



OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL
MAHATMA GANDHI COLLEGE
(Affiliated to University of Kerala)(Re-Accredited with B+ Grade by NAAC,
UGC-College with Potential for Excellence)
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MAHATMA GANDHI COLLEGE, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

GENDER POLICY

Mahatma Gandhi College located at Thiruvananthapuram, named after the father of our nation, and founded in 1945 by the esteemed social reformer Bharata Kesari Shri. Mannath Padmanabhan undoubtedly upholds gender equality. Mannathu Padmanabhan, a prominent social reformer from Kerala, and Mahatma Gandhi shared some common principles and views on gender equality despite their different cultural contexts and backgrounds. Both leaders advocated for social reforms that promoted the empowerment and upliftment of women. Our institution operates on the fundamental principle of equal dignity and opportunity for all individuals, irrespective of their background, abilities, circumstances, and gender and strives to foster an inclusive society.

The college administration recognizes the vital role that higher education institutions play in advancing gender equity among students. It is imperative for all such institutions to ensure equitable access to knowledge and skills for every student, irrespective of gender. Therefore, the college is dedicated to creating and maintaining a safe environment free from violence, harassment, exploitation, and discrimination, where students, faculty, and staff can collaborate harmoniously.

The college staunchly advocates for gender equality and opposes all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence on campus. A Gender Equity Policy has been formulated to ensure that no student at the college faces disadvantages due to their gender. This policy aims to enhance the opportunities and prospects for all enrolled students, regardless of gender. The college adheres to the principles and laws of the country, which include several key legislations aimed at ensuring the protection, empowerment, and rights of individuals. Some of these important laws and policies that our institution upholds are:

1. Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013
2. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO)
3. Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
4. The new laws introduced by the country which ensure the protection, empowerment and rights of women and transgender
5. Gender and Empowerment Policy 2010-2020
6. Kerala State Women Policy

Objectives

The objectives of the Gender Equity policy in the college are to promote gender equality and women's empowerment as strategies for reducing social injustices. This involves ensuring that everyone has equal rights, conditions, and opportunities to shape their own lives and contribute

to societal development. The policy aims to achieve equitable distribution of power, influence, and resources within society.

- To accomplish national commitment to gender equality.
- Aims to redress any violations of gender -based rights and works towards empowerment of women and all the stake holders of the institution in general.
- To prevent the violation of National Acts that prohibit gender injustices.
- To establish and cultivate a gender-sensitive environment in the college and promote respect for gender diversity among all individuals.
- To organize activities, competitions, seminars, workshops relating to women empowerment and gender equality.
- To educate and raise awareness among students about gender equality and laws pertaining to women's welfare.
- To ensure equal opportunity to all, regardless of their gender differences.
- To develop strategies for preventing and addressing gender-based violence and discrimination, including sexual harassment, within the college.
- To ensure full implementation of this policy in letter and spirit.

Scope of the Policy:

This policy applies to all enrolled students, both full-time and part-time staff members, and researchers in various departments within the institution. The policy encompasses the following areas:

- Ensuring a safe working environment
- Providing equal opportunities to all regardless of gender
- Addressing grievances and implementing disciplinary actions
- Supporting professional development
- Promoting leadership and management opportunities

College-Level Activities for Gender Equity:

Gender sensitization of students, teachers, and non-teaching staff is a priority at Mahatma Gandhi College. Gender-related discussions and activities are encouraged in both academic and non-academic settings to raise awareness about gender issues. The college ensures equal opportunities in admission, appointments, and advisory roles, with special provisions for SC/ST, PWD, and transgender students.

Mahatma Gandhi College is affiliated with the University of Kerala, which regularly updates syllabi to meet contemporary needs. The humanities and social sciences curriculum include elective papers on

women and gender studies, such as Women's Writing and Theorizing Sexualities, reflecting the university's commitment to these subjects and how the college prioritizes the inclusion of these subjects.

Mahatma Gandhi College endeavours to sensitize and educate both teachers and students on gender-related subjects and dimensions. The college actively promotes gender-related activities, projects, and dissertations among faculty and students. Furthermore, the college adheres to the norms and regulations set forth by the University Grants Commission (UGC). To ensure gender equity on campus, the college has established various clubs and committees, which include:

The Women's Cell is committed to empowering female students to navigate life's challenges with confidence. It provides mental health counselling, with a particular focus on supporting students who experience gender discrimination in their daily lives. The cell plays a proactive role in preventing and intervening in cases of harassment or discrimination against female students. It serves as a platform for advocating for the rights and interests of female students, ensuring their voices are heard and their concerns addressed within the college community. The Cell collaborates with other institutions, organizations, and stakeholders to strengthen initiatives related to gender equality and women empowerment.

The Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) plays a crucial role in preventing and addressing incidents of sexual harassment and atrocities against students and women within the institution. The ICC remains vigilant and responsive to any complaints or incidents involving students, faculty members, or non-teaching staff. The key responsibilities of the ICC include prevention of instances of sexual harassment and atrocities through education, training, and policy implementation, receiving and addressing complaints related to sexual harassment promptly and confidentially, fair and impartial investigation into the matter. The ICC provides legal guidance and assistance to individuals filing complaints or facing allegations of sexual harassment. This support helps ensure that individuals understand their rights and legal options. The ICC offers moral and emotional support to complainants and individuals affected by incidents of sexual harassment. ICC takes appropriate action to address the complaint that may involve disciplinary measures, counselling for the perpetrator, or other corrective actions to prevent future occurrences. It upholds principles of fairness, confidentiality, and support for all individuals involved in such incidents, fostering a culture of dignity and respect for everyone in the academic community.

The Equal Opportunity Cell (EOC) of the College promotes fairness and inclusivity by implementing policies for disadvantaged groups, such as SC/ST, OBC, PWD, and minorities. It provides guidance, counselling, and academic support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The EOC promotes diversity through equitable participation in campus activities and conducts awareness programs on diversity and equal opportunities. It monitors initiatives for their impact on the college community, advocates for inclusive policies, and collaborates with stakeholders to advance inclusivity and diversity at the college. The EOC ensures all students have equal access to educational and developmental opportunities.

The Grievances and Redressal Cell receives complaints and grievances from students and staff regarding academic, administrative, or personal matters. It conducts thorough investigations into received grievances, gathering relevant information and evidence. It works towards resolving grievances through fair and prompt actions, including mediation, counselling, or other appropriate measures. By offering guidance and support to individuals

filing grievances, it ensures that they understand their rights and the process of redressal. The cell maintains confidentiality throughout the grievance redressal process to protect privacy and interests of all parties involved. It monitors the effectiveness of grievance redressal mechanisms and collects feedback to improve the process. After identifying systemic issues contributing to grievances and recommending preventive measures to address underlying concerns, it collaborates with other campus committees and authorities to facilitate comprehensive solutions to grievances.

Student mentoring sessions and Tutorial Systems provide comprehensive support for students. These programs offer academic guidance, aiding students with coursework, assignments, and exam preparation, while also focusing on personal development aspects like time management and study skills. Mentors assist students in problem-solving, addressing academic challenges, and providing emotional support to manage stress and anxiety. Furthermore, they offer career insights, helping students explore career paths and make informed decisions. The tutorial systems promote peer learning and collaboration, creating a reassuring academic environment. By and large, these initiatives contribute significantly to students' academic success, personal growth, and well-being within the college community.

Expected outcomes

The expected outcomes of the policy include:

- Fostering positive attitudes and behaviour among students, promote social responsibility, and nurture equal, non-violent relationships.
- Creating a comfortable learning environment that enables all students to effectively explore available resources.
- Ensuring a safe and comfortable working environment for all staff members at the college.
- Establishing an academic space that is free from harassment and violence.
- Equipping students with the skills and confidence to advocate for their rights and opportunities.
- Developing a curriculum that addresses the educational needs and rights of all students, irrespective of gender, in terms of content, methodology, and language




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