



**PARVATHANENI BRAHMAYYA
SIDDHARTHA COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCE**

Autonomous

Siddhartha Nagar, Vijayawada-520010

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Policy Name:	Women Empowerment Policy
Originating/Responsible Department:	Women Empowerment Cell
Approval Authority:	Governing Body
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Women Empowerment Policy

Preamble

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favor of women.

The current status of women on human development parameters, legal rights for women to life and freedom from violence, economic and social discrimination and their rights to equality and equity shows that a lot remains to be done. It is necessary, therefore, to reinforce the rights-based approach for creating an enabling environment in which women can enjoy their rights.

The empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women.

The National Policy for Women, 2016 has provided a generic policy framework that guides various sectors like education to issue more detailed policy documents that are sector-specific. We have followed the policy framework while drafting this policy to integrate the principles into our prevailing policy, strategy and program documents.

Education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. Non-discriminatory education benefits both girls and boys and thus ultimately contributes to more equal relationships between women and men. Equality of access to and attainment of educational qualifications is necessary if more women are to become agents of change. Literacy of women is an important key in improving health, nutrition and education in the family and to empower women to participate in decision-making in society. Investing in formal and non-formal education and training for girls and women, with its exceptionally high social and economic return, has proved to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development

and economic growth that is both sustained and sustainable.

The intention to constitute a Women Empowerment Cell (WEC) is to provide and maintain a dignified, congenial working environment for women employees (including teaching, non-teaching and contractual workers) and students, where they can work, study and explore their potential to the fullest. They can approach the Women Empowerment Cell in case of any grievance.

Section 1: Definitions

- 1.1 Institution:** It refers Parvathaneni Brahmayya Siddhartha College of Arts and Science, Vijayawada.
- 1.2 Harassment:** It is unlawful behavior towards a person that causes mental or emotional suffering. It includes repeated unwanted behavior that irritates or upsets someone.
- 1.3 Sexual Harassment:** A behavior characterized by the making of unwelcome and inappropriate sexual remarks or physical advances in a workplace or other professional or social situation.
- 1.4 Crèche Facilities:** It is facilitation that enables parents to leave their children while they are at work and children are provided with a homelike conducive environment.
- 1.5 Discrimination:** The state of being differentiated because of gender, community and/or physical or mental state.
- 1.6 Gender Sensitization:** It refers making people aware about and raises concerns on gender equality. It helps people in examining their personal attitudes and beliefs and questioning the gender realities.
- 1.7 Information Communication and Technology (ICT):** It refers to all communication technologies including the internet and wired and wireless networks accessible through computers, cell phones, and radio. It enables users to access, retrieve, store, transmit, and manipulate information.
- 1.8 Women Empowerment:** It is about promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices and rights to influence social change for themselves and others.

Section 2: Policy Statement and Declaration

2.1 The Statement

Women Empowerment Policy would enable women to capitalize and contribute their fullest potential towards society in general and education in particular. It would culminate in an impactful paradigm shift in their stature and overall wellbeing.

2.2 The Purpose

The policy aimed to bring the advancement, development and empowerment of women through education. The Policy will be widely disseminated to encourage active participation of all stakeholders for achieving its goals.

2.3 The Scope

This policy applies to women employees and students of the College.

2.4 The Declaration

The framework of the National Policy for Women, 2016 has been followed as a guiding document for drafting this women empowerment policy of the college and integrating its principles into prevailing policy, strategy and programs.

Section 3: Women Empowerment Practices

- 3.1** Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for the full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential.
- 3.2** Promoting the de-jure and de-facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on an equal basis with men in all educational spheres.
- 3.3** Promoting equal access to participation and decision making of women in the social, political and economic life of the nation.
- 3.4** Promoting equal access to women to quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office etc.

- 3.5 Priority will be accorded to increased enrolment and retention of girls and women in the first year of courses; it will be done through the provision of gender-friendly facilities like functional girl's toilets, and recruitment of women teachers. Promotion of skill development, vocational training and life skills as a part of the education curriculum for young women will be given importance. Efforts will be made to address the repetition rates for young women including those from the marginalized communities with varying underlying causes to arrest drop-out. A mission mode approach for literacy amongst women is envisaged.
- 3.6 Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.
- 3.7 Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women.
- 3.8 Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process.
- 3.9 Eliminating discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child.
- 3.10 Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations.
- 3.11 Setting up a Women Empowerment Cell (WEC) to provide and maintain a dignified congenial working environment for women employees (including teaching, non-teaching and contractual workers) and students where they can work, study and explore their potential to the fullest, the WEC has been constituted at the college.

Section 4: Priority Area – Empowerment through Education

- 4.1 Every effort will be in addressing the infrastructure gap, availability of adequately trained teachers, promoting a safe and inclusive college/campus environment for women coming from remote and tribal areas.
- 4.2 Priority will be accorded to increased enrolment and retention of

women in higher education especially from a rural or tribal background, it will be done through the provision of gender-friendly facilities like functional female toilets, **crèche facilities**, ramp/rails, scribe, Braille, lifts and higher recruitment of women teachers. Promotion of skill development, vocational training and life skills as a part of the college education curriculum for young women will be given importance. Efforts will be made to address the repetition rates for women including those from the marginalized communities with varying underlying causes to arrest drop-out. A mission mode approach for literacy amongst women envisaged.

- 4.3 Efforts will be made to provide a supportive environment in the college campus and regional centers through a responsive complaint mechanism to address discriminatory attitudes within the organization and in practice, particularly on the issue of sexual harassment and intimidation of girls and young women. Hence, a Women Empowerment Cell (WEC) is established.
- 4.4 Opportunities for recreation and participation in cultural activities will be promoted.
- 4.5 Maternity benefits as per the **Maternity Relief Act** to the working faculty and also some reasonable extension of course duration for young women students if required.
- 4.6 Continued efforts will be made for the gender sensitization of the faculty and curriculum, content and pedagogies for an understanding of concepts of masculinity and femininity and gender stereotypes. Gender champions in schools and colleges will be promoted to ensure gender sensitivity in the educational system.
- 4.7 Major constraints that prevent women from accessing higher and technical/scientific education should be identified and girls will be encouraged to take up new subject choices linked to career opportunities. An inter-sectoral plan of action will be formulated for encouraging the enrolment of women in professional/scientific courses, by the provision of financial assistance, coaching, hostels, child care, etc.
- 4.8 Adult literacy will have an added objective to link literacy programs to

life skills, financial literacy, education on rights, laws, schemes etc. in partnership with government schemes such as the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM).

4.9 Efforts will be made to remove the disparities in access to and proficiency in information and communication technology (ICT), particularly between socio- economically advantaged and disadvantaged women. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) will be adopted for building ICT infrastructure, developing applications and locally relevant content using gender-sensitive language, operations and maintenance and developing the capacity of teachers required for harnessing the full capacity of ICT productive tools. This will be done to reduce the digital divide of the country.

4.10 Regular Audits of the various schemes that are being offered to promote women education will be undertaken to assess whether these interventions have resulted in transformative changes.

Section 5: Implementation of the Policy

5.1 Actions and Activities

For translating the policy framework into action, specific, effective and achievable strategies are framed at the college level.

- 5.1.1 Constituting the Women Empowerment Cell (WEC) as the policy approved for implementation;
- 5.1.2 Procurement of the data for the enrolled women students would be made towards functioning for the retention of young women students after the first year;
- 5.1.3 Available resources for ICT would be managed, more resources would be added if required to achieve the goal of the policy;
- 5.1.4 Computer/cyber literacy program would be designated for young women to develop their ICT skills and to create awareness about cybercrimes and frauds;
- 5.1.5 Women would be encouraged to attend classes as crèche facilities will be available. Educational toys and light refreshments for little kids would be available in the crèche room;
- 5.1.6 Sanitary pads vending machine would be installed inside the washrooms for the convenience;

- 5.1.7 Partial scholarships shall be introduced for women students in special cases;
- 5.1.8 Regular Audit continuously each year in the month of February, of the various schemes and incentives, subsidies that are being offered to promote women education will be undertaken to assess whether these interventions have resulted in transformative changes;
- 5.1.9 Audit will be done by a committee constituted by the Principal of the college in which Vice-principal will serve as Vice Chairperson and at least one person from WEC as its members to evaluate the progress of the policy.
- 5.1.10 To encourage the women in administration.

5.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Women Empowerment Cell

- 5.2.1 To sensitize all members of the college community towards the Supreme Court and statutory mandate prohibiting gender discriminations and sexual harassment at the work place and encourage involvement through academic, cultural and outreach activities such as talks, seminars, workshops, community action, drama, street theatre, and the likes;
- 5.2.2 To provide a dialogue, discussion and deliberations for women's rights and gender related issues;
- 5.2.3 To become a resource center for women and provide for a platform for the exchange of ideas;
- 5.2.4 To review safety and security measures for women employees and girl students on the campus;
- 5.2.5 To constitute the committee as per the guidelines set in Annexure-I.

ANNEXURE-I – Constitution of Women Empowerment Cell

Gender Discrimination is a systematic, unfavorable treatment of individuals based on their gender, which denies those rights, opportunities or resources within any given society. The Women Empowerment Cell (WEC) is a mandated body as per Section 3.2(15) of UGC Guidelines (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutions) Regulations, 2015.

In pursuance of the directions issued by the College Grants Commission and Ministry of Education, Government of India, the Paravathaneni Brahmayya Siddhartha College of Arts and Science, Vijayawada has set up the Women Empowerment Cell.

Objective

The objective of the WEC is to provide and maintain a dignified, congenial working environment for women employees (including teaching, non-teaching and contractual workers) and students, where they can work, study and explore their potential to the fullest. They can approach the Women Development Cell in case of any grievance.

Composition of the Cell

- There shall be one chairperson, who will be the senior-most female faculty of the college.
- One member should be representative of the Andhra Pradesh Higher Education department.
- One member should be the senior-most male faculty of the college.
- One member from every stream, preferable female member; however, if there is no female member then a male member be appointed.

Who can approach the WEC?

Any person including faculty, staff, contractual, temporary, casual worker and student of Parvathaneni Brahmayya Siddhartha College of Arts and Science can approach the WEC.

Women Empowerment Cell

Coordinator

Principal