

UGC Sponsored Sensitivity/Awareness/Motivation Workshop on ‘Capacity Building for Women Managers in Higher Education’

A five days UGC Sponsored Sensitivity/Awareness/Motivation Workshop on ‘Capacity Building for Women Managers in Higher Education’ was organized by WISDOM, Banasthali University from March 13-17, 2009. The aim of the workshop was to build the inner capacity & potential of women so that they could assume senior decision making positions in academic institutions.

The workshop was inaugurated by Prof. Jaya Indiresan, Core Committee Member, UGC Consultative Committee. Prof. Aditya Shastri, Vice-Chancellor, Banasthali University welcomed the participants and resource persons who attended the workshop. While welcoming the resource persons and participants he expressed his happiness at the growing awareness about gender issues. He was of the opinion that women have inherent capacities and talents, but there is a ‘glass ceiling within’ which hampers the advancement of women to higher positions. In her inaugural address Prof. Jaya Indiresan said that there was a common tendency to push women issues under the carpet. She highlighted 4Cs for tackling this problem. The first C stands for the need to be conscious about women issues. The second C is to have concern for these issues, the third C is to be committed to do something for the problem and the fourth C is to develop the competence of women, so that they acquire senior positions on the basis of their merit. She concluded by quoting Swami Vivekananda, ‘People carry within themselves the potential of self-actualization through inner directed continuous growth.’ The aim of the workshop is to develop this inner potential among the participants.

The workshop was divided into five broad themes – Women’s Studies Perspectives, Women & Governance, Women & Academic leadership, Personal & Professional roles, Women & Research. The eminent resources persons who conducted the workshop were Prof. Jaya Indiresan, Prof. Ravi Kala Kamath, SNDT University, Mumbai, Dr. Mrinalini Fadanvis, Nagpur, Dr. Shilpa Charankar, Mumbai, Dr. Archana Patki, Mumbai, Dr. Nafisa Hatimi, Udaipur. The workshop started with the icebreaking and norm setting sessions conducted by the coordinator Prof. Ipshta Bansal. The Workshop was highly participative, full of group activities, group discussions, Role plays and presentations. From the deliberations it was concluded that there was a need to prepare a body of literature on women’s issues, so that proper focus can be brought on women’s problems& challenges. Women have to empower themselves and bring factors “beyond their area of influence” into “their area of control.” Only then will women develop the competence to acquire senior positions.

In the open session Ms. Mythili Bhusarmath Consulting Editor, Economic Times who was invited to interact with the participants highlighted that since we have a predominantly male readership the media projects a male perspective of issues. Furthermore women are generally trivialized in media and to change this situation women have to take the initiative to object to such stories and voice their opinion to the media.

The second open session was conducted by Mrs. Kamla, former Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan. She constantly extolled the participants to develop courage to fight against injustices and pulls & pressures of life. She emphasized on the need to build a strong network among women, so that a more women friendly society can be made.

The participants of the workshop were drawn from various universities and colleges of Rajasthan. All the participants were very satisfied with the organization & management of the Workshop.