

IIHMR University celebrates International Women's Day and support of the theme #ChooseToChallenge

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Jaipur: Center for Gender Studies at IIHMR University in support of International Women's Day and its theme # **ChooseToChallenge** invited a renowned Gynaecologist and organised a talk on **Cervical Cancer and Menstrual Hygiene Management** with women staff at all levels.

74,000 women die from Cervical Cancer in India alone. Cervical Cancer is the 2nd most affected Cancer in Indian Women a huge percentage of 27% Indian women affected by Cervical Cancer out of the Global data of 73% women affected by the same Cancer.

Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) refers to the practice of using clean materials to absorb menstrual blood that can be changed privately, safely, hygienically, and as often as needed for the duration of the menstrual cycle. According to the Performance Monitoring for Action 2020 (PMA2020) results, only 36% of 5,084 girls and women, aged 15 to 49, in Rajasthan have everything they need to manage their menstruation. A majority of women are not able to adequately meet their MHM needs across their reproductive years. About 44% of women wash and reuse their MHM materials.

A challenged world is an alert world and from challenge comes the change but the question is "what to challenge on this International Women's Day". We are very far to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 5: gender equality by 2030 in India. An essential change is required to celebrate equality with diversity. As per the 2019 SDG Gender Index scores and rankings by country, India scored 56.2 only based on five major indicators like: child, early, and forced marriage; perceptions of partner violence; legal grounds for abortion; women in parliament; and women in ministerial roles.

Dr. Nutan Prabha Jain, Director- Center for Gender Studies (CGS), suggests that, "We need to challenge ourselves first. Challenge your stereotypes, challenge your behaviour, and conduct if you see this is a barrier in utilizing one's potential to the maximum. Keep a copy of the Constitution of India in every Institutions and even family and value its provisions of "gender equality". Be a good neighbour and divert the attention while gender-based violence is going on or break the silence. Create awareness of various government schemes and provisions. Be the change!"

The **Center for Gender Studies (CGS)** has its origin in the ‘Resource Center on Women’s Health, Empowerment and Rights’ (RCWHER) that was set up in 1997 in the then IIHMR Institute in a project mode for five years with financial support. IIHMR University organized Rangoli Drawing session and Poster Presentations highlighting the theme **#ChooseToChallenge** with students participating actively. The students and gender champions celebrated the day by various fun activities, skits, mime, and songs. The DPHONs who are attending a training program at IIHMR University also enjoyed.

