

Victoria Institution (College)

78B, APC Road; Kolkata – 700009



GENDER AUDIT REPORT

2018 - 2023

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Preface

In the pursuit of creating inclusive and equitable educational environments, the concept of gender equality has emerged as a foundational principle. Gender equality represents the fundamental principle that all individuals, regardless of their gender, should have equal rights, opportunities, and treatment. It is not merely a concept but a moral imperative rooted in the principles of human rights and social justice. Gender equity, on the other hand, recognizes that achieving equality may require differential treatment or interventions to address historical and systemic injustices.

Stereotypes, ingrained in societal norms and perceptions, perpetuate harmful narratives that limit individuals' potential based on their gender. Women, in particular, have historically been subjected to systemic discrimination and marginalization, resulting in profound inequities across various spheres of life, including education. Women have faced myriad barriers to accessing education, navigating academic spaces, and realizing their full potential. Systemic oppression, perpetuated through societal norms and institutional biases, continues to impede progress towards gender parity. Within the confines of educational settings, these inequalities manifest in various forms – from unequal opportunities for leadership to gender-based violence and discrimination. However, it is within these very spaces that the seeds of empowerment can be sown, challenging prevailing norms and nurturing a culture of inclusivity.

The gender audit conducted at Victoria Institution (College) is not merely an exercise in data collection but a testament to the collective commitment to fostering an environment that nurtures the holistic development of all individuals, irrespective of gender. This report serves as a lens through which the institution scrutinizes existing structures, policies, and practices with a commitment to fostering empowerment and equity. By interrogating existing policies and practices through a gendered lens, the institution aims to uncover hidden biases, address systemic inequities, and pave the way for transformative change. It is through this process that the college can create an educational space that not only empowers women but also cultivates a sense of belonging and agency for all members of the community.

About the College

Victoria Institution (College) established in 1932 is one of the oldest women's colleges affiliated to the University of Calcutta. Founded with a clear mission to empower women and instill in them a spirit of resilience, the college's vision was shaped by its founder, Brahmananda Keshub Chandra Sen, and his daughters, Maharani Suniti Devi and Sucharu Devi. Keshub Chandra Sen, the great Humanist and Reformist of the late nineteenth century envisioned a future where women could access quality education without barriers. His daughters, Suniti and Sucharu, shared his passion and played pivotal roles in realizing this vision. Together, they worked tirelessly to create an educational environment that nurtured the intellect and spirit of young women, enabling them to thrive in a society that often marginalized their potential. The institution's historical legacy and contemporary infrastructure coalesce, fostering an environment that nurtures intellectual curiosity and develops leadership skills. The faculty members are fully committed to providing learning opportunities to students and equipping them with the knowledge they need to thrive in this rapidly changing global landscape.

In addition to its commitment to academic excellence and empowerment, Victoria Institution (College) prioritizes the safety and well-being of its students through various support systems and initiatives. The college has established dedicated bodies such as the Women's Cell, Grievance Redressal Cell and Antiragging Cell, aimed at ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all students. These cells work diligently to address any concerns or issues related to gender-based discrimination, harassment, or violence, providing students with a platform to seek assistance and recourse when needed.

Moreover, Victoria Institution (College) places a strong emphasis on gender sensitization and awareness among its student body and staff. Through workshops, seminars, and training programs, the college strives to foster a culture of respect, understanding, and equality. These initiatives aim to challenge stereotypes, promote empathy, and encourage dialogue on gender-related issues, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and supportive community within the college campus. By prioritizing the safety, well-being, and gender sensitization of its students, Victoria College reaffirms its commitment to creating an inclusive educational environment that not only nurtures academic growth but also fosters personal development and empowerment for all individuals.

What is Gender Audit

A gender audit is a systematic assessment of an organization, institution, or program to evaluate how effectively it integrates gender equality principles and promotes gender equity. It involves examining policies, practices, and outcomes to identify areas where gender biases exist and to develop strategies for improvement. Gender audits can help organizations identify and address gender-based disparities and ensure that their activities promote equal opportunities for all genders.

Objectives of Gender Audit

- a) Assess the current status of gender equality and inclusivity across various aspects of college life.
- b) Identify areas for improvement in policies, practices, and infrastructure to promote gender equity.
- c) Evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs and initiatives aimed at addressing gender issues using data gathered from the majority of staff and students.
- d) To prevent gender discrimination, sexual harassment, ragging in any form in the college campus.
- e) Ensure accountability and transparency in efforts to advance gender equality within the college community

Gender Audit Committee

Member	Designation & Department	Institution
Dr. Indrani Basu	Associate Professor of Economics &	Berhampore College, West Bengal
	IQAC Coordinator	
Dr. Somdatta Banerjee	Assistant Professor of Political Science &	New Alipore College, Kolkata
	President – Internal Complaints Cell	
Dr. Tapasi Bandyopadhyay	Member of Governing Body	Victoria Institution (College)
Dr. Debjani Das (Ghosh)	Member of Governing Body	
	Member of Governing Body	Victoria Institution (College)

Compiler: Dr. Madhumita Basu – Associate Prof. of English & Convener, Women's Cell, Victoria Institution (College)

Gender Policy

Staff

The Workplace Gender Policy applies to all faculty and non-teaching staff; whether full time or part time, temporary or permanent. It includes:

- a) Promote inclusivity for all gender identities with a zero tolerance policy for discrimination and harassment.
- b) Ensure prompt disciplinary action against gender-related grievances.
- c) Ensure equal access to resources and facilities.
- d) Provide equal opportunities for career advancement.
- e) Ensure representation of both male and female staff in leadership roles for diverse perspectives and equitable decision making.
- f) Conduct awareness programs, talks, and seminars to promote gender-sensitive practices.
- g) Adopt effective measures for security & safety of all genders.

Students

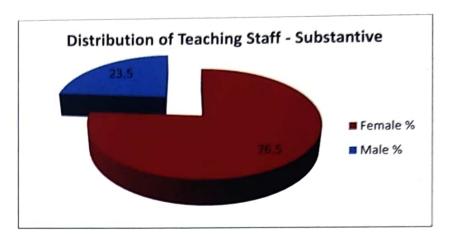
- a) Promote inclusivity for all gender identities with a zero tolerance policy for discrimination
- b) Ensure prompt disciplinary action against grievances
- c) Ensure equal access to resources and facilities
- d) Prohibit discrimination and harassment based on gender
- e) Conduct awareness programs, talks, and seminars to promote gender-sensitive practices
- f) Collaborate for continuous improvement in gender equity
- g) Ensure safe infrastructure, including surveillance through CCTV and both male and female guards, to enhance security
- h) Adopt effective measures for security & safety of all genders.

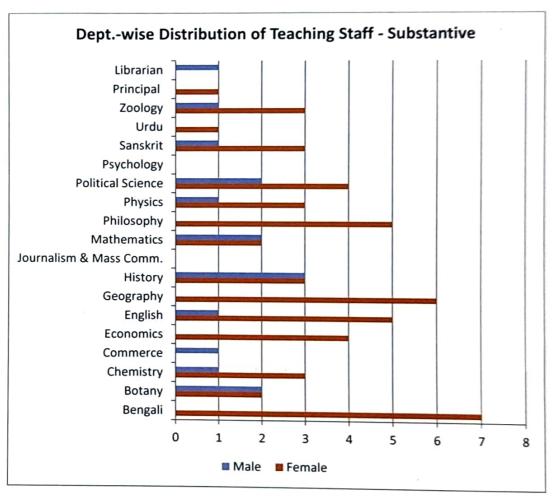
Gender Ratio

Students

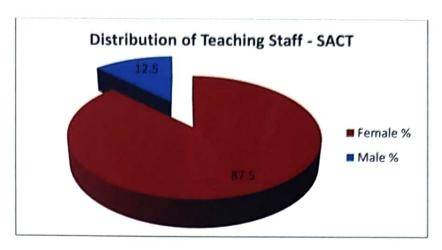
As the college caters exclusively to female students, the consideration of gender ratio of students is not applicable. Therefore, gender distribution statistics for students are not included in the assessment

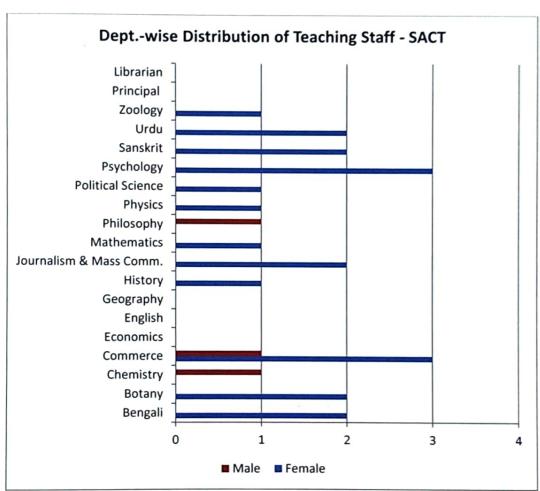
Teaching Staff - Substantive: 2022 - 2023



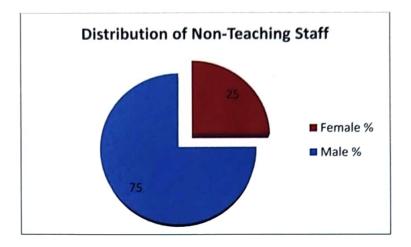


Teaching Staff - SACT: 2022 - 2023

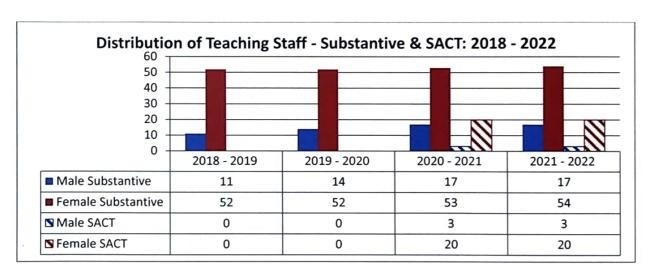




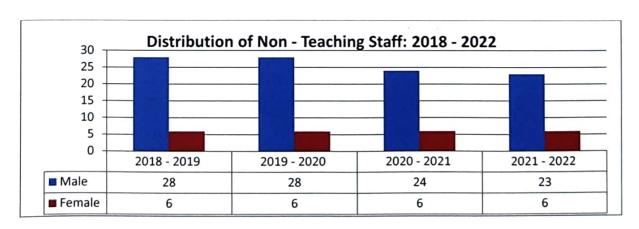
Non-Teaching Staff: 2022 - 2023



Teaching Staff – Substantive & SACT: 2018 – 2022



Non-Teaching Staff: 2018 - 2022



Initiatives to Improve & Promote Gender Equity

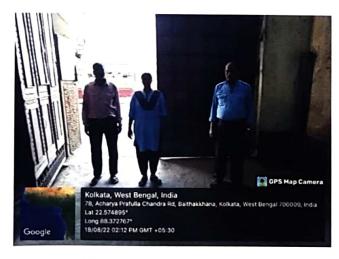
Curriculum Dissemination

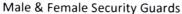
Gender-related content is integrated into the curriculum of most subjects taught in college. Across disciplines, students engage with current gender issues such as roles, inequalities, and representation. Additionally, the college provides opportunities for open discussions on gender-related issues that contribute to a campus culture that promotes gender equity.

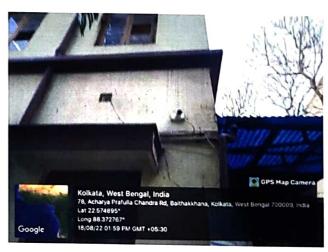
Ensuring Safety and Security

The college campus emphasizes safety with comprehensive CCTV surveillance. This vigilant system effectively monitors key areas, ensuring secure learning environment for all. Male and female security guards are deployed in the college, to enhance safety. Additionally, ID cards are issued to students, without which they are not allowed to enter the campus.

Basic sanitation facility in the form of separate toilets for students and staff is provided in the campus. The Students' Common Room has a Sanitary Napkin Vending Machine. The Teachers' Room and the College Office has separate toilets for male and female staff. The college has a safe and secured affordable on-campus hostel with a female warden for outstation students.







CCTV Surveillance





Hostel

Sanitary Napkin Vending Machine

College Support Cells

The college has established various support cells to promote gender equity and ensure safe and inclusive ambience for all students.

Anti-Ragging Cell

The anti-ragging cell operates in strict accordance with guidelines set by both the UGC and the State Government to ensure a safe environment within educational institutions. The vigilant Anti-Ragging Cell ensures a campus free from harassment and intimidation.

Women's Cell

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The cell promotes gender equality and creates awareness about women's rights within the college community. Additionally the cell organises workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns on topics such as women's health, safety, and empowerment. The Women's Cell serves as a dedicated space for addressing gender-related concerns. Students can confidentially email their concerns to the Women's Cell at the provided email address listed on the college website.

SC, ST & OBC Cell

The SC, ST, and OBC cell of the college serves as a dedicated platform for addressing the needs and concerns of students belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes. It endeavors to promote inclusivity, equity, and social justice within the campus community. Through various initiatives, including counseling, advocacy, and support services, the cell strives to ensure equal

opportunities for academic and personal growth. It also facilitates access to scholarships, financial aid, and other resources aimed at empowering students from marginalized backgrounds.

Minority Cell

The Minority Cell of the college is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment for students from marginalized and minority backgrounds. Through various initiatives, the Cell aims to empower these students by providing access to resources and opportunities for personal and academic growth

Grievance Redressal Cell

The Grievance Redressal Cell addresses complaints related to harassment or misconduct. It provides a confidential platform for students to report incidents, ensuring timely investigation and resolution. The complaints are submitted in a designated grievance box. The committee promptly investigates and addresses each complaint in a fair and transparent manner, striving to resolve issues and promote a supportive campus environment.





Grievance Box

Introducing Student Support Cells

Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)

The college has constituted Internal Complaints Committee as per University Grants Commission (Prevention, prohibition and redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutions) Regulations, 2015. The committee commits itself to a zero tolerance policy towards sexual harassment in campus and ensures a safe & healthy working environment.

NCC & NSS Units

National Cadet Corps (NCC) is a youth development movement which has enormous potential for nation building and provides opportunities to the youth of the country for their all-round development with a sense of duty, commitment, dedication, discipline and moral values so that they become able leaders and useful citizens. The NCC provides exposure to the cadets in a wide range of activities, with distinct emphasis on social services, discipline and adventure training. NCC cadets of our college regularly participate in a wide range of social awareness and community service activities. Apart from memorial days like National Youth Day, World Environment Day, International Yoga Day, Kargil Diwas, they participate in raising awareness regarding infectious diseases like COVID 19, conducting blood donation camps, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Puneet Sagar Abhiyan is on the anvil.

NSS unit of Victoria Institution (College) provides a platform to the students for community work and developing a sense of involvement in the tasks of nation building. NSS volunteers work to ensure that a needy get help to enhance their standard of living. A variety of activities are organized every year to channelize the energy and idealism of the younger generation into creative pursuits. They educate students and society regarding many issues like health, sanitation, palliation, etc. Various health camps and cleanliness drives across campus and slum areas nearby are taken out regularly to create awareness and also to motivate people to work towards a clean environment.

Scholarships

Various scholarships like Talent Support Programme (TSP), Post Matric Scholarship for minority students, SVMCM (for minority students), Swami Vivekananda Merit cum Means (SVMCM), Kanyasree and OASIS Scholarship are available to the students.

Strategies for Women's Economic Empowerment and Self Defence

The college adopts various strategies through add-on courses to promote the economic empowerment of women, aiming to equip them with practical skills and knowledge to enhance their employability and entrepreneurial potential.

These initiatives not only enhance women's economic independence but also foster a supportive community that encourages women to pursue their career aspirations and overcome gender-based barriers.

Gender Sensitization Programmes

Brief on Programmes: 2022 - 2023

The Career Counseling Cell of the college organized an Add-On Course on "Employability Skills Training Programme" from 16th - 26th August, 2022. The course was conducted by the reputed Mahindra group and Naandi Foundation. Nearly 35 participants were trained in this Programme named "Mahindra Pride Classroom", where students were introduced into the basics of back-office job, computer proficiency, office etiquettes and other relevant issues.





Employability Skills Training Programme

On 17th November, 2022, Victoria Institution College's Women's Cell and IQAC jointly organized an "Awareness Program for Security Personnel, Library, and Laboratory Assistants", who play crucial roles in ensuring the safety and smooth functioning of the college. The program aimed to bolster their knowledge and skills in areas such as emergency response procedures, gender sensitivity, and professional conduct within the unique context of a predominantly female student population. Members of the Women's Cell led informative sessions covering topics essential for creating a secure and inclusive environment. Participants actively engaged in discussions, demonstrating their commitment to upholding the college's values of safety, respect, and professionalism. The program

served as a platform for mutual learning and growth, empowering the staff to contribute effectively to the college's mission of providing a supportive and enriching educational experience for its students.





Awareness Program for Security Personnel, Library & Laboratory Assistants

On 8th December, 2022, A Workshop on Domestic Violence and Mental Health was conducted by the West Bengal Commission for Women in collaboration with IQAC, Victoria Institution (College), to sensitize students regarding gender related issues. The esteemed Chairperson of the West Bengal Commission for Women, Smt. Leena Gangopadhyay and her team members Dr. Dipanwita Hazra, Smt. Sujata Pakrashi Lahiri and Smt. Debjani Chakraborty spoke on various aspects related to gender discrimination, particularly Domestic Violence and how it is still rampant even among the educated and elite sections of the society. The audience gained knowledge about the procedure of filing complaints and the legal aspects of such cases. The second half of the Workshop focussed on the issue of Mental Health. This session was conducted by Dr. Subrata Bhattacharya and Dr. Chandan Naskar, assisting members of WBCW team. They not only discussed various cases but also invited questions from students. The Worskshop helped to spread gender sensitivity amongst students and encouraged them to raise voice against gender discriminations.





Workshop on Domestic Violence & Mental Health

On 20th January, 2023 the Women's Cell of Victoria Institution College organized a special screening of Nyna Pais Caputi's documentary, "Petals in the Dust: The Endangered Indian Girls" in observance of National Girl Child Day, designated on 24th January every year. The event aimed to raise awareness among students about the pressing issue of female foeticide and gender-based discrimination, highlighting the importance of safeguarding and empowering girls. Students watched the documentary, which vividly depicted the harsh realities of female foeticide in India and its profound societal repercussions.





Screening of "Petals in the Dust: The Endangered Indian Girls" in observance of National Girl Child Day

Another course, "Communicative English and Soft Skills, Life Skills and Digital Literacy" was held from 22.02.2023 to 04.03.2023 (9 day course for 36 hours). The Soft Skill Course consisted of the

development of Employability Skills, including body language, professional grooming, time management, digital literacy, critical thinking, professional ethics, problem solving, conflict management and so on.





The college organized self-defense courses with invited experts from the Shotokan Karate Foundation. These sessions aimed to empower students, particularly women, with essential self-defense techniques and awareness strategies. Led by skilled instructors, the courses provided practical training in assertiveness skills and physical techniques to effectively respond to potential threats and violence. Students actively participated in hands-on learning experiences, gaining confidence and valuable skills to enhance their personal safety.

On 9th March 2023, a day following International Women's Day, Victoria Institution College hosted a student talk on "Atrocities Against Women". Presented by students, the talk delved into pressing issues such as gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and unequal access to education and opportunities in observance of the global event. Drawing from global statistics and local examples, students passionately spoke on the urgency of addressing these injustices and advocating for gender equality. Through insightful analysis and impassioned rhetoric, the Talk motivated the audience to take concrete actions towards fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. It served as a poignant reminder of the ongoing struggles faced by women and the collective responsibility to challenge and dismantle patriarchal structures. Overall, the talk sparked meaningful discussions on campus and left a lasting impact on the audience.





Student Talk – on Atrocities Against Women

The college hosted a poster competition on June 17, 2023, themed "Equality for All." Students showcased their artistic talents and advocacy for inclusivity through vibrant posters. The event aimed to raise awareness about the importance of equality regardless of gender, race, or background. Participants creatively depicted messages promoting diversity, respect, and equal opportunities for all. Judges evaluated entries based on creativity, relevance, and impact. The competition fostered meaningful discussions on social justice and highlighted the college community's commitment to creating a more equitable society.





Poster Competition – Equality for All

Snippets from some of the other programmes organized during 2018 to 2022



Menstrual Health Awareness by NSS – 19.04.22



Students' Seminar on Women's Writing – 25.10.21



Talk on Pandemic Impact on Women – 13.05.22



Sanitary Health Campaign – 16.01.18



Self Defence Course: Counseling Cell – 29.08.22





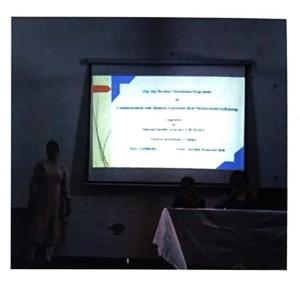
Wall Magazine on Abrogation of Section 377 - 07.12.18



Awareness Campaign by NCC Cadets - 07.04.21



Empowering Women Through Science – 24.02.20



Teachers' Orientation Programme – 24.08.22



COVID Awareness Programme for Staff- 12.11.21

Survey

An institutional self-survey was conducted through the distribution of questionnaires via Google Forms. The survey solicited feedback from various stakeholders, including students, faculty, and staff, to gauge perceptions and experiences regarding gender equity within the institution. This comprehensive evaluation aimed to assess the effectiveness of the policies, practices, and overall organizational culture concerning gender equality. Analysis of the responses revealed that while there is a general perception among most participants that the policies and programs adequately address gender equity, there are still areas for improvement. (Refer Annexure)

Recommendations for Improvement

- Increase awareness on rights under gender equality through engagement with Legal professional
- Promote more self-employment trainings for students
- Organise periodic health camps
- Increase the number of female non-teaching staff

Summary

The gender audit conducted at the institution reveals significant progress towards gender equity across various aspects of campus life. Through comprehensive data analysis and stakeholder feedback, it is evident that strides have been made in promoting gender equality in academic programs, faculty representation, student support services, and the provision of safe infrastructure. Initiatives such as gender-sensitive curriculum development, mentorship programs, awareness campaigns, and the implementation of safety measures such as CCTV surveillance, deployment of male and female security guards and issuance of ID cards for students have contributed to fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for all genders.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of the gender audit reveal that gender equity goals and objectives permeate every program and policies within the college and according to staff feedback, there are no issues concerning gender related criteria. The analysis indicates that gender equality and sensitivity are encouraged by administration, and the college staff demonstrates a keen awareness of gender related matters. The analysis of students' responses regarding program planning and design within college activities reveals that majority of student members feel that gender equity in policies and programs is satisfactory. While commendable progress has been made, the audit also identifies areas for further improvement, such as engaging with legal professionals to enhance awareness of gender rights,

organising health camps and introducing more self-employment trainings for students. Moving forward, the institution will continue to prioritize initiatives that promote equal opportunities, challenge gender stereotypes, and create a campus culture that values diversity and inclusion. By leveraging existing strengths and addressing areas of concern, Victoria Institution (College) is well positioned to serve as a symbol of inspiration for gender inclusivity and empowerment within the higher education landscape.

Kolkata - 51

20.02.202

Signature with Date & Seal

Dr. Indrani Basu

Associate Professor of Economics &

IQAC Coordinator

Berhampore College, West Bengal COORDINATOR

IQAC

BERHAMPÖRE COLLEGE BERHALIPOPE, MURSHIDABAD Sandalle Bour

Signature with Date & Seal

President Dr. Somdatta Banerjee Assistant Professor of Political Science & Complaints Cell Alipore Cal President - Internal Complaints Cell

New Alipore College, Kolkata

Signature with Date & Seal Dr. Tapasi Bandyopadhyay

Member of Governing Body Victoria Institution (College)

Member, Governing Body Victoria Institution (College)

Signature with Date & Seal

Compiled By: Dr. Madhumita Basu

Associate Prof. of English & Convenor, Women's

Cell

Victoria Institution (College)

Convenor

Women's Cell

Victoria Institution (College)

Debjani Das (ghash) 20/02/2024 Signature with Date & Seal

Dr. Debjani Das (Ghosh) Member of Governing Body Victoria Institution (College)

Member, Governing Body

Signature with Date & Seal 2/24.

Dr. Sumallya Karmakar

IQAC Coordinator

Victoria Institution (College)

DR. SUMALLYA KARMAKAR **IQAC** Co-ordinator

Victoria Institution (College)

De 20/2/2024

Signature with Date & Seal Dr. Maitreyi Ray Kanjilal

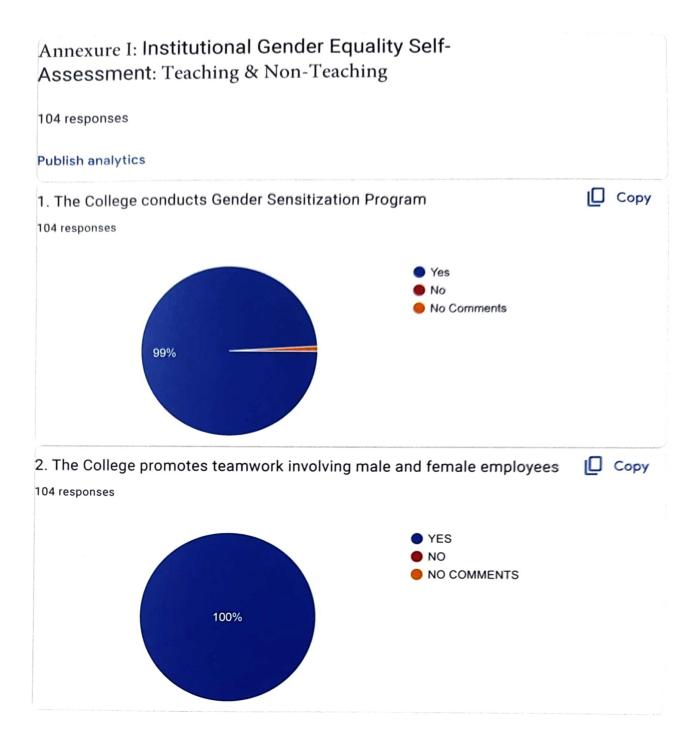
Principal

Victoria Institution (College pal

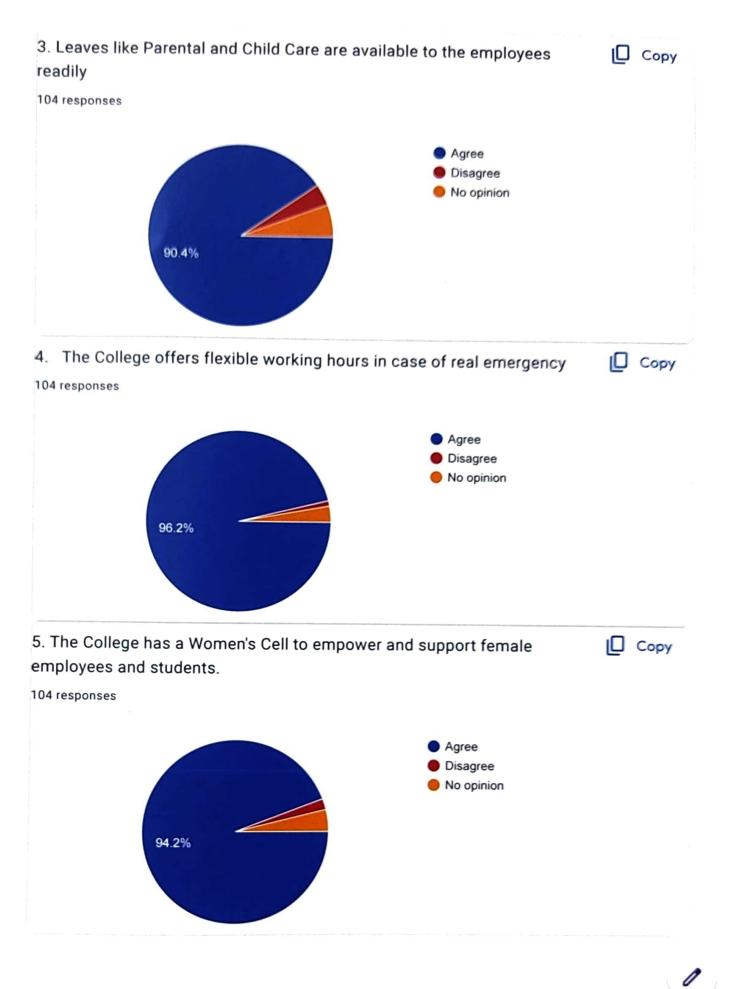
VICTORIA INSTITUTION (College)

Annexures - Institution Gender Equality Self-Assessment

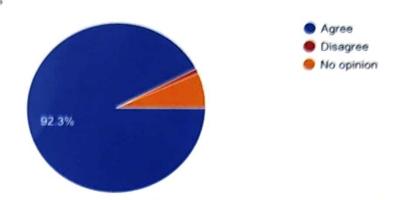
- Institution Gender Equality Self-Assessment for Teaching & Non-Teaching Staff
- Institution Gender Equality Self-Assessment for Students







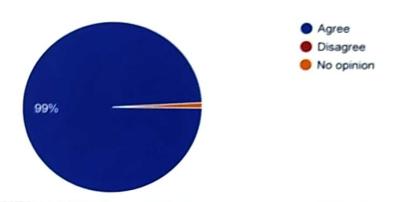
104 responses



7. The College promotes equal opportunities for all genders for free and fair expression of ideas.

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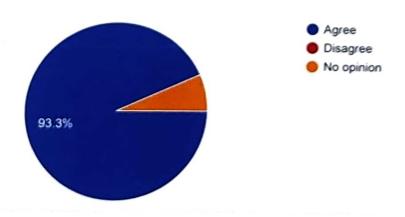
104 responses



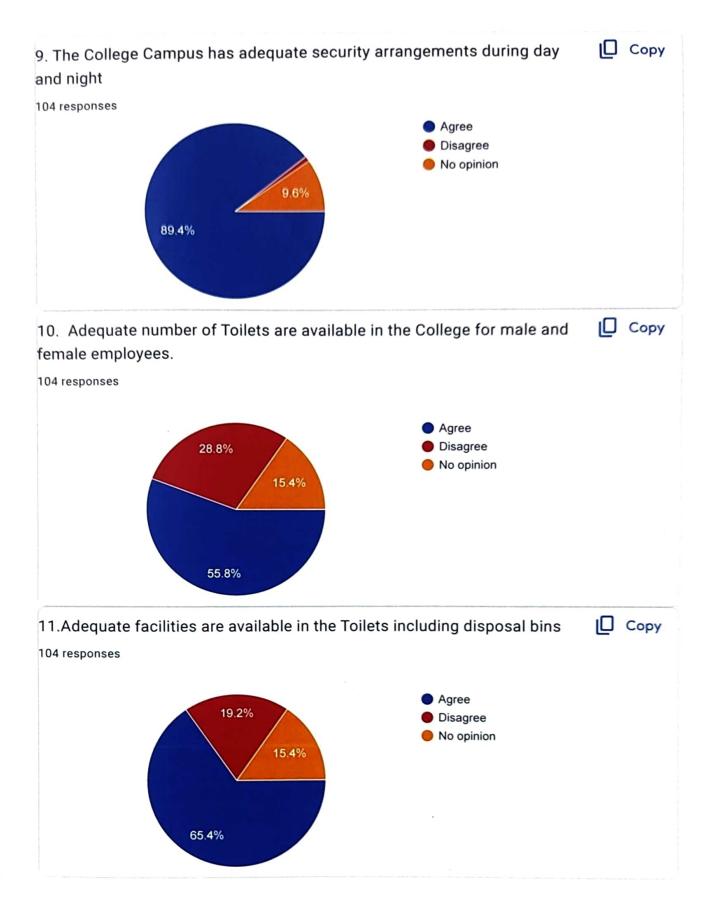
8. The College has equal representation of male and female in the senior decision-making positions of the College.

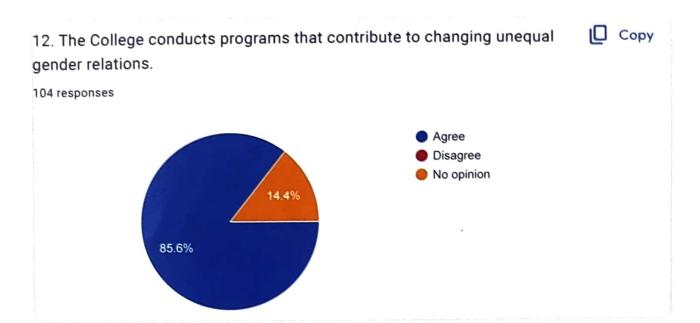
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104 responses









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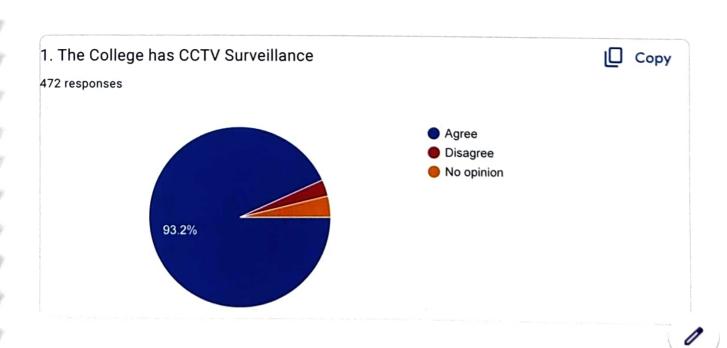


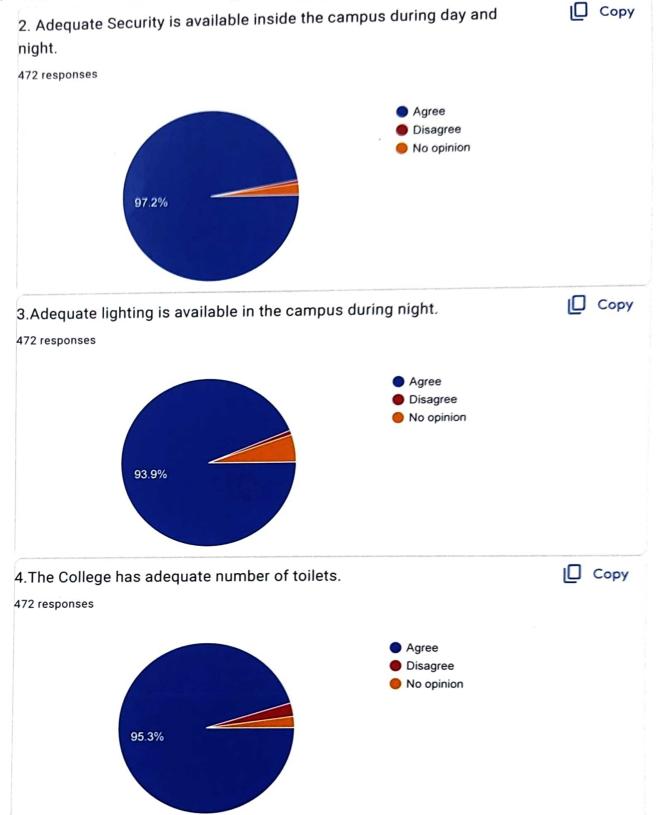
Annexure II: Institutional Gender Equality Self-Assessment: Students

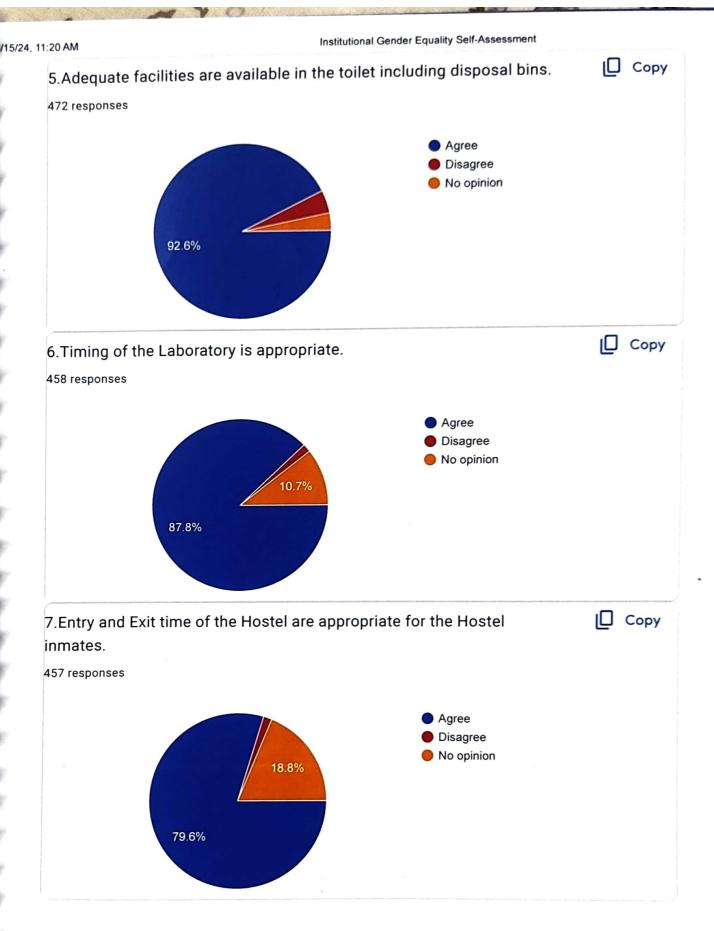
477 responses

Publish analytics

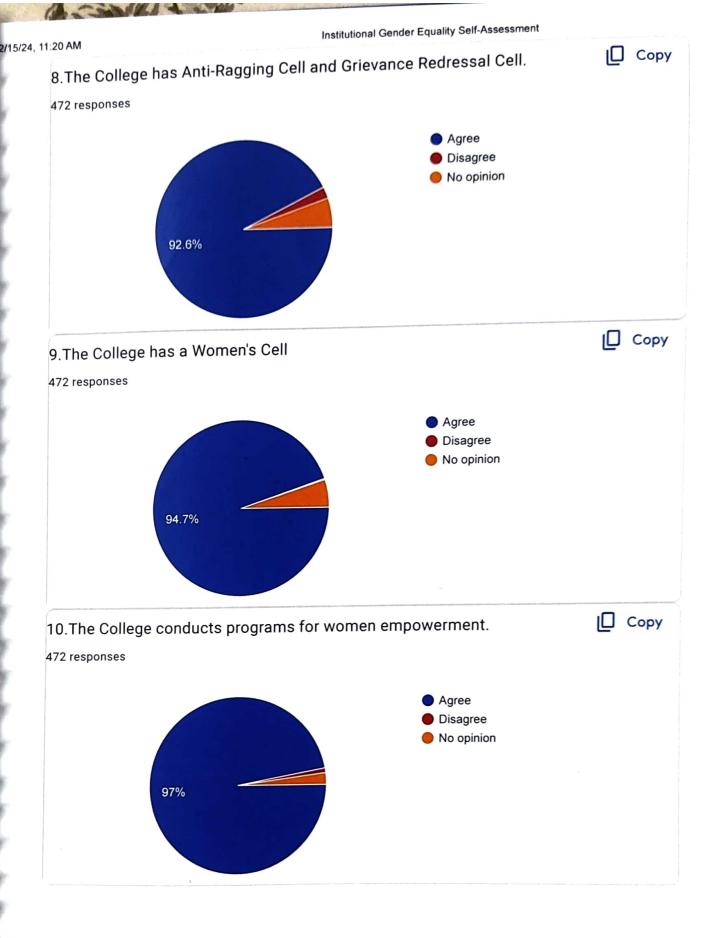








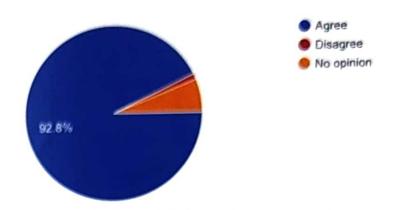




11. The College conducts Gender Sensitization Program.

□ Сору

472 responses



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