



Report on STREE 2024 Conference & Expo

6th- 8th December 2024



The **second edition of STREE 2024**, a National Conference and Expo, was held at the **Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT), Bhopal**, from December 6th to 8th, 2024. Organized by **Shakti (A National Movement for Women)** in collaboration with MANIT and supported by **NITTR** (National Institute of Technical Teachers' Training and Research) and **MPCST** (Madhya Pradesh Council of Science and Technology), brought together an exceptional blend of innovation, tradition, and empowerment.

Under the overarching theme **“Women as Conservators and Propagators of Indian Knowledge Systems: Adi to Amrit Kaal,”** STREE 2024 served as a platform to celebrate and amplify women's roles in preserving and advancing India's diverse knowledge systems, ranging from ancient traditional practices to cutting-edge scientific and technological innovations. This theme resonated with the aspirations of India's **Amrit Kaal**, the 25-year journey towards its centenary as a nation, highlighting the pivotal contributions of women in shaping the country's socio-cultural and technological evolution.

With the participation of over 600 delegates, including scholars, entrepreneurs, policymakers, researchers, and students, the event featured a well-curated mix of **academic sessions, panel discussions, cultural programs, and a mega expo**. Esteemed dignitaries, including government officials, industry leaders, and Padma Shri awardees, added gravitas to the conference, making it a unique confluence of inspiration and action. Over three days, STREE 2024 became a vibrant hub of ideas, innovations, and discussions, fostering collaboration to address challenges and explore opportunities in a rapidly changing world.

Day 1: Mega Expo Inauguration and Tribute to Ahilyabai Holkar



Inauguration of the Mega Expo

STREE 2024 commenced with the inauguration of the **Mega Expo**, a vibrant showcase of innovation, traditional crafts, and technological advancements. Over 50 stalls represented diverse sectors, including science, technology, traditional medicine, sustainable products, and entrepreneurial initiatives led by women.

The expo attracted participants from academic institutions, research organizations, and grassroots communities. More than 5000 visitors as Students, delegates and professionals visited the stalls, engaging with exhibitors to learn about cutting-edge solutions and traditional practices.

Session: “Women Administrators – Ahilyabai Holkar”



The first session paid tribute to the visionary leadership of **Ahilyabai Holkar**, a legendary administrator who exemplified ethical governance and inclusive development. Speakers highlighted

her contributions to infrastructure development, community welfare, and cultural preservation. The session underscored her relevance as a role model for women leaders today.

Day 2: Formal Inauguration and Thematic Sessions



Conference Inauguration

The formal inauguration of STREE 2024 witnessed the presence of distinguished dignitaries:

- Prof. Abhay Karandikar, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology (DST)
- Dr. N. Kalaiselvi, Director General, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
- Shri Shiv Kumar Sharma, National General Secretary, Vigyan Bharati (VIBHA)
- Dr. Sudha Tiwari, National President, SHAKTI
- Dr. Leena Bavadekar, National General Secretary, SHAKTI
- Dr. C. C. Tripathi, Director, National Institute of Technical Teachers' Training and Research, Bhopal
- Dr. Anil Kothari, Director General, M.P. Council of Science & Technology
- Prof. K. K. Shukla, Director, Maulana Azad National Institute of Technology (MANIT)

The ceremony began with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp, symbolizing enlightenment and knowledge. Their addresses emphasized the pivotal role of women as custodians and propagators of Indian knowledge systems, highlighting how traditional wisdom has historically empowered women to contribute to society in diverse ways. They stressed the importance of integrating these traditional practices with modern scientific advancements to address contemporary global challenges such as climate change, healthcare inequities, and sustainable resource management. Recognizing the untapped potential of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), the dignitaries called for greater inclusion and the establishment of robust platforms to foster women's participation in these fields.

Dr. Kalaiselvi, in her powerful keynote, emphasized, **“Science alone can decide the future of the globe.”** She noted that India's scientific advancements have positioned the nation as a global

leader, with the entire world looking to India for solutions to pressing challenges like climate change, energy security, and sustainable development. Dr. Kalaiselvi also lauded the significant contributions of women scientists and called for greater investments in inclusive policies to harness the potential of women in STEM fields.

Prof. Karandikar highlighted the transformative role of **Science and Technology (S&T)**, asserting that it is not just a pillar of economic and social development but a critical driver for India's aspiration to become a global superpower. He underlined the increasing importance of **women scientists and entrepreneurs** in shaping the nation's future. Prof. Karandikar also spoke about DST's initiatives, including the **WISE-KIRAN** scheme, designed to empower women in STEM. He encouraged the audience to provide suggestions to further refine policies promoting gender equity in science and technology.



In their unified message, they urged participants to draw inspiration from the event's theme, foster mentorship, and support the next generation of women leaders while developing scalable solutions that embrace both tradition and innovation.

During the ceremony, two souvenirs were launched:



1. **STREE 2024**, the official event souvenir, documenting the themes, highlights, and contributions of the event.
 2. **Prama**, an annual publication celebrating the achievements of women in science, technology, and entrepreneurship.
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Thematic Sessions on Day 2

Speakers of Session 1:

- Prof. Annapurni Subramaniam, Vigyan Shree Awardee, Bengaluru
- Dr. Madhvi Thakre, Senior Scientist, Project Manager, Chandrayaan-3, Space Application Centre, ISRO, Ahmedabad
- Dr. Anushree Malik, Professor, Centre for Rural Development and Technology, IIT Delhi



1. **Women's Contribution in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)**

This session celebrated the remarkable contributions of women in the STEM fields and focused on how these contributions have driven advancements in various scientific and technological domains. Topics discussed included:

- How Advancement in Astronomy and Astrophysics Have Taken Place with the Help of the Group and Space-Based Observatories: This topic focused on the significant role of space-based observatories and collaborative international research groups in advancing the fields of astronomy and astrophysics. It highlighted how these

platforms allow scientists to study distant celestial bodies, enhance our understanding of the universe, and uncover new phenomena.

- **India's Glorious Moon Mission - Chandrayaan-3:** The second part of the session celebrated India's historic Chandrayaan-3 mission, which marked a significant achievement in space exploration. The discussion focused on how India, under the leadership of women scientists, successfully sent a spacecraft to land on the lunar surface, contributing to global space science. The mission's success was a proud moment for the country, especially for women in the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), who made invaluable contributions to the mission's development and execution.
- **Plant-based nano-formulations & herbal utilities for house fly & mosquito control in rural settings:** This topic addressed the development of eco-friendly solutions to control pests in rural areas. It showcased the innovation of plant-based nano-formulations and the use of herbal utilities to combat common pests like house flies and mosquitoes. These sustainable solutions are crucial in improving public health, especially in rural communities, where chemical-based pest control is often not accessible or safe.

Speakers of Session 2:

- Dr. Vaidya Savithri SG, Vaidya Volunteer and Secretary, Ayurveda Academy, Bengaluru
- Dr. Bhavana Prasher, Senior Principal Scientist, CSIR-IGIB, Professor, AcSIR, New Delhi
- Dr. Pradnya Aptikar, Ayurvedic Gynaecologist, Thane, Mumbai
- Dr. Viswajanani J. Sattigeri, Outstanding Scientist and Head, CSIR-TKDL Unit



2. Women in Ayurveda and Traditional Indian Medicine

This session focused on how women play a key role in the preservation and propagation of **Ayurveda** and **traditional Indian medicine**. Topics discussed included:

- **Ayurvedic perspective on women's physical and mental health: across different life stages:** This session focused on the holistic approach of Ayurveda in addressing women's health, particularly at different life stages such as adolescence, pregnancy, and menopause. It explored how Ayurvedic treatments can support women's physical and mental well-being, providing insights into natural remedies for common health concerns.

- **Ayurgenomics: innovative integration of ayurveda and modern genomics for development of predictive and personalized medicine:** This innovative approach focused on integrating **Ayurveda** with **modern genomics** to develop personalized healthcare solutions. The session explored how **Ayurgenomics** combines traditional healing with the latest advancements in **genomic research**, enabling the development of customized treatments based on individual genetic makeup.
- **Women as conservators and propagators of Indian knowledge systems - Adi to Amrit Kaal:** This session examined the vital role of women in preserving and disseminating traditional Indian knowledge systems, from Adi Kaal (ancient times) to Amrit Kaal (the present and future). Women's contributions to the preservation of Ayurveda and other knowledge systems were highlighted, stressing the importance of empowering women as key stakeholders in safeguarding India's cultural heritage.
- **STREE-2024 - Ayurveda advocated women empowerment through nutrition:** This part of the session discussed the crucial role of nutrition in empowering women, particularly through the lens of Ayurveda. It focused on how Ayurvedic principles of diet and lifestyle can empower women to take charge of their health, promote wellness, and ensure long-term well-being.
- **Indian medical heritage: protection and promotion:** The session stressed the importance of preserving and promoting India's medical heritage, particularly Ayurveda and traditional knowledge. It highlighted initiatives such as the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), which aims to protect India's ancient medical knowledge from exploitation and ensure its global recognition.

Panel Discussion: Indian Knowledge System for Viksit Bharat

Moderator: Dr. Uma Kumar

Panelists:

- Dr. Rama Jaysunder
- Dr. Viswajanani J. Sattigeri
- Dr. Anita Aggarwal
- Dr. Sheela Godbole
- Dr. Kinkini DasGupta Misra

The panel brought together prominent experts to discuss how **Indian knowledge systems** can be integrated with modern science and technology to promote sustainable development and preserve our cultural heritage. The **moderator** for the session was **Dr. Uma Kumar**, who guided the discussion through thought-provoking questions, encouraging the panelists to explore various facets of the topic.

One of the major focal points was how **Indian knowledge systems** can be integrated into **modern science and technology**. The panelists discussed the potential benefits of combining **traditional wisdom** with **contemporary scientific methods** to create innovative solutions for challenges in healthcare, agriculture, energy, and the environment. A significant portion of the discussion was

dedicated to creating a focused policy that encourages the **integration of Indian knowledge systems** with **modern science**. The panelists suggested the establishment of **collaborative platforms** between **traditional knowledge keepers** and **scientists** to bridge the gap between these two domains. It was also noted that a policy framework should promote the **documentation, preservation, and dissemination** of traditional knowledge in a way that is accessible and relevant to contemporary needs.

Day 3: Philosophical Insights, Cultural Heritage, and Awards

Sessions on Day 3



Speakers of Session 3:

- Prof. ShashiPrabha Kumar, Chairperson, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla
- Prof. Vijaya Khader, Former Dean, Acharya N G Ranga Agricultural University, President of IWSA, Hyderabad
- Prof. Mukul Kulshreshtha, Professor & Head, Civil Department, MANIT, Bhopal
- Dr. Mrittunjoy Guha Majumdar, Associate Professor, Physics, UPES, Dehradun



3. **Women Philosophers and Thinkers in Indian Tradition**

This session highlighted the intellectual legacy of women philosophers and thinkers in Indian history. The themes explored were:

- **Economic empowerment of women through application of science & technology: food, nutrition, health & livelihood security:** This session focused on how the integration of **science and technology** can directly impact the **economic empowerment of women**, particularly in rural and agricultural settings. It explored how **advancements in food science, nutrition, and healthcare** can provide sustainable solutions for women's economic independence, ensuring better livelihood security.
- **Vedic Usha - deity of the dawn:** The session explored the figure of **Usha**, the Vedic goddess of dawn, as a symbol of empowerment and renewal. The discussions highlighted how this deity represents the transition from darkness to light, symbolizing women's role in driving social and spiritual transformation. The representation of Usha was framed in the context of **feminine strength** and how it can inspire contemporary women leaders.
- **Contrasting concepts of femininity in religious and dharma:** Discussed varying perceptions of femininity in sacred texts.
- **Dynamic interconnectedness - Trika Shaivism and quantum physics:** Drew parallels between Indian philosophy and modern quantum physics.

Speakers of Session 4:



- Smt. Anupama Hoskere, Padma Shri Awardee, Founder-Director PuppEt Theatre, Bengaluru
- Smt. Lakshmikutty, Padma Shri Awardee, Practicing Traditional Medicine, Kallar Forest area
- Smt. M.M. Hundekar, Former Principal at School of Fashion Technology, Director, Development Cell, Maharshi Karve Stree Shikshan Samstha
- Dr. Sudha Malaiya, Chancellor, Aklavya University Damoh, Madhya Pradesh



4. **Contemporary Perspectives: Reviving Traditional Knowledge Systems for Women Today**

The final session explored how traditional Indian knowledge systems can be revitalized to empower women today. The topics included:

- **A window into investment and returns of Bharatiya systems of knowledge:** This session discussed the potential economic returns from investing in the revival and promotion of India's traditional knowledge systems, with an emphasis on how these systems can benefit women entrepreneurs and rural communities.
- **Reviving Aadi kal for Amrit Kaal: sustainable heritage in Indian textiles:** This session examined how the revival of **traditional Indian textile techniques**, such as handloom weaving and natural dyeing, can promote **sustainability** in the fashion industry. It focused on the empowerment of **women artisans** and the role of **sustainable heritage** in fostering economic growth.



- **Bhartiya classical dance: a scientific analysis:** This session provided a scientific analysis of **Indian classical dance**, emphasizing its role not only as an art form but also as a tool for improving **physical health, mental well-being, and spiritual growth**. The session explored how classical dance can empower women by providing a means of creative expression and a connection to cultural heritage.
- **The role of Indian knowledge systems in advancing women in science:** This final discussion highlighted the contribution of **traditional Indian knowledge systems** in **advancing women in science**, exploring how these ancient systems can support modern scientific practices and help create new opportunities for women in scientific research and innovation.

Session 5: Ethics and Governance in Indian Texts and Its Scientific Interconnection

Speakers:

- Prof. Tripta Thakur, Director General, National Power Training Institute
- Dr. Ekta Kapoor, Scientist F, FTT Division, DST, Govt. of India

Topics included:

- **Advocacy for inclusivity/promoting ethical leadership:** This topic discussed how Indian philosophical texts, such as the Bhagavad Gita and Arthashastra, emphasize inclusivity and ethical leadership. It explored how these ancient teachings can be applied in contemporary governance and leadership, especially in the fields of science and technology, where ethical leadership and inclusivity are critical for sustainable development.
- **Urbanity in the hands of women rulers: Case history, Bhopal:** This session highlighted the historical governance of women rulers in India, particularly in Bhopal, and their contributions to urban development.

PANEL DISCUSSION: Women's leadership in achieving sustainable Development Goals: Bridging Economic Prosperity, Gender Equality, Environmental Integrity and Climate Resilience.

The moderator of the session was Prof. K.K. Dhote and the key speakers were Dr. G. Meera, Dr. Sakshi Bharadwaj and Prof. Savita Raje.



Each session at STREE 2024 provided invaluable insights into the intersections of **science**, **technology**, **culture**, and **governance**, showcasing the vital role that women play in shaping and advancing India's traditional knowledge systems and modern innovations.

Open Forums and Discussions



The **open forums** facilitated interactive dialogue on critical issues:

- **“Success Stories by Women Leaders in S&T and Women Entrepreneurs: Problems and Solutions”**: Women leaders and entrepreneurs shared their experiences, challenges, and solutions, providing inspiration and practical insights to aspiring women innovators.
 - **“Indian Perspective of Women”**: The dialogue covered topics ranging from gender equity in traditional Indian societies to the challenges and opportunities for women today.
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Cultural Programs

Cultural performances celebrated India’s artistic heritage, showcasing classical dance, music, and folk traditions. These programs reinforced the event’s theme by linking cultural expressions with traditional knowledge systems.

Valedictory Session

The **Valedictory Session** marked the grand culmination of the STREE Conference & Expo 2024, providing a platform to reflect on the successful discussions, initiatives, and outcomes from the event. This session not only celebrated the insights and advancements shared over the past days but also honored the contributions of those who helped shape the event into a transformative platform for women’s empowerment and leadership.



The **Chief Guests** for the session included:

- **Sushri Nirmala Bhuriya**, Hon'ble Minister of Women and Child Welfare, Madhya Pradesh Government
- **Prof. Gobardhan Das**, IISER Bhopal
- **Shri Shiv Kumar Sharma**, Special Guest

Awards Ceremony

The event concluded with a grand awards ceremony honouring exceptional contributions:

- **Best Paper Presentation:** Dr. Anjali A. Kulkarni
- **Best Poster Presentation:** Nikita Nagori
- **Best Stall in Expo:** Punduru Khaddar
- **STREE Award:** Ms. Nivruti Rai



STREE 2024 was a monumental event that showcased the profound contributions of women across disciplines while fostering dialogue on integrating traditional knowledge systems with modern science and technology. The conference's success highlighted the transformative potential of women as leaders, innovators, and custodians of India's rich heritage, paving the way for sustainable and inclusive growth during **Amrit Kaal**.