

ASSESSMENT OF AWARENESS, SATISFACTION AND  
EXPECTATIONS OF FEMALE STUDENTS REGARDING GENDER  
EQUALITY AND SENSITIZATION MEASURES ON CAMPUS

Deepika Vijan\*

Poonam Sheoran\*\*

Dr (Mrs) Jyoti Sarin\*\*\*

**ABSTRACT:** Gender based social discriminations starts right from birth and exists throughout society, in schools, colleges and even at workplace. Gender sensitivity is an approach that requires an understanding of these socially determined differences between women and men that often lead to inequities. The aim of the present study was to assess the awareness, satisfaction and expectations of female students regarding gender equality and sensitization measures on campus at Maharishi Markandeshwar University, Mullana, Ambala, Haryana. A quantitative approach with Non experimental descriptive exploratory survey research design was used with 343 respondents selected by stratified proportionate random sampling technique. Gender Equality and sensitization measures Assessment Scale (cronbach  $\alpha$ - 0.80) and Questions for satisfaction and expectation were used to collect data. The mean score of awareness was 124.89 with mean percentage 73.03 which indicated good awareness regarding gender equality and sensitization measures at campus. The highest mean percentage was in the area 'Hostel Facility' (80.53) indicating more awareness in this area and lowest mean percentage was in the area 'Curricular Approach' (63.23) indicating least awareness in this area. Most of the female students (89.8%) were satisfied to some extent with the existing arrangements on the campus for ensuring the gender equality and sensitization. Expectations were expressed to bring certain changes in the area of common rooms in college, increase in hostel timings for Girls hostels,

\* Msc.. Nursing, Obstetrics and Gynecology

\*\* Principal M.M. Institute of Nursing, Mullana, Ambala

\*\*\* Director, Principal, M. M. College Of Nursing, Mullana, Ambala

CCTV cameras in campus, allocation of Bus seats, morning college timings, patrolling guards at campus, female security guards, toilet facility in campus. The study concluded that there is a definite need to work towards a positive interpersonal climate on campuses. Gender sensitization discussions should be made an integral part of public discourse in campuses in order to build awareness on the same.

**Key Words:** Gender Equality, Gender Sensitization, Awareness, Satisfaction, Expectation

## Introduction

Anthropologists use the term sex to refer to biologically based differences between men and women; and gender to refer to social, cultural, economic and political differences between the two sexes. Gender is a cultural construct. In all human societies, there are two distinct social categories of 'male' or 'female,' which are based on specific cultural assumptions regarding different attributes, beliefs and behaviour characterizing individuals included within that category. Gender is also socially ascribed; it determines how individuals and society perceive what it means to be male or female, influencing one's roles, attitudes, behaviours and relationships, and relative power and position in a social setting. Gender is relational because gender roles and characteristics do not exist in isolation, but are defined in relation to one another.<sup>1</sup>

Gender based social discriminations starts right from birth and exists throughout society, in schools, colleges and even at workplace.<sup>4</sup> Gender sensitivity is an approach that requires an understanding of these socially determined differences between women and men that often lead to inequities in their respective access to and control of resources.<sup>2</sup>

The state of Kerala with 1084 females for every 1000 males has the best sex ratio in India. It has shown a tremendous improvement in the last 10 years. Haryana has the lowest sex ratio of 877 females per 1000 males. So **Sex Ratio of India** varies from region to region. Kerala and Puducherry are only two places in India where total female population is more than the male population.<sup>3</sup>

In 2001, 75.85 percent of the male were reported literate as against 54.16 percent among women whereas in 2011 male literacy rate is 82.14% and female literacy rate is 65.46%. . Literacy rate in Haryana has seen upward trend and is 75.55% as per 2011 population census of that, male literacy stands at 84.06% while female literacy is at 56.91%. In actual number, total literates in Haryana stands at 16,598,988 of which males were 9,794,067 and females were 6,804,921. The rise in literacy level has been far less in case of female than male, pointing towards gender disparity. <sup>4</sup>

World Economic Forum (2014) released Global Gender Gap Report which shows that India has performed poorly in removing gender-based disparities, ranking 114 out of 142 countries in World Economic Forum's 2014 gender gap index, scoring below average on parameters like economic participation, educational attainment and health and survival. India was scored at 0.66 and ranked 101 in 2013. India's slipped 13 spots from its last year's ranking of 101 on the Gender Gap Index by the World Economic Forum. <sup>5</sup>

Gender sensitization is not a matter for students alone but is required in all colleges and universities, and for all sections of the community. Human Resource Development Minister Dr. M. M. Pallam Raju said that it is an imperative need to create safe and secure atmosphere in campuses. In order to achieve this, there is a need to change the mindset of the people and to apply it in word and follow it in deed. Gender sensitization discussions should be made an integral part of public discourse in campuses in order to build awareness on the same. <sup>6</sup>

According to the **UGC report**, only 4 per cent educational institutions or campuses had a helpline number that women students and faculty could call, 8.3 per cent had a complaint box, around 10 per cent had installed CCTV cameras, 10.9 percent campuses had patrolling guards who keep watch on girls' hostels and women's departments, 18.5 percent had female security guards, 26.6 percent had vigilance committees and other measures. <sup>6</sup>

Universities are not merely 'workplaces' where faculty and nonteaching staff are employed but are places where students come to learn and be trained for their professional careers, and to realise their full potential as individuals. It is therefore imperative that all students, particularly women students, are provided with a safe and dignified environment in which they are able to

achieve these goals, because only then will they be able to realise the constitutional promise of equality.<sup>7</sup>

## Material and methods

Quantitative research approach with Non experimental descriptive exploratory survey research design was used. There were 11 constitutional colleges in Maharishi Markandeshwar University with 3226 female students. Sample size was calculated by power analysis by considering 95% confidence interval and 5% margin of error from 10 constitutional institutes of Maharishi Markandeshwar University and 1 institute was selected for pilot study. The calculated sample size was 343 which were selected by stratified proportionate random sampling technique from 10 constitutional institutes. Gender Equality and sensitization measures Assessment Scale and Questions for satisfaction and expectation were used to collect data from female students. Maximum score of Assessment Scale was 171 and minimum score was 57. Content validity of the tools was established by submitting to seven experts including the field of sociology, obstetric nursing, pediatric nursing, medical surgical nursing. The reliability coefficient for the Gender Equality and sensitization measures Assessment Scale was calculated by using cronbach's formula. It was found to be 0.80.

Ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Ethical Committee for conducting the research study. The purpose for carrying out research project was explained to the study subjects and assurance for confidentiality was given. The data collection for the final study was done in the month of January and February 2015.

## Results

### Sample characteristics

Majority of the female students (72.6%) were in the age group of 20-22 years followed by 21.9 % female students in 17-19 years of age. Majority of the students (86.3) were pursuing graduation and others(13.7) were pursuing post graduation. Majority of students (77.3%) were Hindu by religion whereas 14.9%, 5.8% and 2.0% female students belonged to Sikh, Christian and Muslim religion respectively. Majority of the female students (84.5%) belonged to nuclear

family whereas 15.5% belonged to joint family. Most of the female students (64.4%) resided in urban area and 22.7% resided in rural area. Most (94.5%) of the female students were unmarried. Maximum number of student's father (60.1%) and mother (42.3%) were graduate. Majority of student's monthly family income (64.4%) were above Rs 15000/-. Majority of the student's father (46.4%) were self employed and 66.5% mothers were home maker. All of the students were aware of the word gender equality and sensitivity and their major source of information was mass media (49.6%) followed by family members (39.1%), friends (25.9%), internet (24.8%), teacher (22.4%), and research (9.3%).

**TABLE 1**

**Overall Range, Mean, Median, S.D and Mean Percentage of Awareness scores of female students regarding Gender equality and Sensitization measures in campus**

N=343

Area	Range	Mean	Mean%	Median	S.D.
Awareness Score	96-168	124.89	73.03%	128	12.98

Data in table 1 shows mean and standard deviation score  $124.89 \pm 12.98$  and mean percentage was 73.03% whereas the median was 128 indicating good awareness regarding Gender equality and Sensitization measures at campus.

**TABLE – 2**

**Area Wise Range, Mean, Median, S.D and Mean Percentage of Awareness scores of female students regarding Gender equality and Sensitization measures in campus**

N=343

Area	Range	Mean	Median	SD	Mean %	Ranks
1. University Infrastructure	(17-33)	24.83	25.00	3.85	75.25	3



## and Utilities

<b>2. Administration</b>	(11-24)	17.11	17.00	2.31	71.31	5
<b>3. Curricular Approach</b>	(7-18)	11.38	11.00	2.19	63.23	8
<b>4. Andragogical Practices</b>	(16-32)	24.68	25.00	3.02	74.79	4
<b>5. Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities</b>	(13-30)	22.83	24.00	3.24	76.09	2
<b>6. University Transport</b>	(0-9)	6.12	7.00	3.19	68.03	7
<b>7. Hostel Facility</b>	(0-9)	7.25	8.00	2.71	80.53	1
<b>8. Gender Based Violence</b>	(5-15)	10.68	11.00	2.09	71.18	6

Table 2 shows that the highest mean percentage was in the area 'Hostel Facility' (80.53) and has rank 1 which shows that the female students had more awareness in the area of Hostel Facility followed by co-curricular and extra-curricular activities (76.09), University Infrastructure and Utilities (75.25), Andragogical Practices (74.79), Administration (71.31), Gender based Violence (71.18), University transport (68.03) and had been given rank 2,3,4,5,6,7 respectively. Lowest mean percentage was in the area 'Curricular Approach' (63.23) and has rank 8 which showed that the female students had least awareness in this area.

Anova/t values computed between awareness score and Age (0.02), currently pursuing (0.03), religion (0.00), educational status of father (0.01), educational status of mother (0.00), and income of the family per month (0.028) were found to be statistically significant at 0.05 levels indicating that awareness scores of the female students were dependent on age, education, religion, educational status of father, educational status of mother and income of the family per month. Whereas anova/t values computed between awareness score and type of family (0.10), place of residence (0.07), marital status (0.32), occupation of the father (0.27) and occupation of the mother (0.05) were not found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance indicating that awareness scores of the female students were not dependent on type of family, place of residence, marital status, occupation of the father and occupation of the mother.

Mean score shows that female students of age group 17-19 years (135.92) had more awareness than age group 20-22 years (131.45) and  $\geq 23$  years (127.42), female students with

Sikh religion (139.00) had more awareness than other religion regarding gender equality and sensitization measures in campus. Female students whose mother's and father's education was upto primary level (139.61) and higher secondary level (135.42) respectively had more awareness regarding gender equality and sensitization measures in campus. Female students with monthly family income (143.00) below Rs 5000/- had more awareness than others regarding gender equality and sensitization measures in campus.

Majority of female students (89.8%) were satisfied to some extent, 9% were very satisfied and 1.2% were not satisfied with the existing arrangements on the campus for ensuring the gender equality and sensitization.

**TABLE 3**

**Frequency and percentage Distribution of Expectations of female students regarding gender equality and sensitization measures in campus**

**N=343**

Area	Percentage	Frequency	Ranks
1. Increase girls hostel timings	38.8	133	2
2. Allocation of Bus seats	10.8	37	4
3. CCTV cameras in campus	11.1	38	3
4. Morning college timings	9.3	32	5
5. Common rooms in college	42.3	145	1
6. Security concerns			
• Patrolling guards at campus	9.0	31	6
• Female security guards	31	17	
7. Toilet facility in campus	3.8	13	7

Table 3 presents the data of expectation and suggestions of female students for ensuring the gender equality and sensitization measures in campus. Maximum number of female students expressed expectations to have common rooms (42.3%) in college followed by increase in hostel

timings (38.8%) for girls hostels, CCTV cameras in campus (11.1), allocation of Bus seats (10.8), morning college timings (9.3), patrolling guards at campus (9.0%), female security guards (31%), toilet facility in campus (3.8%).

## Discussion

The present study findings indicated that most of the female students (64.4% ) resided in urban area and 22.7% resided in rural area which are similar with the findings of **UGC report<sup>6</sup>** which showed most of the female students in higher educational institutions (19% ) resided in urban area and 11% resided in rural area.

The present study findings indicated that majority of the female students (72.6%) were in the age group of 20-22 years. Maximum number of students (77.3%) were Hindu by religion which are similar with the findings of other study conducted by **Khozaei F. et al.<sup>8</sup>** which showed that majority of students were from 18 to 22 years of age group and most of them were Buddhist.

The present study findings indicates that Majority of the female students (86.3) were pursuing graduation and most (94.5%) of the female students were unmarried which were similar with the findings of other study conducted by **Khozaei F. et al.<sup>8</sup>** where most of female students (99.3%) were unmarried and pursuing graduation.

The present study findings indicated that majority of female students (73.03%) had good level of awareness which are consistent with other study conducted by **Rajguru H<sup>9</sup>** on college going girls where majority of college girls (85%) were aware regarding gender sensitization measures at campus.

In the present study findings indicated that female students had more awareness in area of Hostel Facility (80.53) and least awareness was in the area 'Curricular Approach' (63.23) which are similar with findings reported by **Kerubo J<sup>10</sup>** which showed that students had more awareness in area of Hostel Facility (83.1%) and least awareness in the area 'Curricular Approach' (66.4%).

In the present study findings indicated that female students had more awareness in area of extracurricular facility and least in hostel facility which are similar with study conducted by **Manzoor H<sup>11</sup>** which showed that students had more awareness in area of extracurricular facility and least in hostel facility.



The study findings are in consistent with **UGC report**<sup>6</sup> in terms of security arrangements which shows following responses CCTV (10.5%), female security guards (18.5%), patrolling guards (10.9%), common rooms for girls (9%) whereas in present study CCTV (11.1%), female security guards (5.0%), patrolling guards (9.0%), common rooms for girls (42.3%).

In the present study findings indicated that maximum number of female students want to have common rooms (42.3%) in college in their suggestions and expectations followed by increase in hostel timings (38.8%) for girls hostels, CCTV cameras in campus (11.1), allocation of Bus seats (10.8), morning college timings (9.3), patrolling guards at campus (9.0%), female security guards (31%), toilet facility in campus (3.8%). In other study conducted by **Uddin M.N., Mim F.N.**<sup>12</sup> students made some suggestions to improve the quality of different services. Students were worried about the security facilities.<sup>14</sup>

## Conclusion

Majority of female students had very good level of awareness. Highest awareness area was 'Hostel Facility' and lowest awareness area was 'Curricular Approach'. Majority of female students were satisfied to some extent with the existing arrangements on the campus for ensuring the gender equality and sensitization Female students express their expectation by giving suggestions regarding having restrooms in college, increase in girls hostel timings, CCTV cameras, allocation of bus seats, morning college timings, patrolling guards, female security guards, and toilet facility in campus.

## Recommendations

The researcher further recommended that the study can be replicated on larger sample in different setting to validate the findings and make generalizations, to assess the contributing factors affecting the awareness of female students regarding gender equality and sensitization measure. A similar study can be conducted on Male students and Employees of University to assess their satisfaction and expectation regarding gender equality measures at their place. Comparative study can be conducted among male, female students regarding gender equality and sensitization measures in campus.

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