

Event Report of Gender Resource Centre (GRC), RKSMVV

Name of Activity: Special Lecture to commemorate International Working Women's Day

Category: Special Lecture (Gender Sensitization & Women's Empowerment Programme)

Topic: *Unapologetically Me: Rewriting the Rules of Beauty*

Speaker: Dr. Anuttama Banerjee, Consultant Psychologist (Manipal Hospital Mukundapur, Crystal Minds, and Sunrays Clinic) and Poet.

Date: 19/03/26

Time: 11.30 AM onwards

Venue: Muktiprana Sabhagriha

Number of Participants: 186 students and 53 staff members and visitors

Brief Description of the Event: The session was conducted by Dr. Anuttama Banerjee, who thoughtfully addressed the deeply ingrained societal norms surrounding beauty and appearance. She encouraged participants to critically reflect on how traditional standards of beauty are often narrow, exclusionary, and unrealistic. Through relatable examples, she highlighted that success, respect, and influence are rarely dependent on conforming to socially constructed ideals of beauty. She pointed out that many of the individuals we admire as role models are celebrated for their courage, intellect, resilience, and contributions rather than their physical appearance.

Dr. Banerjee also explored the psychological impact of beauty standards, emphasizing how constant comparison and societal pressure can lead to low self-esteem, anxiety, and identity struggles, especially among young people. She stressed the importance of self-acceptance and authenticity, urging students to embrace their individuality without seeking external validation. By bringing in her insights as a psychologist, she created a space that was both reflective and empowering. The session challenged participants to redefine beauty on their own terms and to move toward a more inclusive and compassionate understanding of self-worth.

Programme Outcome: The programme proved to be highly engaging and impactful for all participants. Students, especially, actively interacted with the speaker, sharing their thoughts, experiences, and questions, which made the session dynamic and participatory.

Participants reported gaining a deeper understanding of how societal expectations influence their perceptions of themselves and others. The session helped participants rethink their own beliefs about beauty and recognize the importance of self-confidence and inner qualities. The discussion also fostered greater awareness about mental health concerns linked to body image.

Furthermore, the programme contributed to promoting gender sensitivity by addressing how beauty standards often disproportionately affect different genders. Students left the session

with a stronger sense of self-acceptance and a commitment to challenging stereotypes in their daily lives.

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