



CALL FOR PAPERS

**INDIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH
EASTERN REGIONAL CENTRE
(ICSSR-ERC)**

Ministry of Education, Govt. of India

Sponsored :

**TWO DAYS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
(MULTI DISCIPLINARY)**

on

**"GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS: EXPLORING
WOMEN'S VOICES AND EXPERIENCES IN SOUTH ASIA"**

DATE- 6th & 7th DECEMBER 2023

Organised By :-

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS & WOMEN'S CELL & IQAC, CHANCHAL COLLEGE

In Collaboration With

CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES & IQAC, RAIGANJ UNIVERSITY



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Raiganj University and University of North Bengal),
West Bengal, India



Distinguished Speakers :



PROF. (DR.) SADEKA HALIM
Chairperson
Department of Sociology
University of Dhaka

PROF. (DR.) DEEPA JOSHI
Gender and Social Inclusion Lead.
International Water Management
Institution, Sri Lanka



PROF. (DR.) FOUZIA MANNAN
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PROF. (DR.) GERISE HERNDON
Professor of English
Fulbright Program Adviser, Co-director,
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https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeYXMrzxlEYs011xP9tG9r4Q2hy-1rIKYV0hUTC_31mp3Rw/viewform

Registration fees :

Faculties and Teachers: 2000 INR

Research scholars: 1500 INR

International Paper Presenters: 100 USD

Students and Participants without paper presentations: 500 INR
(Registration includes seminar kit, refreshments, lunch on Seminar days and Certificate)

ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Chanchal College is a premier College in North Malda. It was established on 26th August, 1969 with an aim to imparting higher education to the students of North Malda which is most backward minority concentrated region. It is presently affiliated to the University of Gour Banga. It is housed at the heritage building of Chanchal Palace. The emblem bears the rising sun over an atomic structure which signifies the aspiration and achievement of mankind in the field of knowledge.

Chanchal is a subdivision of Malda, which is a district in West Bengal, India lies 330 km North of Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal and 235 Km South of Siliguri, the heart of Noth Bengal. Mango, jute and silk are the most notable products of this district. The special variety of mango, Fazli, produced in this region is popularly known by the name of the district and is exported across the world and is internationally acclaimed. The folk culture of "Gombhira" is a feature of the district, being a unique way of representation of joy and sorrow in daily life of the common people, as well as the unique medium of presentation on national and international matters.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

Raiganj University, one of the foremost universities in West Bengal and is a premier educational institution that strives to fulfil the higher educational needs of the people of North Bengal. Established on 3rd February 2015, it carries the legacy of 70 years of Raiganj College (University College) which was founded in 1948. The University is located in Uttar Dinajpur, one of the backward districts of West Bengal, with a rural economic base and reaches out to the marginalized communities with over 70% inhabitants dependant on agriculture and allied activities. It conducts a wide range of programmes at the Undergraduate, Postgraduate, M.Phil and Doctoral levels through its 22 University Departments and 11 Centres imparts education in the conventional disciplines of Science, Applied Sciences, Social Science and Humanities and in the professional disciplines of Management, Education and Legal studies. The programmes are suited to the demands of career making and facilitate constructive dialogue with society. The University faculty consists of scholars of national and international repute. The University has initiated measures to forge institutional ties with Universities in Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh for academic collaboration under the Raiganj International Academic Network Programme. Raiganj University supports student start-up projects, facilitates patent application among faculty and promotes industry-university linkage.

ABOUT THE ICSSR-ERC

The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), was established as an autonomous organisation in 1969, by the Ministry of Education (now known as the Ministry of Human Resource Development), Government of India. The primary objective of the ICSSR is to promote and fund research in the social sciences. Regional Centres were set up in the early days for the promotion of the objectives and activities of the ICSSR in the regions. The Eastern Regional Centre (ERC), established in Calcutta (at 10, Lake Terrace, Calcutta - 700 029) with the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC) as its host institution, started functioning from 1973. In May, 2012 the office of the ERC was shifted from 10, Lake Terrace, Kolkata - 700 029 to its new building at 1/R1, Baishnabghata Patuli Township, Kolkata - 700 094. The ERC covers the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal along with the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

CONCEPT NOTE

The percentage of female population in South Asia "was reported at 48.82 % in 2021, according to the World Bank collection of development indicators, compiled from officially recognized sources" as per data "sourced from the World Bank on February of 2023." (<https://tradingeconomics.com/>) However in spite of demographically occupying almost half of the physical space of the region, women in South Asia have not been able to gain their ground when it comes to assertion of rights and/or voicing their opinions for the need of their sustainable development. The UNICEF website has gone at length in stating that whatever progress South Asian women had made in the last couple of decades has been significantly hampered by the pandemic, that not only forced women to relegate back to their stereotypical positions as the primary care-givers to the institution called family but also compelled many of them to lose their businesses, as trade and commerce took a severe backseat with the continuous lockdowns and restricted movements that were imposed on the entire population. UNICEF also raises concern over the increase in violence against women that has escalated during and after the pandemic. Thus the region not only suffers from historically actuated systems of patriarchal domination that vary with their variegated affiliations- be it racial, social, professional and so on but also with the lack of access of South Asian women to facilities and tools of empowerment in this contemporary world. Women's basic rights such as access to food, health, education and employment are yet to match that of the female population in the first world countries. Owing to socio-cultural and religious norms, women in this zone are still restricted by hegemonic patriarchal institutional practices that have emerged as social evils such as the practice of dowry, early marriage, multiple childbirths, etc. Also there is a major reluctance in women, even in the present century, to step out of their homes to earn money or to pursue careers that would require them to stay away from their families or homes. Very significantly the present economic crisis in parts of the region has hit the female population in the worst possible way. The latest data from World Bank confirms that the economic condition in South Asia is limping back to normalcy but still the recent financial crisis in Sri Lanka and Pakistan, the drop in tourism in the Maldives and Nepal, the war in Ukraine and the Israel- Palestine conflict are thwarting the overall economic development of the world.

Empowerment of women in South Asia has been insufficient to a large extent. Education and health facilities are at present available, though in a meager way, but there is a lack of awareness among women regarding these. Empowerment is not possible without awareness of women themselves regarding their rights and privileges. The roots of exploitation cannot be terminated unless women are aware of their role in the various socio-economic spaces in South Asia. During the 'South Asia Women in the Workforce Week,' the World Bank had aimed to address the barriers hindering women's economic participation, such as low girls' education levels, restrictive gender norms, gender-based violence, and the burden of unpaid care and domestic work. Apart from that, the trafficking in women in South Asia is a major cause of concern. By supporting economic empowerment initiatives, we strive to improve the female labor force participation rate and create a more inclusive, safe and prosperous South Asia for women in particular and for all gendered identities in general.

The World Bank extends a warm invitation to key stakeholders, including South Asian governments, private sectors, and civil society, to unite in addressing critical issues affecting women's economic lives in the region. Increased opportunities for women to access better quality jobs, enhancing their participation, independence, and dignity have to be stressed upon. Everyone must come forward to learn, discuss, engage, and raise awareness and contribute towards building a more equal and balanced future for the women in South Asia. Women need to be made aware of their contribution to the growth of the region and its sustenance. They are to realize that they constitute a major part of the labor force of the region. Women must also be conscious of the way they are (re)presented in print and social media. Empowerment in its truest sense will be possible only when women understand the need to take a stand against violence (mental and/or physical), oppression, discrimination, exploitation and politics of (mis)representation. This seminar shall engage experts from various disciplines and have a panel discussion on the need of empowerment of women in South Asia.

Though South Asia has seen very powerful female leaders in every sphere from sports to science to economics to health care to politics, yet in terms of securing equal opportunities for all genders the picture is far from satisfactory. The gender roles in the region have not reversed but the boundaries are now being constantly and persistently interrogated. Women's rights are gaining attention in the press and media and their experiences are going down as alternative his(her)stories. In the sphere of Indian English Literature there has been a sudden upsurge in writing about major and minor female characters from the epics. In the contemporary films, OTT platforms and the regular TV soap operas, women leads are being written about in the effort to generate more TRP or box office profits. However, the question that arises is whether this façade of development or the sudden interest in the matters of women is but a synthetic/cosmetic treatment of the issues of women, that provide us with a sense of pseudo-empowerment while the real issues remain unsolved in the background? How can the gender

issues in South Asia be brought into the mainstream and what can be the major sustainable development goals that would help the women in the region to secure for themselves a better, healthier and secure future? Are the efforts only limited to closed doors conferences or can newer modes and methods need to be discussed to address the crisis?

The aim of this interdisciplinary conference would be to explore the various concerns and challenges that can be met with in order to elevate the status of women in South Asia.

Papers may be sent in English, Bengali, Hindi and Nepali.

PAPERS ARE INVITED ON THE FOLLOWING SUB THEMES BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THEM :

- i) Representation of Women in Contemporary Literature of South Asia.
- ii) Representation of Gender in Print and Social Media in South Asia.
- iii) Representation of Gender in Films in South Asia.
- iv) The impact of Social Evils on the Girl Child and Women in South Asia.
- v) Role of Women in Sustainable Development Goals in South Asia.
- vi) Impact of Education on Gender Equality.
- vii) Gender and Violence in South Asia.
- viii) Intersection of Health and Gender in South Asia.
- ix) Gender and Political Empowerment.
- x) Intersection of Gender and Social Identities.
- xi) Masculinities and Gender roles.
- xii) Gender and Legal Reforms in South Asia.
- xiii) Gender and Conflict.
- xiv) Gender and Technology.
- xv) Role of NGOs and Gender goals in South Asia.
- xvi) Women and His(her)stories in South Asia.

- ▶ Abstracts of not more than 250 words (including six key words) should be sent by mail within 7th November 2023.
- ▶ Full papers (between 5000-8000 words) should be mailed by 25th November 2023.
- ▶ Citations must be done in compliance with MLA 9th edition.
- ▶ Abstracts will be selected after blind peer review .
- ▶ Only complete research papers will be published based on the selection of the peer review committee.
- ▶ Selected papers will be published in **UGC CARE LISTED JOURNAL** and **SCOPUS INDEXED INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATION HOUSE.**
- ▶ Full papers must carry with them a plagiarism certificate duly signed in by the author/authors.
- ▶ Participants can also virtually present their paper with prior permission. In that case the certificate will be sent through Indian Post after the conference.

Abstracts are to be sent : eco.dept.chanchal@gmail.com
cws_rgu@raiganjuniversity.ac.in

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