

*List of Activities taken up by Gender Champions between June 2021 to June 2022*

**Bystander Intervention Program- Stand-Up Against Street Harassment by Breakthrough India**

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Tackling Street Harassment:

Relevance in context of Gender Champions

**Panel Discussion on the Meaningful Inclusion of LGBTQIA+ Members in Labour Forces**

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**Awareness Program on The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013**

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**PANEL DISCUSSION ON**

**MARITAL RAPE: UNDERSTANDING THE SACROSANCT BOND AND CONSENT**

Overview of the Session

**LIST OF ACTIVITIES TAKEN UP BY GENDER CHAMPIONS BETWEEN JUNE 2021 TO JUNE 2022**

**BYSTANDER INTERVENTION PROGRAM- STAND-UP AGAINST STREET HARASSMENT BY BREAKTHROUGH INDIA**

**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2021.

**Online Platform:** Zoom

**Time:** 11 am to 12:30 pm.

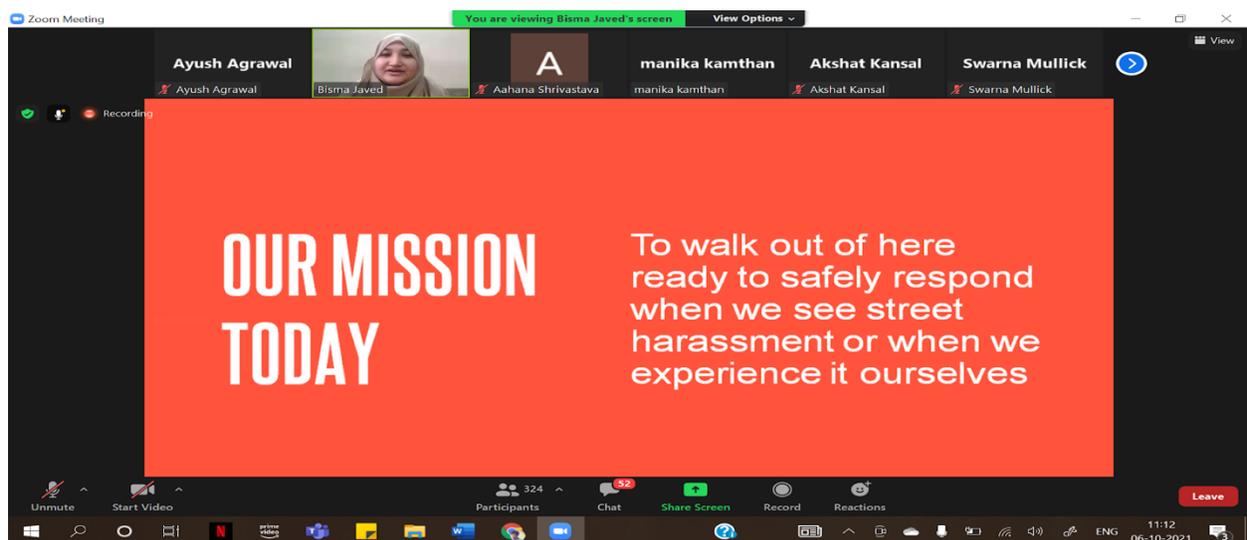
**Moderator and Speaker:** Bisma Javed

o Percentage of Cell Participation: **97%** (34 out of 35 members)

o Number of Students Benefitted: **340 students in attendance**

**Overview of the Session:**

The sexual harassment faced by women and minority groups is widespread and has been found to negatively impact a woman's psychological making, workplace productivity, emotional balance and the role she plays in society. Therefore, the need of the hour is to educate the youth



about what street harassment can look like and the role an individual can play in reducing such instances from occurring.

**(Above: Overview of the key result areas of the session.)**

Breakthrough is a woman's rights NGO working over 20 years now to create a cultural shift and make discrimination and violence against girls and women unacceptable. Hollaback is an international organisation in NYC that began with collecting stories of street harassment interventions. Being convinced of the difference simple intervention in such cases can make, Hollaback created the Bystander intervention in many countries – of which India is one.

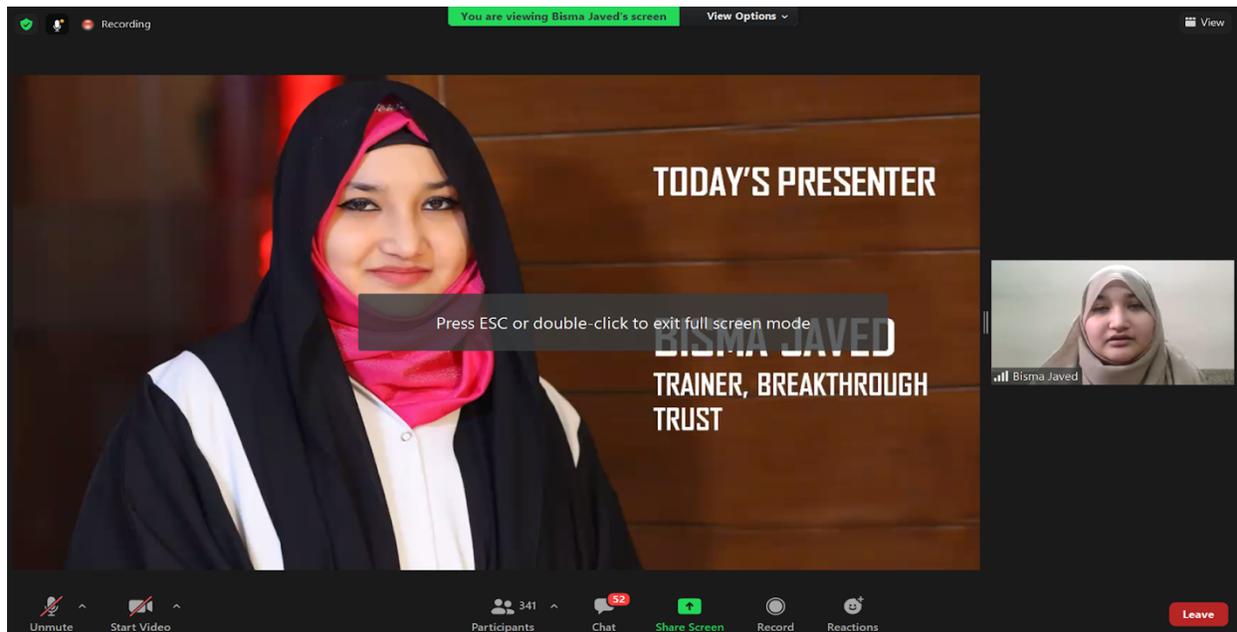
**Speaker For The Session:**

Bisma Javed is a Gender Sensitive Trainer. She has done Bachelors in Sociology and Masters in Gender Studies from Jamia Millia Islamia. She is a trained and certified trainer from Hollaback Foundation. She has been active in voicing her opinion through short-columns and articles. She has also been trying to spread awareness on gender equality, gender sensitivity and women's rights through her digital art page @digital.art.by.bismajaved on Instagram. She was awarded with "Rising Woman Award 2021" on the occasion of International Women's Day. She has also recently represented India in Asia-Pacific Generation Equality Dialogue- Youth Activism Accelerator organized by UN Women.

She began with a personal perspective into sexual harassment wherein she spoke about her own reaction to sexual harassment where she froze and was unable to effectively tackle the harassment. She emphasized on the aspect of intervention it's importance in making change on

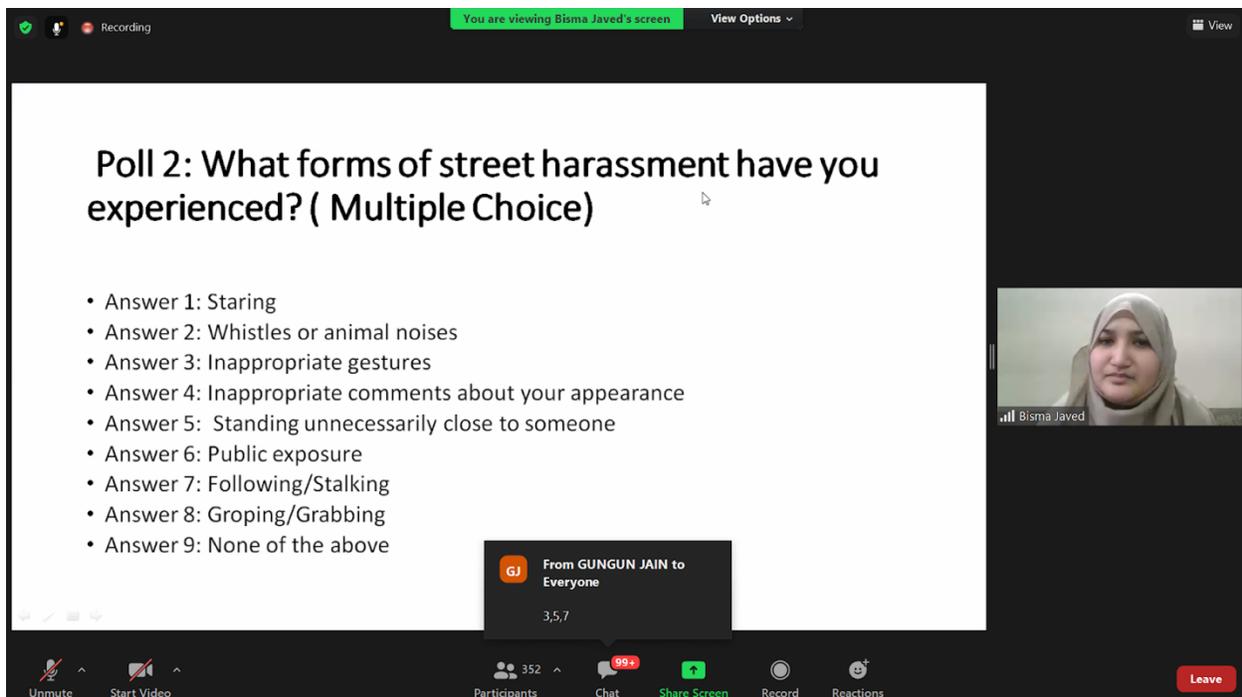
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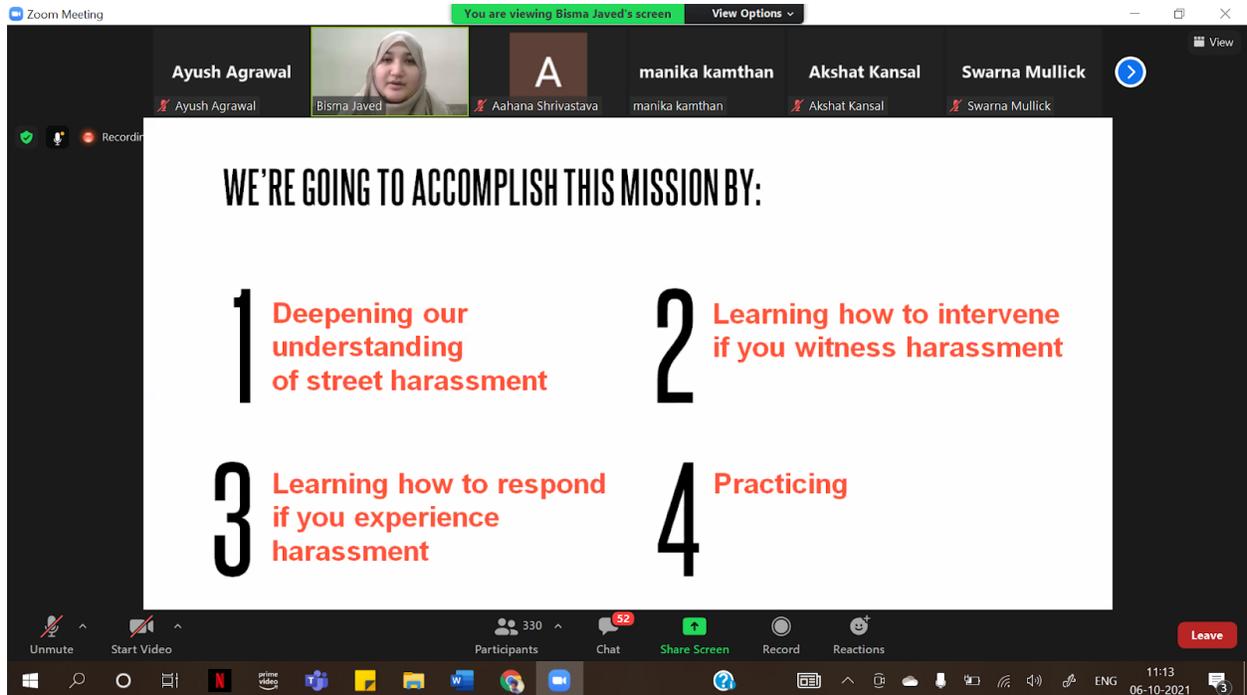
level.



(Above: Introduction of the Resource Person)

(Below: Highlights)



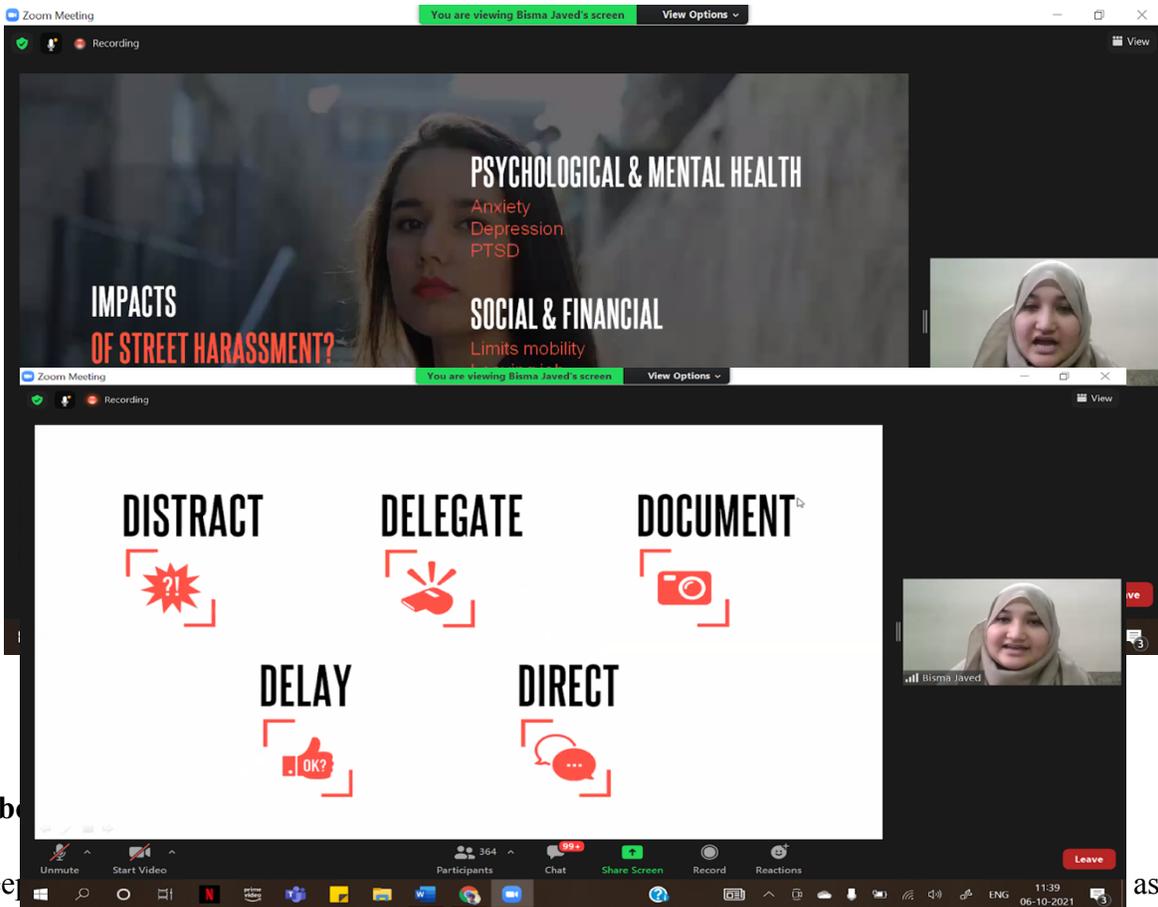


### **Forms and Effects of Street Harassment:**

She went on to speak about the mission of the day, which was to leave the training session with full knowledge about how one can respond in such situations and help someone else. To deepen the understanding of street harassment, to learn how to intervene if you witness harassment, to learn how to respond if you experience it and finally, how to practice all of the above.

Street harassment can happen in many forms, like staring, whistling or animal noises, inappropriate gestures, standing unnecessarily close to someone, public exposure, groping etc. The opinion of the audience was taken into account at this point and many members of the group stated that they have experienced at least one if not all of these forms of harassment.

Sexual harassment can cause detrimental after-effects to a person. Psychological effects could be increased anxiety, depression or PTSD. Limited mobility, skipping school or work could be other signs. Overall, the event is so traumatizing that it affects the overall quality of life.



(Above)

Keep

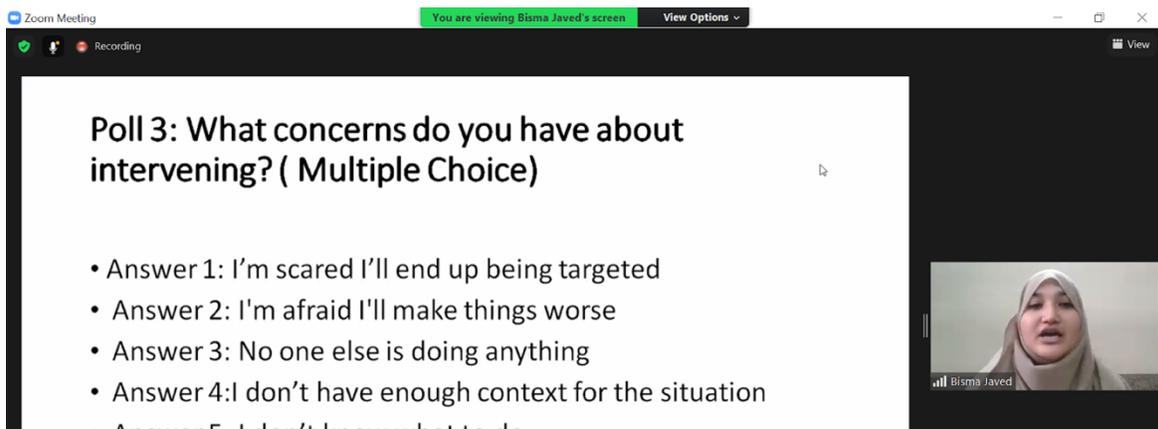
asked

what were the very concerns that stopped us from intervening. The audience picked a combination of the answers such as not knowing what to do or being afraid of making things worse.

(Above: Poll on concerns before intervention)

**Tackling Street Harassment:**

Thus, in most instances there were by standers nearby but they remained passive as they didn't know what to do or looked away to avoid the situation. But there were also instances when



No. 6

people did intervene in simple, yet effective manners. The speaker re-iterated that we did not always need direct confrontation as a form of intervention.

(Below: Advise on how to Act in situations of harassment)

When we talk about safer methods to intervene, we get the 5Ds which are:

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting window. The main content is a slide with the following text:

- DISTRACT** (with a red starburst icon containing a question mark)
- TAKE AN INDIRECT APPROACH TO DE-ESCALATE THE SITUATION
- Start a conversation with the target or find another way to draw attention away from them. Ask them for directions or the time, or drop something.

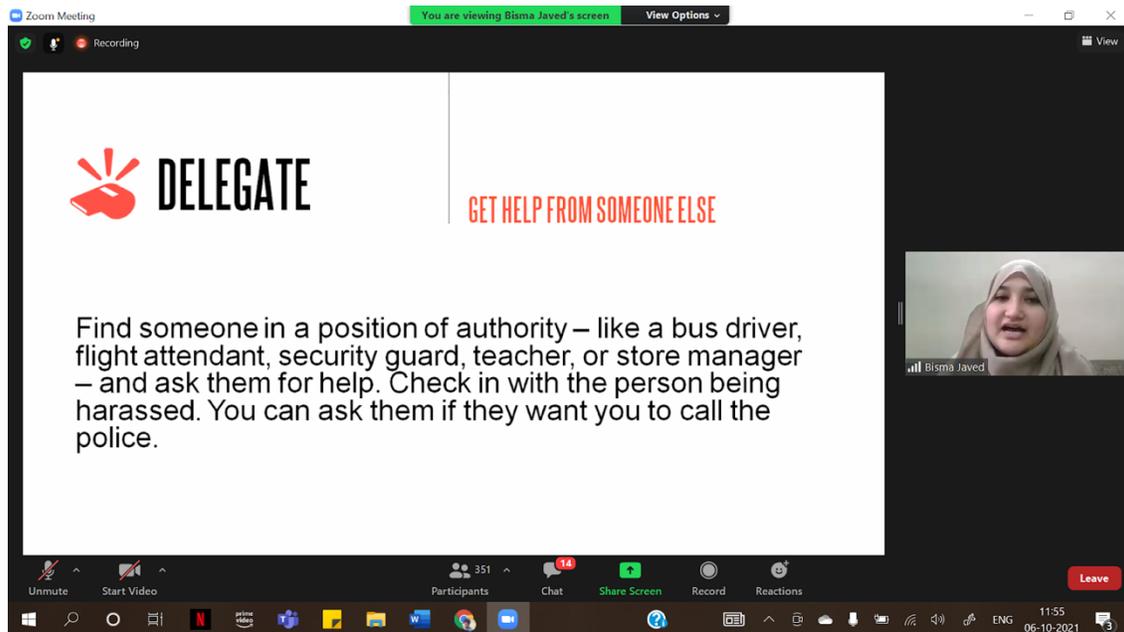
A chat bubble from Aarushi Gupta to Everyone is visible, stating: "Old Lady took the initiative to intervene against street harassment". The Zoom interface at the bottom shows 357 participants and a recording status.

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting window. The main content is a slide with the following text:

- DOCUMENT** (with a red camera icon)
- IT CAN BE HELPFUL FOR THE TARGET TO HAVE A VIDEO OF THE INCIDENT. LAWS ABOUT RECORDING IN PUBLIC VARY, SO CHECK LOCAL LAW FIRST.
- Tips for documenting street harassment:
  - Keep a safe distance. - Film street signs or other landmarks that help identify the location.
  - Say the day and time.

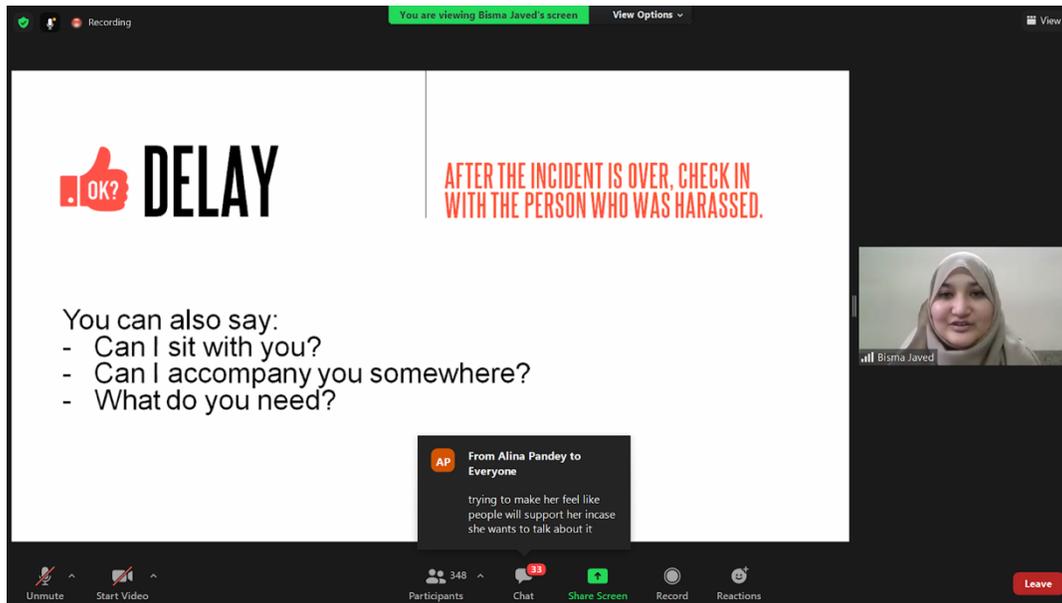
The Zoom interface at the bottom shows 355 participants and a recording status.

Distract: – Start a conversation with the target or find another way to draw attention away from them. Ask for directions or the time or drop something. Simple interactions can break the confidence of the attacker.



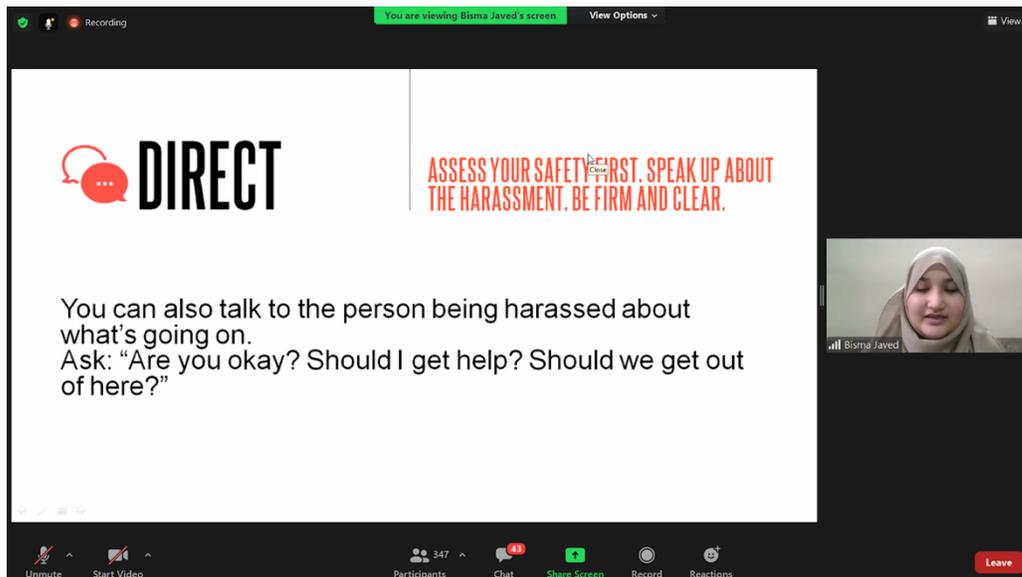
Delegate –Find someone in a position of authority and ask for help. Check in with the person being harassed and ask them if they want to call the police. If the person in authority is going to take time to take action, you shouldn't wait. Engage the people around you by having a conversation on the lines of, "do you think we should help"? There is no perfect or universal way to respond to harassment so one must take actions according to the situation.

Document – Take actual, tangible evidence. Keep a safe distance from the attacker and the target. Film street signs or other landmarks to help identify the location and mention the date and time. Do not upload any proof without the consent of the target and submit your recording to the targeted person.



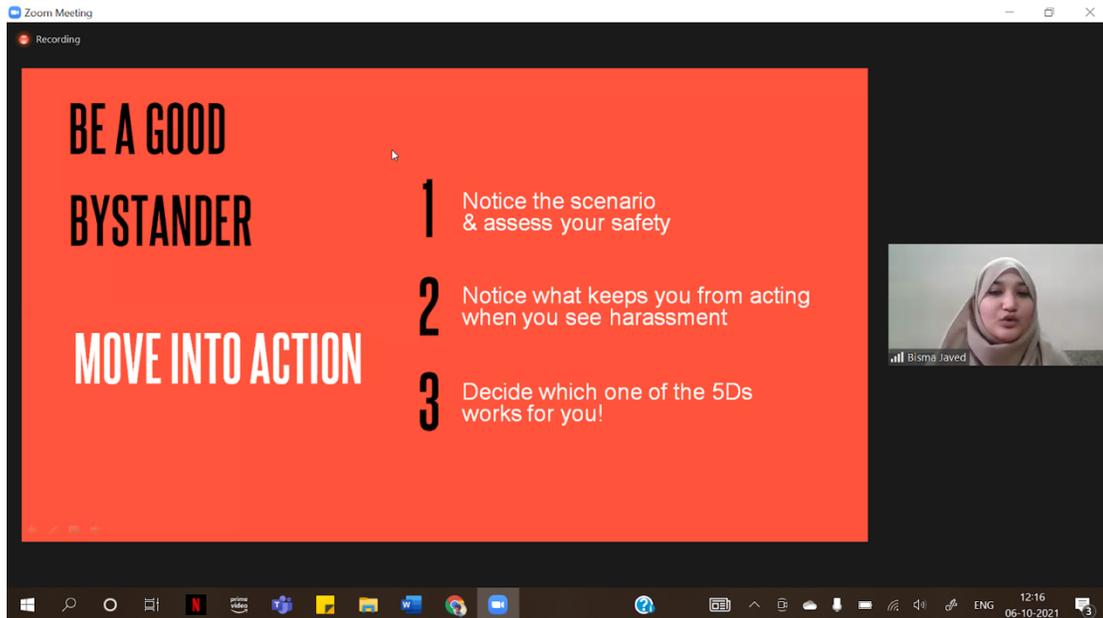
Delay – Start a conversation and keep it going by asking questions so as wear the attacker down.

Direct – Last but not the least, after having considered your own safety in the scenario and taking into account your own comfort, directly confront the attacker and warn them. Asking questions about what is going on can help.

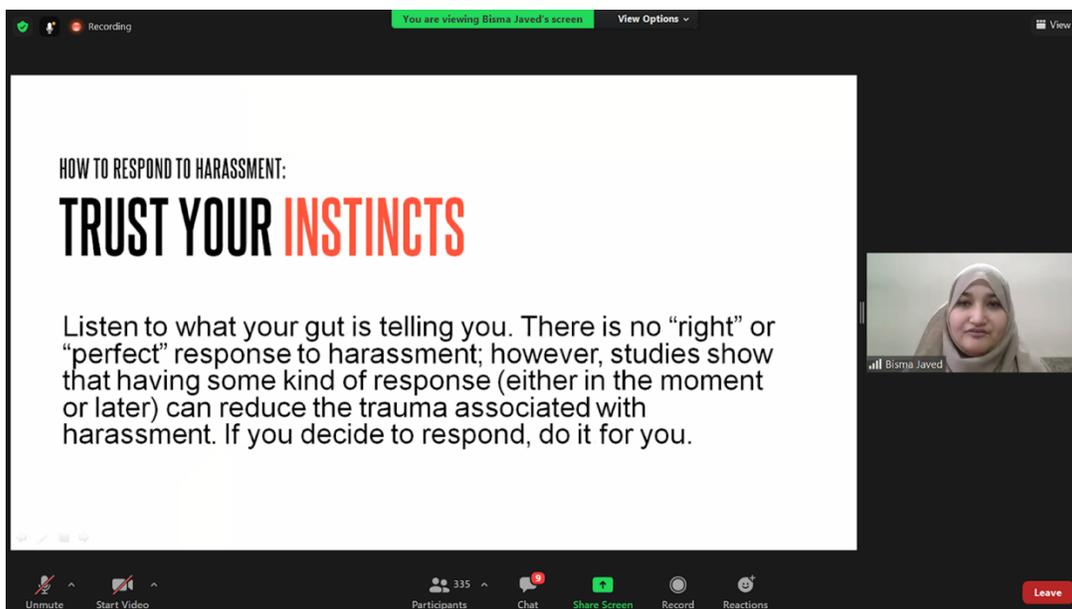


(Below: How to be a Good Bystander)

At the end of the session, she reiterated important things to remember in order to be a good

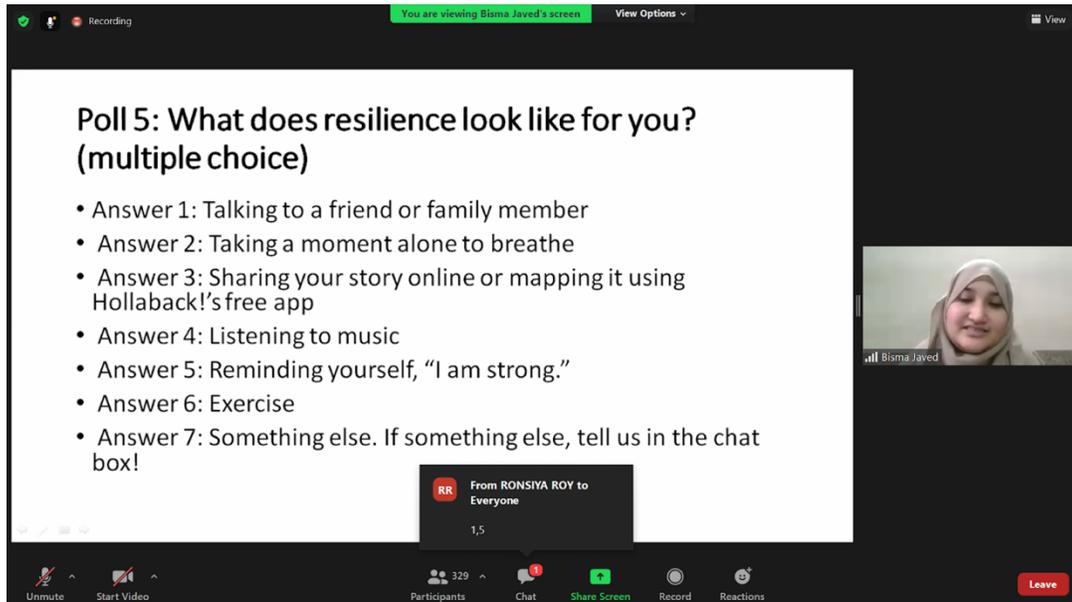


bystander. It is important to be aware of one's own concerns which prevent one from acting and in every situation, it is crucial to ensure own's safety and use any of the D's according to the situation.



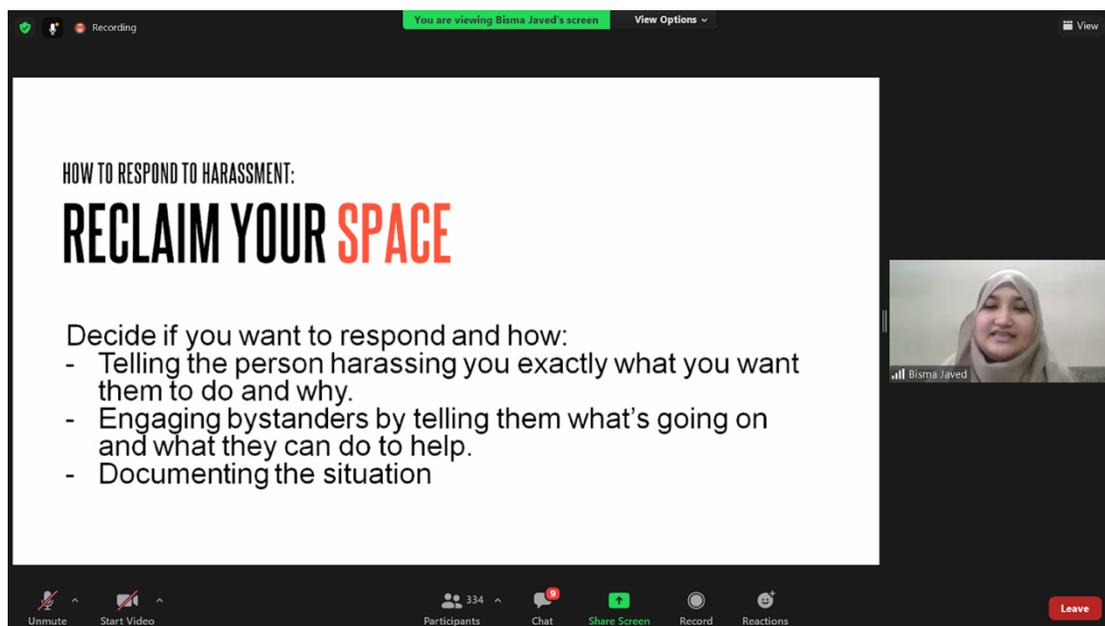
(Above: Trust your instincts)

In fighting street harassment, it is important to be resilient. Resilience can take different shapes for different people but it helps one find strength and believe in themselves and their actions.



(Above: Poll on how we perceive resilience)

She explained the effect of practicing resilience wherein the moment we say out loud, that I belong here and I deserve to be here, then we save ourselves and hundreds of potential



harassments.

(Above: How to Reclaim your space)

**Relevance in context of Gender Champions**

The session uniquely aligns with the key objectives of Gender Champions cell that will surely help us in the drive to sensitise our peers on gender related issues and take all possible steps to create meaningful and lasting changes in the way we think about and approach gender related issues, which shall go a long way in creating a safe and inclusive space for all of us, and with this outlook in mind, Symbiosis Law School, Pune in association with “Breakthrough India” organized the “Bystander Intervention Program-Stand against Street Harassment” event that was spearheaded by the Gender Champions, Human Rights Cell and Community Legal Care Centre.

**PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE MEANINGFUL INCLUSION OF LGBTQIA+ MEMBERS IN LABOUR FORCES**

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**Date:** Friday, November 26, 2021

**Online Platform:** Microsoft Teams

**Time:** ~10:00 am to ~11:45 am IST

**Moderator:** Maitreyee Bhardwaj, Co-Head, Gender Champions

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**Speakers:**

1. Hon'ble Justice Ambadas Joshi, Lokayukta Goa and a retired judge of the Bombay High Court
2. Dr. Pragati Singh, MBBS, Public Health Professional, LGBTQIA+ leader and changemaker

Since this event was concerned with concepts resonating with the objectives of the Gender Champions Cell of SLS Pune, all members were encouraged to attend this panel discussion.

**Session Overview:**

- To deliberate upon the easing the process of, and meaningfully increasing the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ members in labor forces, Symbiosis Law School Pune, a constituent of Symbiosis International (Deemed University), conducted a virtual panel discussion on November 26, 2021. The ceremony was organized by the Gender Champions of Symbiosis Law School Pune, in collaboration with the Human Rights Cell.

- The event gave a significant amount of insight and perspectives on the social and legal elements that play various roles in the current scenario of LGBTQIA+ labor force members.
- The vitality of various elements in order to increase LGBTQIA+ members in labor forces were pondered upon.
- The session also provided various data points, evidence and arguments in the favor of more inclusivity in not just Indian, but global labor forces as well.



Maitreyee delivering the opening remarks of the discussion

### **Panel Speakers**

→ **Hon'ble Justice Ambadas Joshi**

#### **About the Speaker**

Hon'ble Justice Ambadas Joshi is the Lokayukta Goa, and a retired judge of the Bombay High Court.

## His Insights

- The speaker started off by pointing out the interdisciplinary nature when it comes to the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ members; the interdisciplinary subjects being social and legal elements, quoting the Supreme Court judgment ruling in favor of permanent commissions being awarded to women in the Army.
- He also stressed on the importance of career guidance for LGBTQIA+ members, in order to prevent them from resorting to occupations not recognised and valued by society. Maximizing the skills and talents naturally found in LGBTQIA+ individuals was his suggestion.
- His address was followed by a Q&A session wherein he discussed alternatives to legal issues for the encouragement of LGBTQIA+ member inclusivity; mainly being education, advocacy, open-mindedness, and social acceptance. Film, art, the execution of ideas and dialogue have the scope to increase awareness. The Transgender Persons



Protection of Rights Act, 2019 is an evolving provision which still remains violative of an individual's right to privacy.

**Above:** Hon'ble Justice Ambadas Joshi answering a question during the Q&A session

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→ **Dr. Pragati Singh**

## **About the Speaker**

Dr. Pragati Singh is a public health professional, LGBTQIA+ leader and changemaker.

## **Her Insights**

- The speaker initiated her talk by stressing on the difference between ‘inclusion’ and ‘meaningful inclusion’ of LGBTQIA+ members into labor forces.
- She talked on how when we typically talk about the LGBTQIA+ community, we refer to numerous identities; transgender individuals being a fractional part within it.
- She gave a grim remark of the medical profession in India not being inclusive of the LGBTQIA+ community.
- She gave valuable data points; quoting remarks from the Harvard Business Review, the World Economic Forum and Deloitte. These pieces of information, through studies, have proven how LGBTQIA+ inclusivity aids companies and businesses on grounds of decision-making, problem solving, creativity, innovation, profitability outperformance and employee individuality.
- She shed light on her personal opinion on the subject. Two vicious symbiotic processes take place that encourage existing behaviors around labor force LGBTQIA+ inclusivity. On one hand, LGBTQIA+ members have negative experiences with lawyers and medical professionals on average. On the other hand, this encourages reduced representation within medical and legal spaces. Dropout rates significantly increase due to this.
- She ended her talk by deliberating on the solution. She pointed out how this multidimensional solution must take into account the legal, sociological, behavioral and the generally subtle factors that feed the problem. Not only inclusion, but the integration of LGBTQIA+ members within labor forces should be aimed for.



Dr. Pragati Singh giving her insight on LGBTQIA+ inclusivity in the Indian medical field.

### **The Meaning of this Panel Discussion for Gender Champions, SLS Pune**

The Gender Champions believe that it is of vital importance to speak and spread awareness on the inclusivity of LGBTQIA+ members in workforces, professional spaces and even educational spaces, and create an open and safe space for these community individuals. This panel discussion was SLS Pune's small contribution in advocating for a positive change in the scenarios deliberated upon in the event.

**AWARENESS PROGRAM ON THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORKPLACE  
(PREVENTION, PROHIBITION AND REDRESSAL) ACT, 2013**

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**Date:** 15th December, 2021.

**Online Platform:** Zoom

**Time:** 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM

**Speakers:** Dr Shashikala Gurpur Dean, Faculty of Law, SIU & Director, SLS Pune; Dr Manika Kamthan, Assistant Professor, SLS Pune

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- Percentage of Cell Participation: 97% (34 out of 35 members)
- Number of Students Benefitted: **300-400 students in attendance**

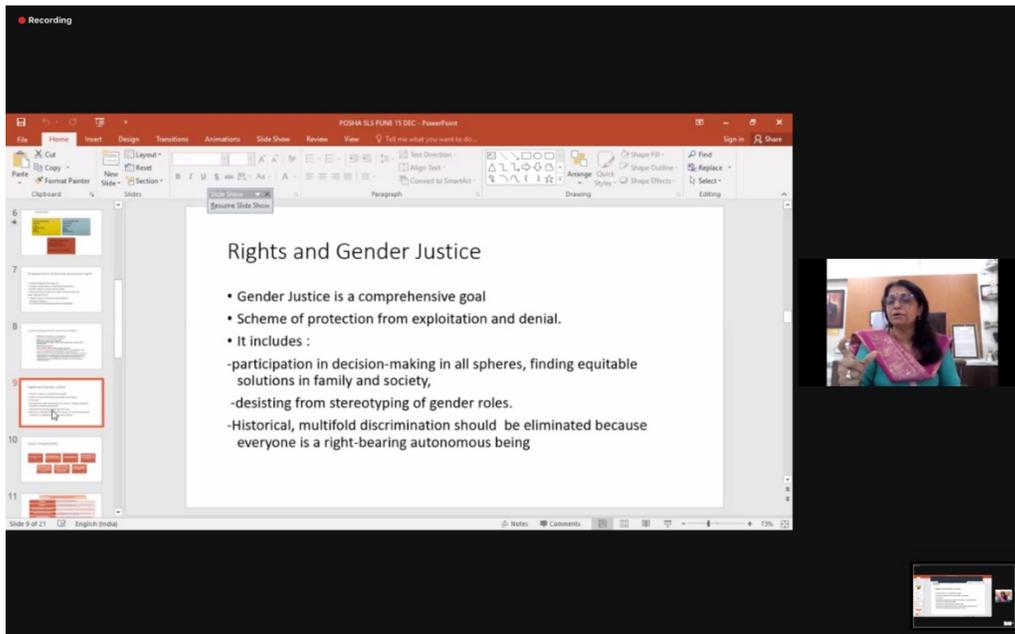
This one-day workshop was organized by Gender Champions, Symbiosis Law School Pune, in furtherance of their objectives to spread awareness for gender-based issues and to fulfil the UGC mandate for the same.

**Overview of the Session:**

9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 marked the eighth anniversary of the landmark legislation against sexual harassment, i.e., The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The Ministry of Women and Child Development commemorated the same and the UGC mandated the organisation of a one-day awareness programme about the Act in all higher education institutes.

## **Conceptual Framework**

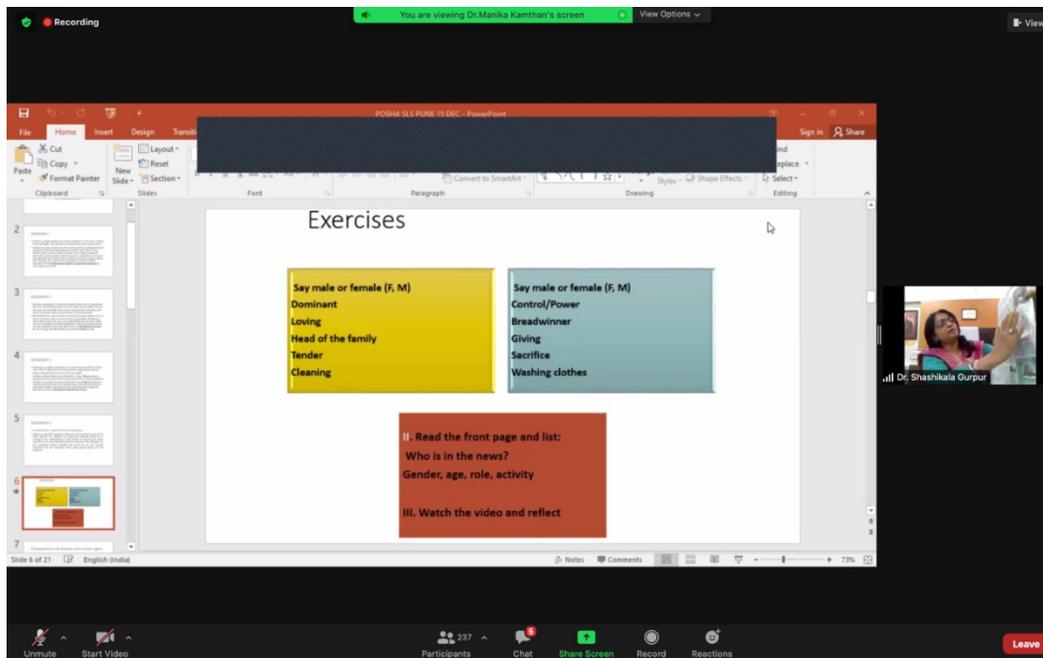
Dr Shashikala Gurpur commenced the session with an overview of the various concepts behind the need for an act on preventing sexual harassment at the workplace. She explained how an unsafe working environment impedes a person's right to work and can play a role in restricting a women's freedom and public participation. Broadly, this first part of the session covered various gendered stereotypes and how the scheme of POSH opposed those. The Act creates a scheme of protection of women from exploitation and denial, therefore ensuring their equitable participation in the workforce.



**Above:** *Conceptual Framework behind POSHA*

## **Interactive Session**

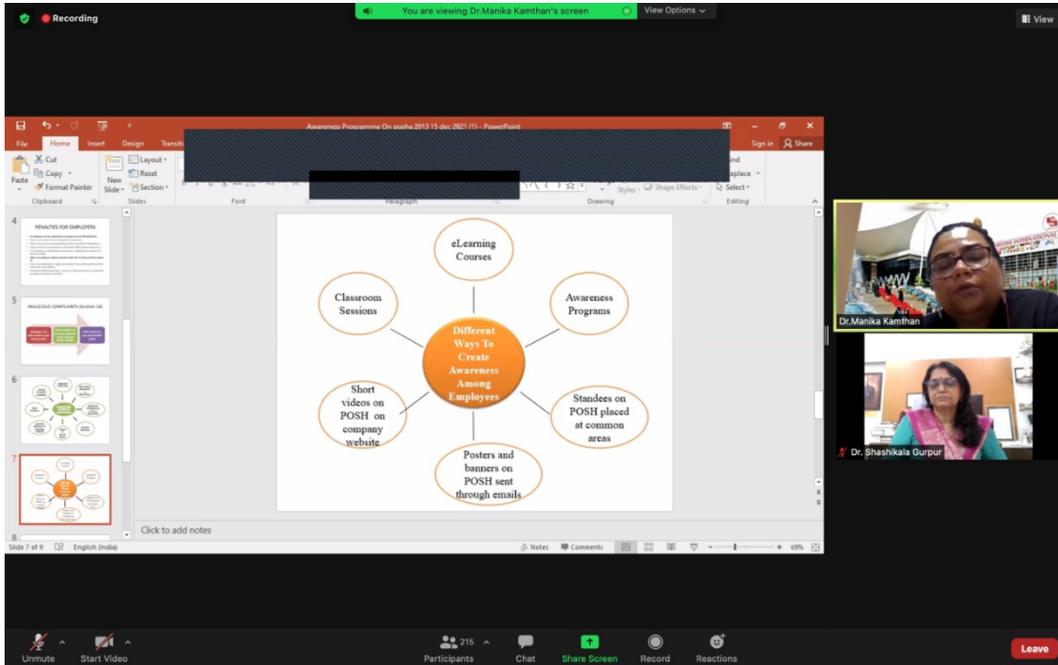
The session encouraged the active participation of all attendees. It relied on discussions about several case-scenarios to understand which incidents and elements can constitute sexual harassment and how harassment can occur in varied circumstances. Concepts were explained in both English and Hindi and attendees were free to express their viewpoints in any language they were comfortable with. Concepts of rights and gender justice, stereotyping and the need for women's empowerment were further explained through an interactive activity.



*Above: Activity-based Explanation*

## **Overview of POSHA**

Following the conceptual overview, Dr Manika Kamthan proceeded to provide all attendees with an overview of the legal framework surrounding the protection of women at workplace from sexual harassment. This part of the session outlined international conventions, landmark cases, and adjacent legislations that played a role in the development of **2013 POSH Act**. The various provisions of the Act were explained, including its object, the various definitions under it and the rights and duties of the parties governed by it. The overview also outlines the various processes that must be complied with by employers and the inquiry procedure. Finally, the session played a short clip that explained the rate of general awareness about the POSH Act among people and the need to improve the same.



*Above: Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace: Explanation*



*Above: Short Video on Awareness about POSH in India*

**Relevance in the light of Gender Champions, SLS-Pune:**

One of the primary objectives of Gender Champions is to spread awareness about social issues that affect marginalized genders and the various recourses available to them for the same. The Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act is a welfare legislation that targets the important issue of sexual harassment of a woman at her workplace and establishes a mechanism for dealing with the same. It is crucial for everyone to be aware of this legislation to help women get justice in cases of sexual harassment they have faced in their workplace.

**PANEL DISCUSSION ON  
MARITAL RAPE: UNDERSTANDING THE SACROSANCT BOND AND CONSENT**

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**Date:** Tuesday, March 8, 2022

**Online Platform:** Zoom

**Time:** 2:00 P.M. to 3:30 P.M. IST

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**Speakers:**

1. Dr Shashikala Gurpur, Fulbright Scholar, Director, SLS Pune and Dean, Faculty of Law, SI (DU), Jean Monnet Chair Professor in EU Climate Justice Law, Governance, Management and Policy.
2. Professor Ratna Kapur, Senior Core Faculty, Institute of Global Law and Policy, Harvard Law School and Co-founder, Centre for Feminist Legal Research, New Delhi.
3. Dr. Justice Shalini Phansalkar Joshi, Former Judge, Bombay High Court and Distinguished Visiting Judge Scholar in Residence, SLS- Pune.

Since this was in tune with the objectives of the Gender Champions cell, SLS, Pune, the members were urged to attend the same.

**Overview of the Session**

**The Gender Champions cell along with the Constitutional Law Club of Symbiosis Law School, Pune, a constituent of Symbiosis International (Deemed University), organised an**

online Panel Discussion on the occasion of International Women's Day i.e., 8th March 2022 from 2:00 to 3:30 PM. The topic for the panel discussion was “**Marital Rape: Understanding the Sacrosanct Bond and Consent**”. The esteemed panelists included **Dr Shashikala Gurpur**, Fulbright Scholar, Director, SLS Pune and Dean, Faculty of Law, SI (DU); Jean Monnet Chair Professor in EU Climate Justice Law, Governance, Management and Policy. **Professor Ratna Kapur**, Senior Core Faculty, Institute of Global Law and Policy, Harvard Law School and Co-founder, Centre for Feminist Legal Research, New Delhi and **Dr. Justice Shalini Phansalkar Joshi**, Former Judge, Bombay High Court and Distinguished Visiting Judge Scholar in Residence, SLS- Pune.

Ms. Tamanna Chachlani, Head- Gender Champions cell introduced the panelists. Dr Shashikala Gurpur took the discussion further by welcoming the panelists and emphasized on the need for gender sensitisation and highlighted the activities taken up by SLS Pune to create greater awareness. She commended the works of Gender Champions, Human Rights Cell and Constitutional Law Clubs in furthering the cause of Gender Equality. Dr Gurpur added substantively to the discussion by pointing out the archaic view of the law and society irrevocable consent underlying on marital rape in India. Further, she highlighted how the exemption of Marital Rape under the ambit of Rape laws in the country severely hampers the autonomy and the consent of women. She concluded by reiterating the need for the removal of Marital Rape as an exemption, the greater need for women's representation in the legislative system and whether there is a need for checks and balances in case of such removal.

Subsequently, Ms Prachurya Sahu, Senior Member, Gender Champions and Constitutional Law Club introduced the second panelist for the day- Dr Ratna Kapur. Dr Kapur started by expressing her gratitude to all the women and gender rights activists that contributed to the Feminist Movement across the world and India. Further, adding to the discussion she remarked that “*Crime is a Crime, and can't be hidden by the veils of culture, religion and social institutions such as family and marriage.*” She gave a highly nuanced discussion on Marital Rape, right from the archaic view of the courts and society which considered the wife as “property” of husband to the contemporary discussion around the bodily autonomy of women. She gave several political, cultural and religious reasons for the systemic ignorance of women's rights and their consent to

sexual acts within a marriage. Towards the end of her talk, Dr Kapur called for moral and legal intervention in the existing legislative framework, the focus should not be merely to reform the law but also social structures that are marred by patriarchal and discriminatory principles.

Further, Mr Aradom Belai, Co-Head, Gender Champions called upon the last panelist Dr. Justice Shalini Phansalkar Joshi. Dr Joshi pointed out the influence of family and cultural values in Indian Jurisprudence. A change in societal attitude need which should freely deliberate on rape in marriages. Further, drawing from her expertise, she compared the jurisprudence of marital rape in various countries to draw the best practices. She concluded that we should revisit the definition of marital consent in sexual acts.

Subsequently, a Question-Answer round was moderated by Mr Aradom Belai, where students posed substantive questions which further added to the insightful discussion. The Panel Discussion ended on a positive note with the Vote of Thanks delivered by Prof. Radhika Jagtap, Assistant Professor, SLS-Pune.



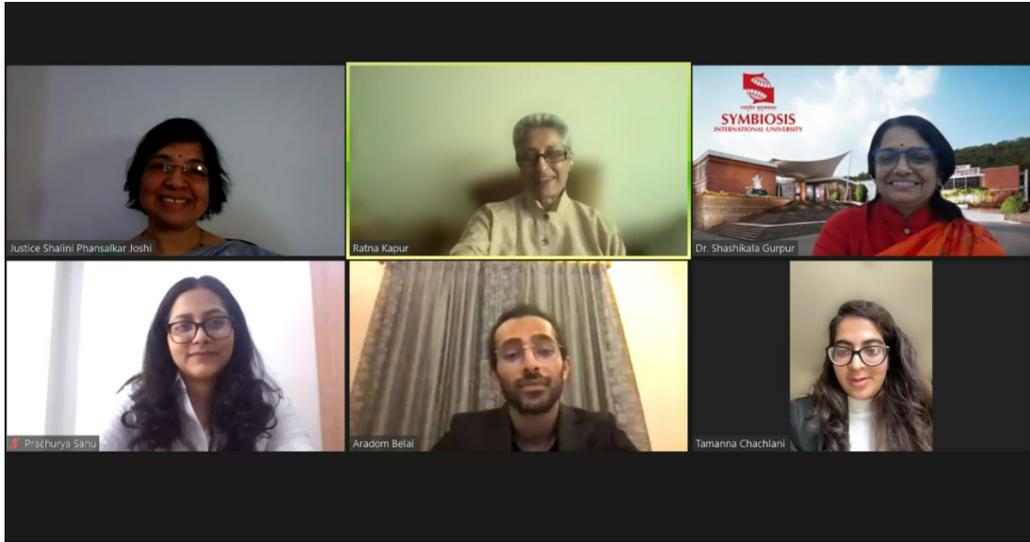
*Above: Prof. Dr. Gurpur delivering the Welcome Address*



**Above:** *Professor Ratna Kapur, addressing the audience*

**Below:** *Justice Joshi delivering the address*





*Above: Q&A Session with all the panelists*