

LOYOLA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), CHENNAI
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

"SHE LEARNS SHE LEADS" NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

**Celebrating the Power of Girl Child Education
in collaboration with Child Rights and You (CRY)**

The Department of Sociology, in collaboration with Child Rights and You (CRY) hosted a National art exhibition and a campaign “She Learns, She Leads” to celebrate the power of girls’ education on 10th September 2024 in the Loyola College Campus.

The inaugural session for the campaign started at 10:30 a.m. in Y.D. Hall. Dr. J. Vanitha, Head of the Department, welcomed the gathering and emphasized the importance of the event. Mr. Arivazhagan Rayan, Consultant in CRY, felicitated Rev. Dr. A. Louis Arockiaraj SJ, Principal, Loyola College, Rev. Dr. A. Louie Albert SJ, Hostel & Alumni Director and Ms. Artist Sabrina Siga, Chief Guest for the event. Rev. Fr. Principal felicitated the gathering and emphasized the legacy of Loyola in accommodating the women students and their inclusivity in the college. He further highlighted the role of Loyola in providing women's entrepreneurship and empowerment programs conducted by the Outreach department of Loyola College.

Chief Guest Ms. Sabrina Siga accentuated the role of the Tamil Nadu government in providing schemes and policies for the empowerment of women students and their education. She also elaborated on the history of midday meal scheme of Tamil Nadu and its impact on girls' education with the statistical data. She further expressed why, through art, the importance of a girl’s education is expressed. Art makes children express their ideal view of the world through art. She also gave literary references while talking about its significance and expressed painting helps in shaping the minds of the children. Further, Ms. Siga emphasized the portrayal of women in Indian societies, citing instances where women are stereotyped using gender roles. Finally, she commended the CRYs programmes and their initiatives in support of girls' education.

Followed by the chief guest’s address, Ms. Manisha Rabha, Manager of Communications, CRY South, explained the goals and initiatives of the CRY organization and its connect with the programme. She also said that the girl child has always been looked down upon, considered as a burden and, at times a curse because of the practice of the dowry system. Following her address

Mr. Arivazhagan Rayan, Consultant in CRY Chennai, expressed the need for more Higher Secondary Schools for girls that are accessible, and explained that girls do not pursue higher secondary education as the schools are far away. He emphasized the importance of the girls' safety and mentioned that parents point to safety concerns and transportation issues as the main reasons for their daughters not attending school. Following his address, two short videos were projected that focused on the importance of girls' education.

Mr. John Roberts, the Regional Director, CRY South, mentioned that National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) report states around 83 percent of girls attend primary school, but this figure drops out to 70 percent in secondary school. A range of socioeconomic factors, such as poverty, gender discrimination, and regional disparities, drive this decline. He concluded the inaugural session by delivering a vote of thanks to the audience.

Following the inaugural session, the attendees moved on to view the art exhibition which was on the theme, 'A World Where Every Woman Is Educated' that was displayed in the Jubilee Quadrangle. The art contest was a part of the nationwide campaign "Poori Padhai, Desh ki Bhalai," which means 'Complete Education of Girls helps the Country Prosper.' The art exhibition featured 110 artworks of children from the Southern States and the Andaman Islands and a total of 1,933 children from 44 schools participated in this event. A street play was performed by the students of the Department of Sociology featuring the importance of girl child education.

Various other events were conducted apart from the street play. A red ribbon braiding table was among the many other colorful stalls and students could show their support for the campaign by braiding red ribbons. A selfie photo booth was set up adjacent to braiding station in support of women's education and a Human Snake and Ladder game was conducted where students had to move inside the box in the game rather using game coins. Participants in the tongue twister challenge had to recite sentences three times through, without pausing or making mistakes. Students demonstrated their support by affixing their hand print on a white canvas to show their solidarity towards girl child education. The event concluded with a group photograph with the organisers and the participants of the Department of Sociology.



