment Prevention Cell  
Chairperson, School of Social Sciences  
Professor and Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University  
Karaikudi- 630 003, Tamil Nadu, India.

## WOMEN HARASSMENT PREVENTION CELL

<b>AIM</b>	Women Harassment Prevention Cell aims to create a safe and respectful environment by preventing harassment, providing support to victims, and enforcing anti-harassment policies, promoting gender equality and cultural change
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<b>PURPOSE</b>	To prevent instances of harassment against women, provide a platform for reporting and addressing complaints, offer support to those affected, promote education and raise awareness about harassment issues, and cultivate a culture of respect and gender equality.
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<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<p><b>Empowering Education:</b> A core objective of the Women Harassment Prevention Cell is to empower individuals with comprehensive knowledge about diverse forms of harassment, pertinent legal regulations, and the potential consequences of such behaviors. By conducting workshops, seminars, and awareness initiatives, the cell equips members with the understanding needed to prevent and address harassment effectively.</p> <p><b>Cultivating Respectful Conduct:</b> Through strategic training sessions and awareness campaigns, the cell promotes a respectful culture within the organization or community. By promoting empathy, understanding, and adherence to the rights of women, the cell seeks to create an environment where harassment has no place to take root.</p> <p><b>Proactive Prevention:</b> The cell's ultimate objective is to proactively prevent instances of harassment from occurring. By instilling an environment of awareness, knowledge, and mutual respect, the cell aims to eliminate the conditions that can lead to harassment, thereby safeguarding the well-being and dignity of all members.</p>
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Year	Name	Designation & Dept./Division/College	Status
2016-2018	Dr.K.Usharani	Associate Professor, Department of Phy.Edu & Health Science, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.	Coordinator
	Dr.B.Sudha	Associate Professor, Department of Banking Management, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.	Member
	Dr.A.Padmapriya	Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science & Engineering, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.	Member
2018-2023	Dr.K.Manimekalai	Professor & Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.	Coordinator
	Dr.P.Veeramani	Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.	Deputy-Coordinator

## INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (ICC 2019)

S.No	Category	Name & Designation
1.	Presiding officer (women category in the cadre of professor)	Dr.S.Senthamizh Pavaï Professor, Centre for Tamil Culture, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.
2.	Three Faculty Members	1.Dr. A. Padmapriya, Associate Professor, Dept. of Computer Science, Alagappa University, Karaikudi. 2.Dr.J.Sujathamalini, Associate professor, & Head i/c Dept of Spl.Edu and Rehabilitation Science, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.
3.	Two Non-Teaching Employees	1.Mrs.SP.Geetha, Dy.Registrar(U), Alagappa University, Karaikudi. 2.Mrs.K.Lakshmi, Assistant. Alagappa University, Karaikudi.
4.	Three Students	1.Ms.A.Ashifa,II MCA Department of Computer Application, Alagappa University. 2.Ms.R.Kanitha,I Year,M.P.Ed. Department of Education, Alagappa University. 3.Ms.M.Surya, Research Scholar in Commerce, Alagappa University.
5.	One member from Non-Government Organization	1.Mr.Sekar , TRUPA , Sirukudalpatti,Thiruppathur , Sivagangai District.

## INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE (ICC 2023)

S.No	Category	Name and Designation
1.	Presiding officer (women category in the cadre of professor)	Dr.M.Sudha, Professor, Department of Tamil, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.
2.	Three Faculty Members	1.Dr.P.Veeramani, Department of Women's Studies 2.Dr.M.Ayisha Millath, Associate Professor, Alagappa Institute of Management, Alagappa University, Karaikudi. 3.Dr.B.Sundaravadivu, Assistant Professors, Department of Mathematics, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.
3.	Two Non-Teaching Employees	1.Dr.C.Meena, Assistant Registrar, RUSA Section, Alagappa University, Karaikudi. 2.Dr.B.Jeyamala, Superintendent, Finance Section, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.
4.	Three Students	1.Ms.G.Santhiya, Ph.D Scholar (FT), Department of Library Science and Information Technology, Alagappa University. 2.Ms.N.Bhuvaneshwari, Ph.D Research Scholar (FT), Department of Bioinformatics, Alagappa University. 3.Ms.S.Pushpa, Ph.D Scholar (FT), Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, Alagappa University
5.	One member from Non-Government Organization	Mr.Micheal D Anaraj, Joint Director, Thirupputtur Rural Uplift Project Association (TRUPA). Sirukudalpatti,Thiruppathur , Sivagangai District.

## ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT THROUGH SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION CELL

### **Symposium on Students and Screen: A New Addiction**

A One-Day Symposium on “Students and Screen: A New Addiction” was organized on 18.09.2017, under the aegis of the Centre & Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.

Prof.K.Manimekalai, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Alagappa University, while welcoming the gathering, highlighted the relevance and contemporary significance of the theme of the symposium and how it is intrinsically linked to students’ day-to-day activities. Healthy and productive human resources contributing to the nation’s development is the need of the hour and not addict of any kind, she added. Too much dependency on communication gadgets and instruments such as the Television, Cinema, Internet, and Smartphone has fostered an addictive behaviour on the part of the youngsters. “We should keep these instruments under our control and we should not live under their control”, she quipped. Spending quality time with our family members, friends and playing indoor and outdoor games would not only bring about happiness but also release us from the clutches of Screen Addiction.

Dr.K.R.Murugan, Professor and Head, Department of Social Work, Alagappa University, while inaugurating the symposium, stated that India’s future lies in the hands of the youngsters, who form 40 percentages in the total population of the country. Nurturing vibrant and healthy youth for the nation’s development becomes imperative in this context. He added that positive aspects of communication gadgets should be taken into account by the youth for their progress and they should always remember that any addiction would lead to negative impact on their lives making them depressed, irritable and anxiety-ridden persons. He illustrated the negative impact caused to some individuals owing to the impact of some negative video games.

While presenting an overview of Screen Addiction, Mrs. Leema Thomas, Psychologist and Student-Counsellor, Alagappa University, said unfortunately that the Screen Addiction could affect people of all age-groups and enumerated the serious symptoms associated with it. Disruption in performing one’s normal work and also mounting anxiety causing difficulties in carrying out ordinary duties and family responsibilities are the two major symptoms indicating this addiction. The affected person shows a feeling of overwhelming helplessness and anxiety when an attempt is made to stop the screen usage.

The person develops “poor impulse control”. By providing Behavioural Therapy, Motivational Support, Family Therapy and Counselling, this addiction could be set right successfully. She said the first phase of treatment should begin with “slow withdrawal” and “digital fasting” and then the addict must be encouraged to take to some hobbies such as reading, gardening, cycling, etc., and to spend more time with family and friends.



In the second session, Prof.J.Frank Ruben Jebaraj of American College, Madurai, dwelt on the situational factors in Screen Addiction and explained and illustrated how human behaviour and changes could affect day-to-day style of life. In the third session, Prof.J.John Jeyakamaraj, Department of Computer Science, American College, Madurai spoke on the impact of Screen Addiction on academic performance of students. He said this addiction affected the students leading to lack of concentration and results in poor skill development. He added that it created health problems, poor time-management, etc.

Dr.S.Poul Punitha, Assistant Professor, Centre for Women’s Studies, proposed a vote of thanks. More than 260 participants attended the symposium.

### **Leave No One Behind: End Violence against Women and Girls**

A Campaign against Gender-based Violence with the title “Leave No One Behind: End Violence against Women and Girls” was organized by the Centre for Women’s Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi, on 12.12.2017.



Prof.K.Manimekalai, Director, Centre for Women's Studies, in her thematic address, pointed out that the Centre in association with the Police personnel has conducted a number of awareness programmes to educate and ensure the safety and security of women and children. Atrocities against women, she added, are on the increase day after day. At the global level, around 35% of women are subjected to physical torture and mental pinpricks only from close relatives and close associates. She said that in India 75% of these problems emanate from husbands or close relatives. Three out of four children face cruelties, intimidations and violence. Bearing all these in mind the Centre is conducting a number of awareness programmes for the benefit of the society.

Presiding over the function, Prof.S.Subbiah, Vice-Chancellor, Alagappa University, said that there is no proper awareness among Indian women and children about their own safety and security. He added that this kind of campaigns and events will create awareness in them. He specified that most of the women and children in India are in need of such sensitization. This can effectively be done only by educational institutions. It has been found that women become victims of sexual harassment mostly from close members of their families and associates. Children who are prone to use cellular devices frequently and carelessly are ever to be on their guard. He added that it is the responsibility of their parents to identify and give proper precautionary guidelines to their children. Their advice will go a long way in safeguarding their children from being victims of many crimes and violence.

Around 5,660 young men and women carry on their studies at Alagappa University Campus and 75% of this student-population comprises women. The reason for the increase in the enrolment of women students in the University is owing to its foolproof and efficient

security system prevailing in the premises. Women students of the University feel very secure in the campus. In case women sense any untoward happening around them, they have to reach out to the police immediately. Women should always be conscious of their right to enjoy full freedom and this consciousness will help them to progress in life. If they use their freedom judiciously, he added, they could escape from many precarious situations and violence.

Thiru.G.Karthikeyan, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Karaikudi, was the Chief Guest and in his special address, he said that the main aim of the Police force in Karaikudi is to eradicate violence shown in any form to anyone. He added that different forms of indiscriminate violence against women are prevailing at the global level. Their sufferings, in fact, start right from their being a foetus in the womb of their mothers and continue unabated till they go to their tomb. Through online social media, many educated women unknowingly entangle themselves in inextricable problems. Such victims can get protection from the Police, he assured the members of the audience. He added that pamphlets regarding the safety and security of women were distributed to evoke greater response from the public.

As a part of this programme on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017, various competitions were held for the students and the winners were given prizes at the function. Dr.P.Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies, proposed a vote of thanks. Three hundred students from various Departments participated in the programme.

### **Inauguration of Women Employee's Club**

A "Women Employee's Club" was set up at Alagappa University, Karaikudi and inaugurated on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at the Convocation Seminar Hall, Alagappa University. The main objective of the club is to strengthen the role of women employees of Alagappa University through collectivism.

Prof. K. Manimekalai, Dean, Faculty of Arts, welcomed the gathering and introduced the Coordinators and the other members of the club. In her welcome address, she highlighted the importance of the club and its function for the welfare of all women staff (both teaching and non-teaching). She pointed out that a happy woman would be able to promote happiness in her family and workplace. She listed out the various activities to be performed by the club viz. providing personal counselling, creating awareness on health issues (physical and mental health), arranging evening tuition for the children of the staff, running a University Crèche,

teaching Yoga and creating awareness on contemporary issues and so on for the benefit of all the women staff of the University.

Presiding over the function, Prof.S.Subbiah, Vice-Chancellor, of Alagappa University, pointed out that Alagappa University is the first University in Tamil Nadu to set up a Women Employee's Club to look after the welfare of the women staff of Alagappa University. He hoped that the club within the campus would create safe spaces for women employees to discuss difficult issues arising, both at home and workplace. Also, he added that the club would provide a fun environment, help in the process of a healthier understanding of womanhood help in increasing self-esteem and personality development, and impart increased skills to take public action to prevent violence against women. He asked women to be always conscious of their rights and privileges in order to enjoy full freedom and to progress in life.

Mrs. S. Geetha Lakshmi, Inspector of Police, All Women Police Station, Sivagangai, delivered the keynote address in the programme. She appreciated the coordinators for their efforts taken for establishing the club specifically for women staff of the University. In her keynote address, she said that the club should pave the way for social change through championing the cause of women, children, and families and help members of the club to take a progressive stance on such issues as child welfare, health and women's rights.

Dr. M. Jayabharathi, Deputy Registrar and one of the Coordinators of the Women Employee's Club, at Alagappa University, proposed a vote of thanks. More than 100 women teaching and non-teaching employees from various Departments and administrative sections of Alagappa University participated in the programme.



## **Second Nationwide Competition on Legal Rights for Women**



Legal awareness can empower people to demand justice, accountability and effective remedies at all levels. The National Commission for Women has a view to disseminate information on constitutional and legal rights for women. In this regard, the Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University in collaboration with the National Commission for Women has conducted a second nationwide competition on legal rights for women for all University Department students on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2018. Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, Women's Studies presided over the competition and 450 students participated in the competition. Prof. N. Rajendran, Vice Chancellor, of Alagappa University distributed the certificates and cash prizes for the Winners of the Competition on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2018.

## **Awareness Programme on Social Empowerment of Women through Eradication of Dowry System**



The Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi in collaboration with Tamil Nadu State Commission for Women, Chennai and Ford Trust, Tiruppattur, conducted an "Awareness Programme on Social Empowerment of Women through Eradication of Dowry System" on 4th December 2018.

While welcoming the gathering, Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, remarked that by providing adequate education and employment to women, the evil impact of this loathsome system could be ended. Quoting the National Crime Records Bureau, Prof. Manimekalai pointed out while 2500 bride-burning incidents are brought to the notice of the police every year, the number of dowry deaths is said to be about 9000 in India and this number is on the increase at a rate of 1 to 2 percent every year. 21 dowry deaths are reported across the country every day but the conviction rate is only 34.7%. She added that dwindling rate of 940 women per 1000 men is also a cause for concern. She asked women to be courageous to face challenges and seek employment and that would make them economically independent so as to create confidence in them.

Prof. N. Rajendran, Vice-Chancellor, Alagappa University, in his presidential address, said that in India the ancient dowry system was a gesture of love shown by parents during the wedding of their daughters but with the passage of time the system was abused and it was transformed into a vital source of income for bridegrooms' families to meet the pressing social and economic needs. He further stated that imparting socially relevant education to all women would be the major solution to end this evil system of dowry in India. He emphasized that education alone could play a key role in bringing about social transformation; and hence women should get adequate education, acquire knowledge and be economically independent to overcome the issues and problems related to the dowry system. The eradication of the system will not only raise the standard of living of women but also emancipate them from the heinous crimes indulged in by the patriarchal society.

Mr.SP. Manikandan, Senior Lawyer, Karaikudi, in the course of his special address, expatiated on the loss of domestic rhythm, because of the cruel practice of dowry. Today Family Courts, Mahila Courts and All Women Police Stations exclusively for women have been established to help women find solutions to the issues confronting them. He added that awareness programmes of this type will go a long way in strengthening the laws for protecting women from the problems encountered by them and also in putting an end to the barbaric acts done because of dowry system.

As a sequel to the programme, a documentary film produced by UNICEF was screened to create awareness among the students, both men and women, of the University. Mr. Paul Azhagarajan, Director, Ford Trust, proposed a vote of thanks. More than 250 students were enlightened through the conduct of this awareness programme. The students took an oath to prevent the dowry system.

## Special Lecture on Stress Management

A special lecture on “Stress Management” was organised on 24 July 2019 under RUSA 2.0 of the Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi.

Dr. P. Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University while welcoming the gathering, highlighted stress management from an Indian perspective. She explained the concepts related to stress management and how it is operated in contemporary society.



The Department of Women’s Studies organised a Special Lecture on “Stress Management” on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019. Dr.Lloyds Fernando, M.B.B.S., M.D., Psychiatrist, Health Care Centre, Alagappa University, Karaikudi served as resource person for the special lecture. The Special lecture includes the origin of stress management from a global perspective. He explained various types of stress and discussed how stress affects the contribution in the workplace as well as the student community. He pointed out that the ABC strategy of stress management will reduce stress and the individual can feel free and relaxed. This will enhance the contribution of individuals either in the workplace or in studies. Dr.I.Sivakumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Women’s Studies delivered a vote of thanks. Sixty students and staff have participated.

## Speciallecture on Mental Health



The Department of Women’s Studies organized a special lecture titled **Mental Health** on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2019 under RUSA 2.0 for the faculties of the Faculty of Arts, Alagappa University.

Prof.K.Manimekalai, Head, Women’s Studies welcomed the gathering and highlighted the importance of mental health of the employees at work place. She insisted that

workplace stress is a common problem. When it left unchecked, it can lead to bigger problems, such as depression and anxiety. Also, she noted that stress not only creates negative emotions, the inability to concentrate on work and strained relationships with colleagues.

Mrs. Leema Thomas, Psychologist, Health Care Centre, Alagappa University served as resource person for the special lecture on mental health. In her lecture, she focused on mental illness which causes disturbances in thinking, behaviour, and emotions that make it difficult to cope with the ordinary demands of life. She also explained psychosocial factors that impact



employees' responses towards work conditions, ultimately lead to psychological health problems. Further, the Psychologist gave recommendations to build self-confidence in order to overcome mental illness. At the end of the session, the faculty members interacted with the resource person. Dr. P. Veeramani, Assistant Professor, delivered a vote of thanks.

## **Two Day International Conference on "Women, Health and Safety in India"**

A Two-Day International Conference on "Women, Health and Safety in India" was organized at Alagappa University, Karaikudi, on 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019 under the aegis of the Department of Women's Studies. Sponsored under the RUSA 2.0 Scheme of MHRD, the Conference was attended by more than 100 participants from across the country and Canada.

Prof. K. Manimekalai, Professor and Head, Department of Women's Studies, in her welcome cum thematic address, said that health factor has become a central concern in development. It is a key to productivity. A nation cannot develop without healthy women. Gender discrimination has undermined their access to health care for a long time. Many ill health conditions have significant impact on economic growth and development. Owing to lifestyle changes many women are prone to psychological problems such as anxiety, depression and consequent infertility issues. Violence and discrimination affects seriously the

lives of many women and hold them back from playing a full part in home, workplace and society. She said that the discussions in the conference would suggest ways to control discriminatory practices that impede women's access to health care and safety in the society.

Presiding over the Inaugural Session of the Conference, Prof.N.Rajendran, ViceChancellor of Alagappa University, said that despite the fact that women play a significant role in various developments of the society, their contribution is still held in periphery. He added that health is a fundamental right that is guaranteed in several Human Rights Treaties. Many women in India belonging to various socio-economic milieu are either marginalized or neglected on account of gender discrimination. Though there is improvement in providing medical treatment for physical ailments of Indian women in the recent years, not much attention has been paid to the mental health of women. Mental health problems encountered by women need to be given more attention as women are away from expressing their emotional problems in the conservative Indian society. This problem has to be viewed sympathetically and women should be encouraged to express their feelings and emotions without repressing them. The advancement of gender equality and equity, empowerment, and elimination of discrimination would help in improving women's health and well-being. In spite of the best efforts to encourage women's education, studies have revealed that many rural girls reaching adolescent age tend to discontinue their studies. It is attributed to a lack of separate rest rooms for girls in rural schools. Now steps are being taken by the government to improve the facilities. He hoped that real issues and ground realities brought to light in the discussions of the conference would help in policy making.

He further added that 46 distinguished professors and scientists from 19 countries were invited to the campus under RUSA 2.0 scheme to update the curriculum (during February to April 2019) so as to enhance excellence in teaching and research. He announced that 'h' index' of the University has increased to 72.263, scholars pursuing Ph.D. programmes at the University Departments are given a stipend of Rs.20,000/- with certain conditions and 35 Post-Doctoral Fellows are given a stipend of Rs.75,000/- each under RUSA 2.0 scheme. He concluded his speech by stating that the adoption of villages by the Departments under the Village Extension Programme has helped the students learn about the ground realities and societal issues.

A book containing 180 abstracts of research papers was released by Prof.Vaithehi Vijayakumar, Vice-Chancellor of Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal and copies were received by the dignitaries.

In her inaugural address, Prof.Vaithehi Vijayakumar, while highlighting the advantages accrued on account of the introduction of modern smart technology, stated that the safety, security and health of women has improved in the current era of the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution. Elaborating on the factors affecting health and safety, she explained how the problems could be overcome by the efficient use of technology. She added that the Internet of Things could help in the health care of women. And it has the potential not only to keep the patients safe and healthy but also help the physicians to provide efficient health care services. She referred to the invention and use of the latest healthcare devices which are of great help in diagnosing and monitoring diseases. She stressed the importance of ensuring safety for women in the society for all-round progress of the nation. In order to overcome Cyber Crimes, she hinted at how SMART security systems and several apps are being used today to protect women and Children. She made a mention of several wearable devices and privacy apps available to protect women. She also referred to Women Helpline 181 which provides 24 hour emergency and non-emergency response to women affected by violence including sexual offences and harassment both in public and private sphere, including in the family, community, workplace etc.

In her keynote address, Prof.Meera Kaur, Department of Family Medicine, University of Manitoba, Canada, stated that knowledge about women's heart, health and nutrition is necessary. A heart disease is the leading cause of death in women. In fact, it kills one woman in every 80 seconds. According to available statistics, in today's world, one in three women develops some kind of heart ailment. Heart diseases kill more women than all cancers combined. She said that women in Indian society are expected to play multiple roles which severely impact on their overall health and affects their heart. She added that proper changes in dietary system and lifestyles can safeguard the functioning of the heart and lower the risk of heart-attack upto 80%. She referred to the American Health Association recommendations for a healthy diet consisting of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meat, fat-free dairy products, oily fish and little salt which could protect heart. She exhorted women to undergo a risk score test and follow a prescribed heart-healthy diet and lifestyle in order to prevent and manage heart diseases.

Dr. P. Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies, proposed a vote of thanks. In the technical sessions that followed the inaugural function Prof.Molly Kuruvilla, Director, Department of Women's Studies, Calicut University, spoke on "Implications of Gender- based Violence on Women's Health", Dr.R.Rathinamala, Research

Officer, Central Council for Research in Siddha, Puducherry “delivered a lecture on “Gender-specific Health and Treatment” and Prof.K.R.Murugan, Head, Department of Social Work, Alagappa University spoke on “Safety and Security Mechanisms for Women”.

### **Awareness Programme on the Importance of Education**

“Awareness Programme on the Importance of Future Education” was organized by the Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at Bharath Public School, Aaravayal. The Principal gave the welcome address and Dr. K. Manimekalai Professor and Head, delivered a lecture on the importance of future Education. She emphasized that education is playing a very important role in the lives of an individual and the society. The basic aim of education is to help each individual to inspire their own potential. She also pointed out how to gain knowledge, train the human mind, and bolster confidence and career advancement. She has highlighted that robotics and artificial intelligence will allow any of us, to easily and quickly find answers, create products, or accomplish tasks, expressing our desires to attain our future goals. She concluded that proper education will change the quality of life of a person in the future. In this programme, more than 78 students and 8 teachers participated and benefited. The sessions were very informative and interactive, in which the students actively participated and clarified their doubts. Finally, the Vice Principal, of Bharath Public School, proposed a vote of thanks.

### **Lecture on Child Abuse**

On 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2020 “Lecture on Child Abuse” was organized by Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi, held at Bharath Public School. The programme commenced with welcome note by Mr.Anilkumar, Principal, Bharath Public School. Thereafter, Dr.T.Murugesan, Project Associate, Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi, delivered a lecture on “Child Abuse”. The purpose of the programme was to sensitize the children about child abuse and to prevent the behavioral issues from various risk factors. He emphasized that there are many forms of child maltreatment, including neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation and emotional abuse. He also discussed about how to spot the warning signs of child abuse and what can be done to help keep children safe. He showed the pictures and videos related to child abuse and how to protect themselves. He concluded that when children and their families have access to safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments, individuals and communities flourish. Nearly 75 students were actively participated and enriched their knowledge about how to

prevent from child abuse. Finally, Mrs.Amutha, Vice Principal, Bharath Public School, thanked everyone.

## **Rally on Safety and Security of Women**



Under the aegis of the Department of Women's Studies and Women Harassment Prevention Cell a "Rally on Safety and Security of Women" was conducted on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 at 10.00 a.m. The Rally started from Aariyabhan Bus Stop and reached Alagappa University Main campus. Dr.P.Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, welcomed the participants and Prof. N. Rajendran, Vice-Chancellor, Alagappa University, flagged off the rally. The aim of the rally was to promote awareness about the safety and security of women and girls in private and public spheres.

Prof. H. Gurumallesh Prabu, Registrar, Alagappa University, 30 teaching and non-teaching staff and nearly 200 students participated in the rally. Dr. S. Poulpunitha, Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies delivered the vote of thanks.

## **National Webinar on Menstrual Health Status of Women and Children**

The Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi organized the Online National Webinar on 15-07-2020. Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, welcomed the gatherings and spoke about the importance of maintaining menstrual health among college students and its impact on marriage life. Ms. R. Abirami Sridhar, Trustee, Nature Trust, Thanneerpall, Tamil Nadu, addressed, the gatherings on the health status of women and children, and shared her experience related to menstrual hygiene and the importance of it.

## **International Webinar on Social Transformation: A Gender Gaze in Covid-19**

International Webinar on Social Transformation: A Gender Gaze in Covid 19 was organized by the Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi. The Five days Online National Webinar on 24.07.2020, 29-07-2020, 06-08-2020, 13-08-2020 and 14-08-2020. Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, of the Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, welcomed and addressed the issue of gender discrimination and social transformation during COVID-19. Dr. Eszter Zsofia Toth, Institute of Social and Economic History, E.L.TE University, Hungary, Dr Premalatha Karupiah, Associate Professor, School of Social Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia, Dr Siva Mathiyazhagan, Associate Director, SAFE Lab Columbia University, New York, USA, Prof. Asha Shukla, Vice Chancellor, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar University of Social Science Mhow, Indore, Madhya Pradesh are the distinguished speakers. They highlighted the following matters.

- The importance and uniqueness of COVID-19,
- Understanding the role of women in community development during COVID-19,
- Promote knowledge on women's participation in public administration,
- Understand the challenges faced by women in COVID-19,
- Information on Gender Sensitive Indicators and Gender Action Plan during COVID-

## **National Webinar on Human Rights and Women Education**

The Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi organized the Online National Webinar on 23-12-2020. Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, welcomed the gatherings and spoke about human rights and peace. Prof. Sabiha Hussain, Director, Sarojini Naidu Centre for Women's Studies Jamia Milla Islamia University, New Delhi was the distinguished speaker created awareness about the State, National and International Enforcement Mechanisms on Human Rights, It reflects the changing mindset of men who are ready to break the fetters of patriarchy system.



## **Two - Day National Seminar on Prevalence of Screen Addiction Among College Students**

Under the aegis of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) a Two-Day National Conference on “Prevalence of Screen Addiction Among College Students” was organised by the Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2021.

Prof.K.Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University and Former Vice-Chancellor of Mother Teresa Women’s University, Kodaikanal, while welcoming the gathering, highlighted the relevance and current significance of this National Seminar and elaborated the impact of screen addiction on physical, mental and social well being of adolescents. She added that screen addiction is worse than drug addiction which affects the entire world and Human Development Index as well. She noted that due to screen addiction suicide rates are increasing among the individuals aged between 10-24 years and their thoughts are preoccupied with a game, social media or smart phone even when it is not being used. She pointed out that nearly 27% of children are spending more than 3 hours a day on social media and exhibits the symptoms of poor mental health. She added that studies have shown that men are addicted to online games, cyber porn and online gambling, while women become addicted to social media and online shopping. She noted that out of 7.8 billion world population 5.22 billion population are unique mobile phone users and check their devices 63 times a day. She referred various cases relating to ill effects of screen addiction at national and international level and asked students to safeguard themselves from cyber crime. She

asked the students to disseminate the message to the people that contributes to physical, mental and social well being of people and nation as well.

Prof. M. Selvam, Vice-Chancellor, Bharathidasan University, Trichy, in his inaugural address, he appreciated the Department of Women's Studies for organizing a conference on a topic of Vital interest, which is the pressing need of the hour.



### **Series of Awareness Programmes on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition And Redressal) Act, 2013**

The Department of Women's Studies and the Women Harassment Prevention Cell has organised the 16 days Activism to Raise Awareness and Prevent Gender Based Violence Against Women and Girls from 25<sup>th</sup> November to 10th December 2021. On 25<sup>th</sup> the 16 days of Activism was inaugurated by Dr. V.T. Usha, Former Head, Centre for Women's Studies, Pondicherry University. She highlighted the various types of violence faced by women and children and its impact on their health, economy and education. On 26<sup>th</sup> Nov 2021 orientation lecture was given by Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, for the Faculty of Arts students at Mary Wollstone Craft Hall in Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University. She highlighted means, measures and strategies to overcome from various social issues. On 29<sup>th</sup> Nov 2021 awareness programme on Zero violence to the student of education, Alagappa University at Convocation Seminar Hall of Alagappa University. Dr. I. Sivakumar, Women's Studies highlighted the depiction of male pronouns viz his, him, he and himself in novels and general books, which indicates the portrayal of male domination in novels, text books etc., Dr. P. Sindhuja, Women's Studies, gave a lecture on Combating the Trafficking of Women and Children in India.

On 1<sup>st</sup> Dec 2021 awareness programme on Prevention of Gender Based Violence was organised to the Alagappa Institute of Skill Development and Fine Arts students in the Convocation Seminar Hall. Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, highlighted the need of gender equality in all sectors and created awareness about the issues faced by the girl children, such as education, nutrition, forced child marriage, legal rights, and medical rights. She also highlighted the State, National and International Enforcement Machineries that works to protect the girl children from various social issues. Dr.S. Poulpunitha, Assistant Professor, Women's Studies, Alagappa University discussed the various forms of violence faced by women and measures to overcome those violences. Dr. S. Geetha, Women's Studies, Alagappa University discussed about the subtle violence and its impact on physical and mental health of women.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec 2021, the orientation lecture on prevention and harassment of women at workplace was given to the students of Faculty of Science in Alagappa University. Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, welcomed the gatherings and said that Gender-based violence is experienced by women in every country. Yet not taken seriously and it is human rights violation. She highlighted the impact of violence against women on women's health, they are not allowed to participate fully in society, which affects their enjoyment of socio-economic, education and decision making rights. She also added that it creates a tremendous physical and psychological suffering for both women and their families. Dr. I. Sivakumar and Dr. P. Sindhuja, Women's Studies, Alagappa University has focused on the impact of gender based violence at workplace and its reflections towards family and society

On 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec Poster Making Competitions were conducted to the Alagappa University students at Mary Wollstone Craft Hall, at Women's Studies Department, Alagappa University.

The Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi, District Legal Services Authority, Sivagangai and National Commission for women jointly organized a Legal Awareness Programme on Dec 06, 2021. Prof. C. Sekar, Registrar, said it was an encouraging sign that 74% of those pursuing higher education at Alagappa University in the current year are women. M. Parameshwari, Secretary/Pro-Judge of District Legal Services Authority, who presided over the function, said gender equality would pave the way for reducing crimes against women. She said children and women who face problems can contact the helpline numbers 1098 and 181, respectively. M.P. Murugan, Pro-Judge, Devakkottai, in

his keynote address, said that it was ironical that at a time when women excelled in all fields, the violence against them was also increasing day by day, Dowry Prohibition Act, Domestic Violence Prevention Act and various other Acts were there to safeguard women, he said. Advocate S. Palaniappan and Radha spoke about the laws that safeguard women from various social issues.

On 7<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021, the Movie 'The Great Indian Kitchen' was screened which won Kerala State Film Award for Best Film, Best Screenplay and Best Sound Designer. Discussion was made on that movie regarding the traditional role of women that depicted in the movie. On 8<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021, competition on Power Point Presentation regarding the prevention of Gender Based Violence was conducted for the students of Alagappa University in the Department of Women's Studies.

The Department of Women's Studies has adopted the Alagappa Model Higher Secondary School, Karaikudi and awareness programme was conducted on good and bad touch and child rights for Alagappa Model Higher Secondary School students on 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021. On 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021 exhibition on poster was organized for the students of Alagappa University. Students actively participated and gained knowledge on the importance of promoting gender equality and the consequences of gender based violence.



On 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021, the valedictory of the 16 days activities was ended up with the lecture of Dr. C. Aruna, Head (i/c), Centre for Women's Studies, Pondicherry University and Dr. Amurthraj R.M., Kerala Institute of Local Administration, Kerala. Both of them elaborated the significance of the 16 days activism which was initiated in 1991 by the first Women's Global Leadership Institute, held by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) at Rutgers University. They also highlighted the shadow pandemic that occurred during COVID-19 and illustrated its impact on women, family members and society

as well. More than 1000 students actively participated and benefited from this 16 days activism that raised awareness on prevention of gender based violence in public and private spheres.



## **Legal Awareness Programme on Women's Health and Legal Service Day**

Alagappa University, Department of Women's Studies, Karaikudi, District Legal Services Commission, Sivagangai and National Commission for Women jointly organized a Legal Awareness Programme on Women's Health and Legal Service Day on 06-12-2021 at Alagappa University Convocation Seminar Hall.

Prof. C Sekar, Registrar, Alagappa University welcomed the participants and spoke about the economic rights of women in education and the sexual problems they face. Described the security of women in India is very low compared to other countries and therefore it is very important to ensure their safety. In his speech that 74% of women are pursuing higher education in the current year at the University which indicates women's progress in education.

Mrs. M. Parameshwari, Secretary / Pro-Judge of the District Legal Services Commission presided over the function. Ensure the protection of women, those below the poverty line and the elderly and the need for protection from the legal challenges facing the family and society. She noted that all assistance is being done free of charge by the District Legal Services Commission. She said that gender equality was essential in today's situation and would pave the way for reducing crimes against women. She also called on the helpline

number 1098 to protect children from problems and the helpline number 181 to protect them from crimes against women.

Mr. M.P. Murugan, pro-judge, Devakottai attended and delivered a keynote address. Today women excel in all fields but the violence against them is also increasing day by day. Dowry Abolition Act to Protect Women, Domestic Violence Prevention Act, Sexual Violence Against Women in the Workplace, are as many laws to protect women. He urged women to use the schemes and realize their status and make progress in the society.

Mr. S. Palaniappan, Advocate attended the function and advised the women to face the challenges of real life by imparting practical knowledge on the rights and solutions provided by various laws relating to women.

Ms. Radha, Advocate attended the ceremony and spoke about the laws on women's welfare. Article 15 (3) of the Constitution makes separate laws for the protection and advancement of women. She noted that special laws have been enacted for improvement.



The event was attended by more than 200 University students and professors and research students. At the end of the ceremony, Dr. Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University delivered vote of Thanks.

## **Gender Sensitization programmes conducted by the Gender Champions of Alagappa University**

### **Event 1**

The Gender Champions of Alagappa University conducted Gender Sensitization programme for the students of Tourism and Hotel Management, Alagappa University on 30.03.2022. Ms. H. Priyavarshini, Gender Champion of Alagappa University welcomed



the gathering and highlighted the need of promoting gender equality at all levels. Dr. K. Alamelu, Professor and Head/c, Department of Tourism and Hotel Management in her presidential address elaborated the status of women in India and the challenges faced by them in both private and public spheres. Dr. P. Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University in her keynote address discussed the various discriminations faced by women and girls in family, schools, colleges, workplaces etc.,

Mr. V. Michael Thibon, II B.Sc Dept. of. Tourism and Hotel Management and Gender Champion of Alagappa University provided a lecture on What is Gender?. He quoted some of the examples that have been projected on mass media which discriminated and assigned the socially constructed gender roles. He highlighted that both men and women are equal, men and boys should share the responsibilities of their mother, sister and spouse and insisted to change the traditional mindset of men which inhibits the development of women and girls.

Ms. M. Sneha Bharathi, II B.Sc Dept. of. Tourism and Hotel Management and Gender Champion of Alagappa University discussed the various types of gender based violence faced by women and girl children. She particularly highlighted the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and said that nearly 200 million women and girls have undergone FGM in 30 Countries of Africa. Ms.V. Selvaraj, II B.Sc Dept. of. Tourism and Hotel Management and Gender Champion of Alagappa University spoke about the importance of promoting gender equality and its impact on national development. He also highlighted the triple role carried out by women: production, reproduction and community work.



Ms. M. Malavika II B.Sc Dept. of. Tourism and Hotel Management and Gender Champion of Alagappa University discussed the constitutional provisions, laws, acts and women helpline numbers that protect, safeguard and rehabilitate and safe them from various social issues. Dr. I. Sivakumar, Teaching Assistant, Dept. of. Women's Studies, Alagappa University proposed vote of thanks. Nearly 80 students participated and get sensitized on significance of promoting gender equality and equity.

## Event 2

On 31.03.2022 the Gender Champions of Alagappa University organised the Gender Sensitization Programme for the students of Alagappa Institute of Skill Development at Alagappa University Convocation Seminar Hall. Ms. S. Gayathiri, II M.Sc Alagappa Institute of Skill Development, delivered the welcome



address. Prof. K. Manimekalai, Former Vice – Chancellor of Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodikanal, and Head, Department of Women's Studies, in her presidential address elaborated the importance of promoting gender equality and also highlighted ways and means in promoting the gender equity and equality.

Dr. T. Thendral, Teaching Assistant, Alagappa Institute of Skill Development delivered the speech on women empowerment by quoting one female character (Ambai) from the Mythical scripture Mahābhārat. She discussed various



attempts carried out by Ambai for her survival and highlighted the various sources that Ambai could taken instead of falling down into fire. Ms. V. Kayalvizhi & Ms. V. Mathivathani II B. Voc Fashion Technology and Gender Champions of Alagappa University spoke about feminism and ways to adopt in daily life for promoting gender equality. Ms. R. Keerthana, and Ms. S. Narmada I B. Voc Fashion Technology and Gender Champions of Alagappa University highlighted the importance of gender diversity practices in organizations, institutions etc., They pointed out that globally only 43% of women involved in work force. Hence, adopting gender diversity practices attract, retain the female employees which intern benefits the female employees and the organizations, institutions etc.,



Ms. V. Kanimozhi, II B.Voc Software Development gave lecture on concepts of gender equality. She highlighted the constitutional provisions and legal rights for safeguarding women and children from various social issues. Finally mime had been played by the Gender Champions of Alagappa University which depicted the gender discrimination faced by the girl children and highlighted that parents should treat both boys and girls equally in all aspects from health, education, employment, marriage etc., Dr. P. Sindhuja, Teaching Assistant, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University proposed vote of thanks. Nearly, 200 students participated and benefited from this programme.

### Event 3



The Department of Women's Studies has made an MoU with Alagappa Model Higher Secondary School and has organised the Gender Sensitization Programme on 01.04.2022. Mr. M.S. Rajapandian, Head Master, Alagappa Model Higher Secondary School in his inaugural address elaborated the significance of initiating Gender Champion

Club in all educational institutions.. Dr. P. Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Women's Studies, Alagappa University gave lecture on roles and responsibilities of gender champions and various ways and means in promoting the gender fair society. Dr. S. Poul Punitha, Assistant Professor gave lecture on Gender Concepts and said that it refers to the learnt roles, norms and expectations on the basis of one's sex. It is a socio cultural attributes that define a boy and a girl, of a man and a woman. The norms/values, dress codes, attitudes, opportunities, rights, mobility, freedom of expression, priorities and even dreams are determined by the society. It varies from society to society and can be changed. She further added that some of the social norms attribute and values act as obstacles for the development of women, hence the deconstruction of the social values, norms and attributes would help to promote the gender fair society. She highlighted that the socialization process starts from the family, so



as the students they can bring some positive changes by changing the norms, beliefs and attributes. Mrs. K.R. Uma Periyanyagi, PG Assistant in Tamil, Alagappa Model Higher Secondary School, proposed the vote of thanks. Nearly, 100 students participated and benefited from the programme.

#### Event 4

The Gender Champions of Alagappa University V. Abinayasankarai and S. Rajasuriya I year M.A. Gender Studies, had organized the gender sensitization programme on 08.04.2022 for school students in Government High School at Vagavasal, Pudukottai. The Head



Master Mr. R. Kumaravel welcomed the gathering and insisted the students to use this opportunity so as to create awareness about the gender equality in our society. V. Abinayasankarai and S. Rajasuriya explained the various forms of gender based violence faced by the girls and women in public and private places.

The students actively observed the lecture and asked questions in promoting the zero violence and gender fair society. Nearly 100 students actively participated and benefited from the programme. The programme was co –ordinated by Dr. T. Murugesan, Project Associate, Women’s Studies, Alagappa University.

### **Awareness Programme on Legal Provisions for Safety and Security of Women**

The Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi, Free Legal Aid Centre organised an awareness programme on Legal Provisions for Safety and Security of Women for staff and students of Department of Women’s Studies Alagappa University on 27.08.2022, at



Marry Wollstonecraft Hall. 42 students and staff participated in the programme. The main

objective of the programme is to sensitize the students about the Legal Provisions available for Safety and Security of Women and also to make them learn the constitutional rights for women.



While welcoming the gathering, Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, highlighted about Free Legal Aid and she added informative points about punishable

offence.

In the session, Adv. Nelson Jeeva, Mediation Women Centre Counselling, elaborated about the Right to Information Act (2005), Hindu Marriage Act (1955), Domestic Violence Act (2005), The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 (property rights), The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (2013), emphasized on the problematic side of being silent to the societal injustices and detailed procedure of Court Notice.

Finally, there were discussions and doubts of students regarding POCSO Act (2012), Sexual Harassment at Work Place effectiveness and in camera proceeding, victim blaming, Uniform Civil Code were cleared. Dr.P. Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, proposed a vote of thanks. 42 students and staff participated in the programme.

## **Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness Programme**

The Department of Women's Studies in collaboration with Karaikudi Taluk Legal Service Committee has organized the Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness Programme on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 at Central Library Seminar Hall. Dr. P. Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University in her welcome address highlighted the significance of the programme and insisted the students and staff to disseminate the knowledge on various laws and acts that support and safe guard the girls and women.

Prof. G. Ravi, Vice-Chancellor of Alagappa University in his presidential address elaborated the functions of Taluk Legal Service Committee and said that the main aim of the committee is to provide free and competent Legal Services to the weaker sections of the society, promotes justice on a basis of equal opportunity and ensures that justice are not

denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities. He pointed out that the raising consciousness about the legal literacy would empower the women and girls and promote the violence free society. He also highlighted an important legal principle that says “ignorance of the law is no excuse.” which means that people can’t defend their actions by claiming they didn’t know the law. Further, he mentioned that access to justice is a fundamental right guaranteed to all citizens by Article 14 and Article 21 of the Constitution of India. Denying a person in accessing justice deeply affects the quality of one’s life.

Prof. S. Thanuskodi, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Alagappa University, in his keynote address said that while India has enacted several acts for the welfare of the people only few people are approaching the justice delivery system, when they are in need. Majority of the people due to lack of awareness they are victimized and hence to avoid such conditions the Taluk Legal service Committee promotes awareness about the legal rights and various means and ways in accessing the justice. Further, he elaborated the significance and functions of Consumer Protection Act 1986, Human Rights Act 1993 and Right to Information Act, 2005.

Mr. A. Dharanidharan, Chairperson/District Munsif, Karaikudi in his special address highlighted that crimes against women in Tamil Nadu went up from 5,934 in 2019 to 6,630 in 2020, and 8,501 in 2021, as per NCRB data. These crimes include ‘Cruelty by Husband or His Relatives’, ‘Assault on Women with Intent to Outrage her Modesty’, and ‘Kidnapping & Abduction of Women’, and ‘Rape’. He highlighted the years of sentences for violation of those section 354 IPC -outrage the modesty of women, 354 A IPC - Sexual Harassment and Punishment for Sexual Harassment, 354 C IPC - Voyeurism and 354 D IPC – Stalking .

Mr. V. Kannappan, Advocate in his speech said that in Tamil Nadu the Right to Information Act was enacted on 1997 but in India it was enacted on 2005. He highlighted that there are 31 sections in RTI 2005, and Section 8,9,19, and 11 deals with disclosure of information. Further, he discussed the significance and importance of RTI 2005 and insisted the students to propagate the information that they have gained through this programme.



Mrs. S. Ratha, Advocate, Karaikudi discussed the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, the Act that protects children from offences of sexual assault, sexual



harassment and pornography. She highlighted the various section that protect the children while doing investigations and methods of doing investigation in POCSO act, 2012.

Nearly 100 students and faculty members from various departments were benefited from this programme. Finally, vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. I. Sivakumar, Teaching Assistant, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University.

### **One Day Awareness Programme on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2012 for Alagappa University Employees**

The Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, Karaikudi, organised 16 days of activism to raise awareness and prevent violence against women and girls from November 25 to December 10, 2022. As part of this, on December 8, 2022, the Department of Women's Studies organised a One-day Awareness Programme for Alagappa University Employees on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act 2012.



While welcoming the gathering, Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's, Alagappa University, and Former Vice-Chancellor of Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, stated that women do not have basic rights in the workplace and women should be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace and in the family. The main focus of this awareness camp is on how to prevent violence against women in the workplace and the laws related to it. She insisted the staff to disseminate the message and create awareness about The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 which is a legislative act in India that seeks to protect women from sexual harassment at their place of work.

Mr. Kamal Daylan, Advocate, Karaikudi delivered the special address and highlighted the significance of implementing the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), structure, power

and the grievance redressal mechanism of the ICC. He elaborated the evolution of the law on the prevention of work place harassment by quoting the Vishaka Judgemnt. Further, he referred historical event that focused on the collectivism, and insisted the participants to have an integrity and collectivism in accessing the act which would help their co - workers, friends and colleagues to get a gender fair judgment.



Dr. P. Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Department of Women’s Studies, proposed a Vote of Thanks. More than 60 staff members of Alagappa University get benefited from the programme.

### **One Day Legal Awareness Programme for Self Help Group Women**

As part of the sixteen days activism the Department of Women’s Studies in collaboration with the District Social Welfare & Tamil Nadu Rural Livelihood Mission organized a One Day Legal Awareness Programme for Self Help Group Women on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2022 at Mary Wollstonecraft Hall.



Prof. K. Manimekalai, Former Vice-Chancellor, Mother Teresa University, Kodaikanal and Head, Department of Women’s Studies while welcoming the gatherings said that enhancing knowledge on legal rights of women and girls would help them to share their power equally and to work together for achieving equality and justice. Prof. G. Ravi, Vice- Chancellor, Alagappa University, inaugurated and presided over the programme. He explained the origin of the SHGs, and significance of the SHGs that meet the productive and consumption needs of the members out of their own savings. Dr.R.Stalin IPS, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Karaikudi, in his keynote address, discussed the importance of Internal Complaints Committee and various key provisions for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Work place (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. Further, he mentioned the help line numbers like 1098, 1091 and 181 that protect the women and children from gender based violence. Ms.P.Anbu Gloria, District Social

Welfare Officer, Sivagangai, in her special address, explained the nuances of the Domestic Violence Act, 2005 and highlighted the women and child welfare activities that are carried out by the District Social Welfare Board. Mr.V.Kannapan, Advocate, in his special address, elucidated the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. Dr. P. Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University proposed vote of thanks. Nearly 85 Self Help Group members participated and benefited from the programme.



### **Observance of National Girl Child Day - 2023**

In commemoration of National Girl Child Day, the Department of Women’s Studies conducted the awareness campaign on 24th January 2023 in the premises of Faculty of Arts, Alagappa University. The motive of this campaign is to raise awareness among people about the inequalities, discrimination, and exploitation faced by girl child. Further, the campaign also exhibited the importance of child rights in accessing the education, health, nutrition and its impact on society and nation. More than 50 students participated and benefited from this campaign.



## **Two - Day International Conference on Reproductive Health and Mental Well Being of Women**

As a sequel to the commemoration of the International Women's Day, the Department of Women's studies, Alagappa University, conducted the inaugural function of a Two - day International Conference on "Reproductive Health and Mental Well Being of Women" on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

While welcoming the gathering Prof.K.Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University and Former Vice-Chancellor of Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, highlighted the relevance and current significance of this International Conference. She made a reference to the serious consequences of poor mental and reproductive health of women and its impact on family and society. By quoting the National Family Health Survey 2019-2020, she said that about 30% of women in India face gender based violence which forces them to develop anxiety, and depression. She stated that poor mental health may adversely impact pregnancy, maternal infant bonding, maternal functioning, and growth and development of children. She said that a focus on integration of mental health and reproductive education at schools and colleges will help reduce the risk associated with mental and reproductive health of future generations.

Prof. S. Rajamohan, Registrar i/c, Alagappa University, in his inaugural address, said that one of the most important aspects of women's well being is related to reproductive health and mental condition. It is central to their ability to make choices and decisions about their lives, including when, or whether, to consider having children. He said that early childbearing impairs the health of young mothers and it also leaves its negative effect on their children. He stated that the mental well being and reproductive health of women are interlinked, only mentally healthy woman can give birth to healthy children which in turn helps to have a healthy family, society and nation.

Speaking at the conference, Thiru.P. Madhusudhan Reddy, Collector, Sivagangai District, stated that Tamil Nadu ranks third at the national level in the health care infrastructure facilities, which is a clear indicator of medical services provided by the State . He said that National Health Mission has set a target to have 1/1000 Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) and 25/1000 Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and it can be achieved only when people utilize various well planned programmes and schemes of the Governments that focus on reproductive health of women. He explored the eco system that exists around the pregnant

woman such as other family members and society. He hinted at the responsibilities of the society in promoting the mental health of women. He cited the “baby shower function” conducted as one of the fine examples. He added that during the span of pregnancy period due to anaemia and hyper-tension many pregnant women face various complications and sometimes it may also lead to mortality. In such situations, they need counseling, healthy food, and they have to involve themselves in doing exercise and yoga which help them in getting relief from stress and also helps to deliver healthy babies. He said that there is an increase in number of teenage pregnancy due to poor socio economic conditions and lack of awareness about its consequences. Further, he stated that the Government has made facilities in each district to rehabilitate the mentally ill people who are left on the streets. These centres rescue, rehabilitate and reintegrate the mentally ill people with their families. Further, he said that every Tuesday the Primary Health Centres conduct periodical checkups and screening for pregnant women and also provide some nutritious food items and teach them simple exercise and yoga to improve their physical and mental well being. He concluded his speech by urging the participants to actively involve themselves in the conference proceedings and disseminate the information acquired here for the welfare of women and society. He also asked the participants to organize various programmes to create awareness about the reproductive and mental health of women which could promote healthy family, society and nation as well.

Prof. Seetha Lakshmi of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, in her keynote address, stated women play a dual role and as a result they have inadequate time for taking care of their health. Due to heavy work load both at home and work place women undergo mental stress which may affect their physical health. She said that due to lack of awareness about the importance of breast feeding many women failed to breast feed their children which significantly affected the immune system of their children. Mental Health and Sexual and Reproductive Health are two sides of the same coin and the role of both need to be addressed in a young person’s life. She highlighted how the high magnitude of sexual and reproductive health challenges such as an early or unwanted pregnancy, HIV and gender-based violence impact greatly on the overall well being of women, children and family. She stated that depression and anxiety are the most common mental health problems encountered by many women in pregnancy. She also highlighted that major life transitions such as pregnancy, motherhood and menopause can create physical and emotional stresses for women. Negative life experiences – infertility and prenatal loss, poverty, discrimination,

violence, unemployment and isolation – also impact heavily on women's mental health and wellbeing.



In the valedictory ceremony held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2023, Prof. K. Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, welcomed the gathering. Presiding over the ceremony Prof. G. Ravi, Vice-Chancellor, Alagappa University, stated that women's mental health is determined by both biological and social factors. Unlike men, women are affected to a large extent by mental illness, due to physiological, psychological and social factors such as poverty, sexual abuse related stress, intimate partner violence, and so on. Women are vulnerable to mental disabilities owing to social pressures. Mental health during pregnancy and postpartum deserves special attention to safeguard women from depression and illness. Reproductive health problems like infertility and reproductive tract complaints are largely related to poor mental health in women. Further he opined that gender responsive approach in treating the mental ailments would be effective in improving the mental health of women.

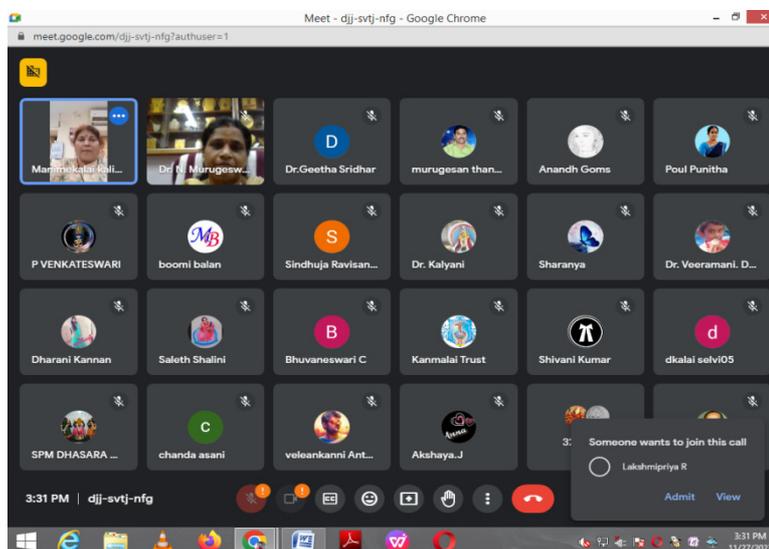
The Vice-Chancellor also released the online e journal titled *The Indian Journal of Women's Studies* and launched a new website specially for the Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University. Prof. S. Thanuskodi, Dean, Faculty of Arts, offered felicitations. At the end of the programme, certificates were distributed for the active Gender Champions 2022 – 2023 and prizes were distributed to the winners for various competitions organized by the Gender Champions.



Dr. S. Poulpunitha, Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies, proposed a vote of thanks. 50 research papers were presented at the conference by scholars and 250 participants attended the conference.

## Series of Activities to Raise Awareness among People for Preventing Gender-Based Violence against Women and Girls (25th November - 10th December 2023)

The Department of Women's Studies and Women Harassment Prevention Cell, Alagappa University, Karaikudi organised a series of programmes titled "UNiTE! Invest to Prevent Violence against Women and Children" from 25<sup>th</sup> November to 10<sup>th</sup> December 2023.



The Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University in collaboration with Department of Women's Studies, Bharathidasan University organised a series of programme under the theme of "UNiTE! Invest to Prevent Violence against Women and Children" on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2023 Prof.K.Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University, delivered inaugural address, further on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 she gave a special lecture on "Preventing and Combating Violence against Women at the Workplace" Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The speaker highlighted the role of organizations, leaders, and individuals in fostering a culture of respect and equality. The speaker provided a comprehensive understanding of violence against women in the workplace, encompassing physical, verbal, and sexual harassment. Real-life examples were shared to illustrate the various forms of violence that women may encounter in professional settings. A session was dedicated to outlining the legal aspects surrounding workplace violence.

As part of the programme, a special lecture was organized on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at Alagappa University, Convocation



Seminar Hall. Prof.K.Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University delivered welcome address. In the presidential address, Prof.S.Rajamohan, Registrar (i/c), Alagappa University elaborated the activities of Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) that exist in Alagappa University. He said that women and girls should not discriminate themselves from other genders, they have to build a confidence and do wonders in their life and too become a model for every other women in the society. Prof.V.Palanisamy, Syndicate Member, Alagappa University and Prof.S.Thanuskodi, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Alagappa University delivered felicitation address. Dr.P.Veeramani, Assistant Professor, proposed vote of thanks. More than 200 Alagappa University students from various departments have actively participated and benefited from the programme.

On 4<sup>th</sup> November 2023, a Movie titled “*Shabaash Mithu*” was screened at Mary Wollstonecraft Conference Hall, Department of Women’s Studies, Alagappa University. A biopic based on the life and struggles of Mithali Raj, Indian Cricketer, and captain of the Indian National Cricket team is the theme of the movie. The audience raised and discussed critical points related to women’s equality at the end of this film.

On 9<sup>th</sup> December 2023 the Poster Making Competition for the Students of Alagappa University was organized. Theme on ‘Say NO to Violence against Women and Girls’ and the Power Point Presentation Competition on ‘Gender-based Violence-free Society’ for the Students of Alagappa University was organized by the Department of Women’s Studies. An artistic endeavor to



raise awareness and speak out against violence targeting women. The power of creativity knows no bounds, and through this poster-making competition, we aim to harness the visual arts to shed light on the importance of eradicating violence against women.



On 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023, the poster exhibition was organized by the Department of Women's Studies, at Mary Wollestonecraft Conference Hall. The display of 60 posters prepared by students that conveyed message such as "Break the Gender Bias" posters on gender equality, gender stereotypes, forms of violence and its impact on family, society and nation were also exhibited. The poster exhibition created awareness on significance of promoting gender equality and responsibility of each individual in creating Zero violence against women and girls.

Legal awareness programme on Constitutional Provisions for Gender Justice (Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace

(Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013) was organized on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at Alagappa University, Convocation Seminar Hall. Prof.K.Manimekalai, Head, Department of Women's Studies, Alagappa University delivered welcome address. In the presidential address, Prof.G.Ravi, Vice-



Chancellor, Alagappa University, highlighted that in India the Gross Enrollment Ratio in higher education is 27% and in Tamil Nadu it is 52%. He mentioned the revolutionists such as Thanthai Periyar, Aringnar Anna and their contribution for the welfare of state and education. Further, he added that only through proper education, the society can build a gender fair society.

In the keynote address, Prof.N.Chandrasekar, Vice-Chancellor, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli mentioned the acts and laws that safe guard women and girls from various social issues. He stated that the mindset of the parents on the gender discrimination has to be eradicated and mentioned that disciplined life and self confidence of women help them to become an efficient professionalist, economically independent and sustainable life. Prof.S.Thanuskodi, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Alagappa University delivered felicitation address. Dr.P.Veeramani, Assistant Professor, Women's Studies, Alagappa University proposed vote of thanks. More than 200 Alagappa University students from various departments have actively participated and benefited from the programme.

**Lecture on Women Empowerment  
03.01.2017**



**Lecture on Gender Concepts  
05.01.2017**



# Awareness programme on Prevention of Gender Based Violence 06.01.2017



## Women Empowerment Cell



## An awareness programme on Gender Mainstreaming for Alagappa University Students of Faculty of Education on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023



**Poster Exhibition On 'Violence Against Women'on 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022**



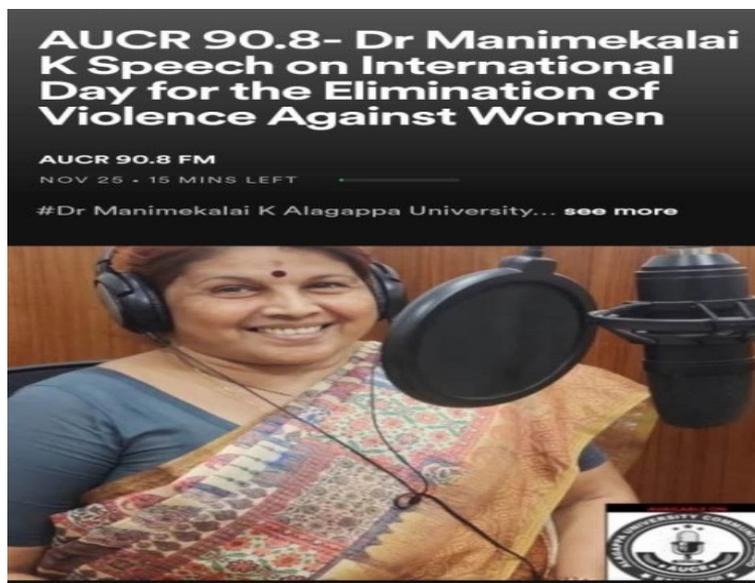
**Special Lecture on "Prevention of Gender Based Violence" for the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation Employees, Karaikudi on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022**



**Film Screening and Discussion "The Great Indian Kitchen" on 30th November 2022 at Convocation Seminar Hall, Alagappa University**



**Delivered a radio talk on "Elimination of Violence against Women" on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2022**



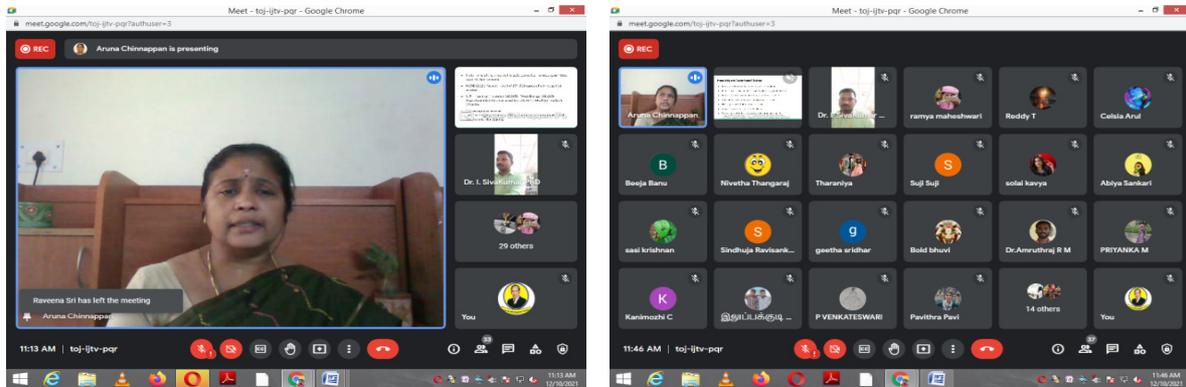
## Poster Making Competition on Preventing Gender Based Violence



## 16 Days of Activism to Raise Awareness for Preventing Gender-Based Violence Against Women and Girls



**Online Orientation Lecture on Gender Mainstreaming and Sexual Harassment Prevention Act 2013 by Dr.C.Aruna, Head (i/c), Centre for Women's Studies, Pondicherry University**



**Online Lecture on Shadow Pandemic by Dr.Amurthraj R.M, Kerala Institute of Local Administration, Kerala**

