NORTH-SOUTH FEMINIST DIALOGUE

Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Higher Education

A conversation between activists and scholars across borders on the feminist struggles and strategies for fighting gendered violence on campuses in the UK and India

July 29 - 31, 2020

To all survivors and activists fighting for justice against the oppressive structures of higher education.

NORTH–SOUTH FEMINIST DIALOGUE
JULY 29–31, 2020

Day 1
June 29

Day 2
June 30

Day 3
June 31

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Higher Education: Lessons from India
with
Ayesha Kidwai (Professor in School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, JNU, and founding member of GSCASH)
Vrinda Grover (Feminist activist/lawyer)
Student activist (Pinjra Tod)

A United Feminist Stand: Joint reflections on SGBV in HE in India and UK

Closed door conversations on policy, sensitization and accountability

Keynote
Dr. Mary E. John (Centre for Women's Development Studies/SAKSHAM taskforce) in conversation with **Dr. Navtej Purewal** (Centre for Development Studies, SOAS)

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Higher Education: Lessons from the UK
with
1752 Group (UK-based research and lobby org dedicated to ending sexual harassment in HE)
Clarissa Humphreys (Sexual Misconduct Prevention & Response Manager and author of Addressing Student Sexual Violence In Higher Education)
Vicki Bars (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Manager, UCL)
Shailza Sharma (SOAS Account For This)

Feminist Protest Art
featuring **Nuvpreet Kaur Kalra** (spoken word artist, University of Cambridge) and **Jagjeet Kaur** (musician,Punjab University)

FOREWORD

by Prof. Mary E John

It is quite a unique opportunity to offer a few words by way of a foreword to this report on a three day workshop held online and hosted by a research team based at SOAS, UK. Issues of sexual and gender based violence in higher education have come into fresh focus in the twenty-first century, at a time in the history of women's and feminist movements when such concerns were thought of as belonging to a time long past. The years leading up to the #Me Too movements in many parts of the globe dramatically revealed how critical issues of sexual violence and harassment continued to be in the lives of very differently located women and transpersons. Higher education in particular – colleges and universities – turned out not to be the kinds of safe spaces where young people could freely come into their own without fear of violence or harassment. More to the point, as this report attests, when they did have unwelcome experiences of violation, there was precious little by way of recourse available, least of all institutional mechanisms for providing support and relief. That this should be the case at this historical moment is scandalous. As the co-chair of the Task Force set up by the University Grants Commission of the Government of India to look into matters of safety and freedom for young people in Indian universities (in the wake of the so-called "Delhi gang rape" of December 2012) I can vouch for our collective shock when we tried to ascertain the situation in India at the time. Firstly, sexual harassment was widespread, condoned and suffered, and secondly, college and university mechanisms to address and counter them were, with a few important exceptions, non existent. (Saksham 2013)

There is another reason why I am particularly pleased with the form and content of the present report, which also reflects something of the dynamic of the workshop on which it is based. This was not the usual north-south dialogue, feminist or otherwise. Unfortunately, most such dialogues are unable to escape the power hierarchies that structure the relationship between the North and the South. Indeed, the era of neo-liberalism has seen a deepening of inequalities between regions, and academia has not escaped these processes by any means. It is all too common, even in a time when our language has become increasingly politically correct, to find that the "South" is still only a secondary participant in the agenda setting initiatives of the "North", and that efforts by first world feminists to save third world women have lost none of their traction. This report is especially refreshing because it is more fully a genuine dialogue between feminists located in the UK and India. Not only that. There are sessions and discussions where, if anything, the direction of influence is moving from India to the UK. The sessions are vibrant with many levels of learning and sharing.

This is a report that deserves to be widely read and discussed, and which should, hopefully, serve as basis for much more in the future.

INTRODUCTION

by Adrija Dey

This handbook is a result of a 3-day workshop called North-South Feminist Dialogue that brought together academics, activists and survivors working in the area of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in Higher Education (HE) from India and UK. This is our attempt to share some of the knowledge produced in this workshop with fellow academics, activists and organisers. This does not contain recommendations but focuses on knowledge sharing and raising questions based on what we have learnt collectively as a group. As researchers, activists and organisers in this space we have all struggled to develop concrete questions and feminist methodologies to campaign against SGBV within HE for better policies, practices, and institutional accountability. So, drawing from our own experiences, in this workshop we shared, discussed, reflected and spoke about best practices.

SGBV in HE institutions is a major issue globally. Over the past few years, especially following the #MeToo movement, institutional discrimination and violence have been a real concern for HE institutions across the world. A survey of 5,649 students published in 2019 in the United Kingdom, found more than half the students surveyed had experienced unwanted advances and assault, ranging from explicit messages (online and offline) to rape (Batty, 26 February 2019). In India, 188 cases of SGBV were reported from campuses in 2017 (Gohain 20 March 2018). These figures however must be approached with caution. Due to the lack of reporting mechanisms and policy frameworks related to SGBV as well as the prevailing cultures of sexism, racism and homophobia inclined to victim blame, 'slut shame' and generally doubt the survivors, SGBV cases are rarely reported with only a fraction of those affected reporting incidents to their university or the police.

HE is not commonly recognised as a site of violence nor does it recognise itself as an agent of oppression. Its hierarchical nature gives rise to sometimes visible and other times hidden power dynamics, oppressing certain minority bodies while privileging others. This makes academic institutions rife with unequal power relations and male domination, which intersects with factors such as class, religion, caste, nationality, sexuality, and disability.

However, both my research and activism reveal that the institutional approach to tackling SGBV tends to criminalise individuals following criminal justice system procedures instead of redressing these unequal power relations, changing cultures or heralding transformative justice mechanisms. Such constructions pathologize individual men, thus erasing the role of patriarchal power in violence by de-coupling sexual violence from structural inequalities stemming from patriarchy, capitalism, racism, and casteism (Phipps, 2020). This approach constructs violence as committed by a few 'bad apples', who, with the right support, may individually overcome this 'mental illness,' or relies on state power and bureaucracy to purge 'bad men' from elite institutions with little concern for where they might appear next

(Phipps, 2019). Hence, rethinking SGBV within HE not only requires an acknowledgement of these power dynamics and the resultant violence, but a complete overhaul in the way theory, policy and practices are imagined in these contexts.

Much of the research on this issue also tends to problematically focus on the global North. However, to appropriately address the depth of the problem and to devise plausible solutions, there is a need to decentre, de-Brahmanise and decolonise the understandings and praxis, by also bringing focus to the global South. In a scenario where most HE institutions across the world share similar issues and concerns, constricting the process of knowledge creation based on empirical evidences from the global North creates silos and echo chambers. Leading publications on SGBV in HE still have few voices from the Global South, even though highly creative and effective work in theory and activism around this issue is being conducted there (Bennett, 2009; Farinloye & Omobuwa, 2016; Oni et al., 2019; Owoaje & Olusola-Taiwo, 2010; University Grants Commission, 2013). Furthermore, globalisation has led to a steady flow of international students, staff, and workers to the Global North in pursuit of education and work. As of 2018/19, according to official international enrolment statistics, 485,645 international students were attending university in the UK. These students come from different cultural backgrounds, with varied histories/contexts of patriarchal practices, and resultant violence. It is routine for bodies from the Global South to be ignored in institutional responses to SGBV, including mental health support, in the Global North, leading to normalisation and invisibilisation of the violence. Lack of understanding and sensitivity to cultural contexts, especially in the case of international students, coupled with a lack of sensitivity for questions regarding race, class, caste, religion, nationality, immigration status, lead to differing and complex forms of everyday violence.

Furthermore, there is little to no knowledge exchange either on an institutional level or an organisational or policy making level to learn best practices among academics, activists, and support services across the world. Keeping this in mind, through the North-South Feminist Dialogue workshop we wanted to bring together academics, activists, organisations and survivors from UK and India to discuss and debate issues of SGBV in HE. This platform was geared towards comparing policy frameworks, rethinking training and consciousness raising methods and exchanging ideas on organising and campaigning against institutional violence.

This workshop was also rooted in the ideological perspective that all oppression is connected and the fight against SGBV in academia is incomplete without fighting conservative states and neoliberalisation and privatisation of the education system globally. The aggressive marketisation of education has resulted in making HE accessible to a select few and the development of a teaching and learning system that is premised on precarity and exploitation. These depoliticised educational spaces devoid of debate and critical thinking are not aimed at creating conscious individuals and citizens but workers for the capitalist market who would not challenge any existing status quo. This is evident from the fact that schools in England were recently told not to use material from anti-capitalist groups.

Hence it is also important to understand HE as a neoliberal space that fosters violence. In their research, Phipps & Young (2015), speak about the relations between neoliberalism and sexual violence in HE in the UK. They state that in the marketised university, education is reduced to a transactional exchange. Many of their research participants described violence such as 'casual groping' as part and parcel of academic life. The most cruel and shocking aspects capture the media and public consciousness, while the normal everyday violence gets lost.

Every HE institution has a duty of care towards its students and staff. However, while HE institutions demand continuous accountability from their students and staff, they provide little in return. When institutions actively try to cover up cases of SGBV, and 'due process' either does not exist or fails to serve its purpose, student, staff and workers are left with very few options. Due to fear, stigma, and lack of support, it is rare for students to file police complaints. In that case, the question that many academics and activists are grappling with is: 'How do we hold academic institutions accountable for SGBV?'

In India since 2014, university campuses have witnessed continuous repression from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led Indian government. This oppression becomes manifest in the form of cancellation of scholarships for minority students, charges of sedition against students, charges against academic staff for dissent, securitisation of campuses, banning of books and rampant Brahmanisation of the curriculum, banning of unions and student union elections along with an accelerated push towards privatisation (Apoorvanand, 2018; Dutta, 2016; Kidwai, 2015). This has been part of the government's agenda of stifling dissent on campuses as some of the scathing voices of critique against the current Indian government's Brahmanical, Hindu, right-wing, nationalist agenda have come from academic spaces. Students involved in activism have been portrayed, both by the government and large sections of mainstream media, as 'wasting taxpayer's money' based on the education and food subsidies they receive (Farooqi 2018). The notion that since public universities receive state funding, they are accountable to state bodies, has been heavily critiqued (Collini, 2017; Jayal, 2019). However, the government continues to demand this accountability from public university students as a test of their love for the nation and its people.

We have seen a similar push towards aggressive and rampant neoliberalisation of the education sector in the UK where the main role of universities is predominantly to contribute to the economic productivity of the country, which means being, as the Gordon Brown administration encouraged, 'business-facing'. According to Maisuria & Cole (2017, p. 604-605), 'this policy agenda is openly and explicitly demanding that universities develop specific capacities in the next generation of workers, such as entrepreneurialism and a competitive spirit, to reproduce neoliberal capitalist relations of production and an ideological agenda for and in education (i.e. 'for' education to be a neoliberalism enterprise in its operation and outlook, including the possibility of it being fully privatized, and 'in' education to prepare workers for neoliberalism)'.

Keeping this mind, this workshop also challenged the violence of the capitalist and

patriarchal state and education system in both India and the UK and celebrated the fierce resistance of feminist sisters and comrades in both contexts who are challenging and standing up against state repression and violence.

The workshop also encouraged moving away from carceral mechanisms when dealing with SGBV within HE and thinking of mechanisms that emphasize care and empathy and consider sustainable cultural changes. HE institutions qualify as a unique entity for various reasons. In highly stratified societies where people are bound by various social norms, universities are perhaps the only spaces where young people can find the opportunity and confidence to break social barriers (Apoorvanand, 2018). This makes HE the perfect space to challenge and critically engage with questions of gender, class, caste, religion, and nation. Concepts of new feminist discourses and gender justice are theorized and deliberated upon within academic spaces and circulated through student networks, familiarizing and sensitizing students to such ideas as they move on to non-academic spaces, policy, research and media networks, the non-profit world, state institutions and the like (Collini, 2017). Hence, changing the culture of academic institutions, transforming ideas about gender relations within the academic community and inculcating ideas of gender justice in students has the powerful potential of bringing about long-term progressive social change.

The main questions that structured the discussions of this workshop were:

- What does a survivor-centred, feminist and intersectional policy for dealing with SGBV within HE institutions look like?

- How can we encourage and equip institutions to tackle issues around SGBV?

- How can institutions be held accountable?

- What lessons can the UK and India learn from one another?

The workshop was divided into three separate groups - policy, sensitisation and accountability- and the following sections will highlight the summary of the discussions of these groups. It is important to note that the three sections of the report are structured differently based on the contributors and discussions that took place there. Here, I would also like to acknowledge that certain sections of the report are heavily inclined towards mechanisms, policies and practices from India. However, this reflects the conversations that took place in the workshop where we spent a lot of time learning about feminist struggles, policies and practices in the Indian context and think about which aspects can be implemented in the UK. Further, we also reflected critically on how we can shift the geographies of knowledge production and think about power dynamics and imbalances from an intersectional and interdisciplinary lens.

The recording of Day 1 of the workshop: Lessons from India can be found here.

The recording of Day 1: Lessons from the UK session can be found here.

The recording of Day 3 of the workshop can be found [here](#).

Finally, I want a say a huge thank you to everyone who participated in this workshop- for your time, labour, solidarity, patience and love.

POLICY

Participants
Anna Bull, Chandni Chawla (facilitator), Gita Chadha, Jhuma Sen, Suneetha Rani, Tiffany Page

Key takeaways:

• The major takeaway from this discussion was the need to adopt an **intersectional approach** in all discussion on policy.

• Every university needs a **separate stand-alone policy to address SGBV** within HE. This cannot/should not be clubbed with other policies such as Dignity and Respect or bullying as is the case with most institutions in the UK.

• One SGBV policy should **cover all stakeholders** within the university- staff, students, workers and visitors- to avoid cases falling through the loop holes of multiple policy documents.

• Every university needs a **designated and trained first point of contact** for reporting cases for all staff, students and workers

• Any investigation conducted by the university should follow a **civil rather than criminal** justice procedure.

• Any investigating or complaints committee for dealing with SGBV set up by the university must involve **representatives from all stakeholders within the university-** staff, student and workers. The involvement of HR, heads of department or only senior members of staff bring forth inherent power dynamics and hence should be avoided.

• **Independent investigators** are a good step, but universities should also be accountable. In this instance we need to think of ways which combines independent and internal experts.

• The building principle of any inquiry of SGBV should be to given the **benefit of doubt to the survivor.**

• Any investigating or complaints committee for dealing with SGBV set up by the university should **create a safe and comfortable environment** for the survivor and do whatever they can to put **safeguard measures** in place.

• Universities should provide guidance and help to survivors who want to make a **police complaint or pursue legal cases.**

• Policies on SGBV should incorporate **provisions of group complaints.**

• A survivor should have the right to complain **anonymously** and policies should incorporate provisions of the same.

• **Third party reporting** of complaints should be allowed only with the consent of the survivor and the survivor should have a right to withdraw the complaint at any point during the inquiry.

• Can the **Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)/ Gender Sensitisation Committee**

Against Sexual Harassment (GSCASH) model from India [*See figure 1 & 2*] be implemented in the UK context? What do we need to do for that?

• Cases of SGBV should not be dealt with using staff/student disciplinary procedures. We need new and creative methods of **transformative justice** which centre care and are not carceral. For example, one of methods of rehabilitation used by GSCASH in India was asking the perpetrator to work as a part of GASCASH and through that develop a gendered consciousness.

• Any policy document needs to be **regularly reviewed and updated.**

• **Training and consciousness raising programmes** should be conducted in universities for all staff, faculty, workers, students and management.

• **A feminist consciousness** should become a part of the classroom. Student led campaigns should be incorporated in universities (under the Gender Studies Department where possible) which conduct regular sessions and discussions on these issues.

Figure 1: Short description of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 is a legislative act in India that seeks to protect women from SGBV at their workspaces. This superseded the Vishaka Guidelines for Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) introduced by the Supreme Court (SC) of India. Following this law:

• University spaces are considered as "workplaces" under the law.

• The complainant can be any woman - whether employed or not, students, faculty, workers, people visiting the university – they are all covered under the definition.

• Every employer of a workplace is mandated to have an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and every district needs to have a Local Complaints Committee (LCC) to deal with cases of sexual harassment within the institution.

• The ICC should consist of the following members (three internal members and one external member) to be nominated by the employer, namely:

1. **Presiding Officer:** needs be a woman employed at a senior level at the workplace. If that is not possible, the Presiding Officer should be nominated from other offices

or administrative units of the workplace. The Presiding Officer and all member of the ICC should not hold office for more than 3 years.

2. Other members: Not less than two members from amongst employees preferably committed to the cause of women rights or who have had experience in social work or have legal knowledge.

3. External expert: someone from a non-governmental organisations or associations committed to the feminist cause or a person familiar with issues relating to SGBV. They should be paid fees or allowances for being part of the proceedings of the ICC.

4. In cases where the Presiding Officer or any member of the ICC has been convicted for an offence, has an ongoing enquiry against them, has been found guilty in any disciplinary proceedings or has a disciplinary proceeding pending against them or has abused their position, they shall be removed from the Committee and the position would be filled by fresh nominations.

• There is a penalty on workplaces for not constituting an ICC according to the law.

• All complaints to the ICC must be provided in writing. ICCs should assist survivors who are unable to write.

• Conciliation can be resorted to only if the survivor wishes to.

• Interim relief is provided during the pendency of the inquiry. Such measure include transfer of the survivor or the perpetrator to any other workplace or department to avoid contact, grant leave to survivor up to a period of three months, grant other relief to the survivor demanding on their immediate needs and recommendations by the ICC.

• Importance given to due process and natural justice.

• Witnesses can be called in by the ICC. Further, examination and cross-examination of witnesses can take place and the ICC can ask for documents where needed.

• During the process of investigation, a major emphasis is provided on making the survivor comfortable.

• The final inquiry report consists of recommendations to the employer. Disciplinary action, compensation, transfer, removal from services can be recommended.

• In case either party is not satisfied with the recommendations, they can appeal.

• If recommendations are not followed, the survivor can appeal to the court.

Figure 2: Short description of the Gender Sensitisation Committee against Sexual Harassment

Gender Sensitisation Committee against Sexual Harassment (GSCASH)

GSCASH: an exemplary committee set up in the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi to deal with SGBV on campuses. This is based on the ICC discussed above. Read more about GSCASH here.

• One uniform policy for everyone: students, administrative and academic staff and workers. Any stakeholder within universities can file complaints to GSCASH if they face any form of SGBV.

• It is an elected body which includes student representatives, teaching representatives, workers among others.

• To maintain autonomy from the institution the committee also consists of an external expert to oversee the enquiry process.

• Being independent of the institution ensures that hierarchies in the university cannot influence its outcome or tamper with proceedings, even if the complaints are against someone in a position of power.

• Once the enquiry is completed the recommendations are passed on to the university administration.

• Committee also carries out consciousness raising activities throughout the year.

Here it is important to note that GSCASH was a product of years of activism by the feminist community who worked tireless to make HE institutions safer and more inclusive and hold powerful forces to account.

A summary of discussion/questions raised:

The discussion on policy revolved around the following questions:

What should a survivor-centred, feminist and intersectional policy for dealing with SGBV within HE institutions look like?

• There is an urgent need for survivor centric and trauma informed policies. However, first step towards building such policies should be education, consciousness raising and training.

• Different disciplines in academia have a different understandings and impact on SGBV. For eg, if a science student files a complaint against their PhD supervisor, they run the risk of losing their data. Hence, any policy document needs to be cognizant of different streams in academia, resultant power dynamics and their impact on the complaints process.

• Often policy makers within universities at not sensitive or educated about sexual and gender orientations leading to queerphobia and transphobia. Such training must be made compulsory. This is also reflected in a lack in mechanisms to address the SGBV on queer and trans folks on campus- absence of process (eg: trans-woman complaint about a non-binary person, violence in homosexual relations) or lack of representation in committees.

• The group decided to build a **Feminist Wishlist** in the future based on feminist principles to further the work of building a survivor centric, feminist and intersectional policies.

Do we need designated committees to investigate cases of SGBV in universities?

• A comparative discussion was held on who should be a part of these committees and in this context the functioning of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and GSCASH were discussed (see figure 1 & 2)

• Any investigation committee must function with total transparency. Currently, many of these investigations are carried out and decisions made behind closed door where even the survivors are kept in the dark about procedures and decisions. All universities should provide annual reports.

• All committee members need to be trained before they can investigate any complaints of SGBV.

• Strategies need to put in place to create safe spaces for survivors.

• How can the policy deal with questions of natural justice and anonymity?

• In the UK, data protection and privacy laws are interpreted very narrowly in ways that often protect the perpetrators. There was a discussion on whether the names of the perpetrators and recommendations of investigation committees should be made public.

• Survivors should be allowed to speak about their experiences without the fear of defamation.

• Rehabilitation of the survivors and perpetrators should not result into displacement and re-location of the survivor. If needed the perpetrator should be relocated.

• A suggestion was also made by members of the 1752 Group to allow for group complaints against a common respondent.

• A document prepared by GHCASH on natural justice which provides a feminists understanding of the issue was discussed.

What kind of relationship should exist between institutional policy and the criminal justice system?

• Should investigation committees in universities investigate criminal crimes like rape, assault and grievous hurt? In India, ICCs are supposed to recommend filing a complaint/FIR with the police, but they usually do not get involved. However, the law requires them to help the complainant with the entire process of a police complainant.

• The burden of proof in any investigating procedure should not be placed on the survivor.

• In certain universities in India separate disciplinary/investigation committees can look at criminal complaints and ICC can look at others. But this can affect confidentiality as proceedings are not to be made public.

• Should investigation committees be allowed to collect evidence? In this case it must be remembered that this is a civil and not a criminal procedure.

• The need to have rape kits in universities was emphasized.

How can bystander reporting be incorporated into the existing policy frameworks?

• In India third party reporting in certain circumstances are allowed with the consent of the survivor. In this context, consent becomes of primary importance.

• In the UK, staff members can report sexual harassment if they are made aware of it. This varies between universities and the university may refuse to take it any further without the survivor's consent and participation.

• Survivors should have the full right if they want to withdraw the complaint at any stage.

SENSITISATION[1]

Participants

Alice King, Bittu Karthik, Leena Pujari, Megan Reynolds, Ngozi Anyadike-Danes, Ruth Lewis, Roza Alexandra Atac, Sara Kazmi (facilitator), Vinita Chandra

[1] Sentsitisation is the word that is widely used in Indian academic, policy and activist circles to understand consciousness raising or training. It is a process through which individuals can be re-socialised, made aware of or made sensitive to issues of gender, class, caste, sexuality, disability etc. The term is widely used in the context of dealing with SGBV in HE.

The discussion in the sensitisation group centred around the **cultivation of safe spaces on campuses, long-term cultural change to dismantle the inherently violent structure of patriarchy, transformative justice,** and the convergences between the UK and Indian contexts in these aspects.

It is vital to begin with an overview of the specific **political, structural and cultural factors** that shape campus life and the experience of harassment by those in gender marginal locations in both the UK and India. A quick overview of universities in both countries reveals the tough challenges faced by activists, students and concerned staff members in combating gendered violence and instituting structural safeguards against SGBV. In India, a fascist Hindu government has increasingly deployed its majoritarian power to clamp down on dissent and progressive politics, happily resorting to brute force to discipline student bodies and critical academics. While this has caused irreparable damage to the liberal Indian public sphere as a whole, the brunt of this crackdown has been faced by feminists, Dalit, Muslim and other minority groups on campus. This political environment has also negatively impacted the advances made in the fight against sexual harassment. For example, earlier gains made at institutions such as Jawaharlal Nehru University through its survivor-centred GSCASH mechanism are now being rolled back by the administration under pressure from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Similarly, in the UK, feminist and anti-racist organising on campuses is increasingly threatened by the rise of Right-wing white supremacist cultures, bolstered by racist Brexit discourse. In the UK, while the state does not directly intervene in the university as in India under the Narendra Modi regime at present, the establishment relies on the structures of the neoliberal university to diffuse any dissent, rendering toothless any attempt to institute responsibility and accountability in universities. This is accomplished through the tools of marketisation and professionalization of campuses and higher education.

Thus, the battle against SGBV remains daunting in both contexts, despite the crucial difference in legislative solutions between India and the UK. While the former mandates ICCs and Gender Cells in all universities, and has a promulgated sexual harassment law that applies to all higher education bodies, in the UK, the situation appears a lot more dire, with no government-ordained sexual harassment policies that bind institutions. In many cases, the only recourse that survivors have is to the Equality Act or the Workplace Safety Act, laws that do not capture the specificity of sexual and gender based violence.

With this kind of structural and political environment as the backdrop for our discussion, we collectively arrived at the following observations and recommendations:

• As noted above, as institutions are increasingly controlled by Right-wing, fascist, neoliberal, patriarchal agendas, the shrinking space for policy intervention afforded to feminist activists compels us to orient ourselves with renewed determination towards **sensitization and awareness raising for long-term cultural and structural changes.** Situating SGBV on campuses within the larger context of misogyny and sexism in wider society, we need to emphasize its systemic nature, and the need to tackle it by prioritizing

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casualised and everyday forms of sexism which manifest themselves as inappropriate flattering statements, jokes, and casual remarks that belittle women and those in gender marginal locations. It is important to map and understand how the hetro-normative, upper caste and upper class gender regime is constructed and reinforced on campuses through routine, taken for granted activities. Sensitisation efforts must actively work to disrupt the hegemony of patriarchy, and not simply encapsulate legalistic policy requirements.

• Sensitisation programmes must keep in mind the **complex hierarchies and inequalities** within campuses. Universities in both the UK and India are heterogenous and cater to a diverse bunch of students from different backgrounds. Thus, sensitisation and awareness raising must address the intersecting oppressions of caste, class, sexuality, religion, nationality, immigration status and race as well as gender. Further, the conversation must be extended to faculty and non-teaching staff, as such addressing the entire campus community, rather than focusing merely on students.

• While sensitisation and awareness raising focus on the campus community as a whole, **targeted trainings and sessions for administration members and faculty who sit on sexual harassment committees** are of paramount importance. For policy to be effective, those interpreting it and dispensing justice must be appropriately acquainted with the cultural and social factors that complicate cases of SGBV, in which all manner of odds are stacked against survivors. As individuals who will be interacting with both survivors and perpetrators, a deep insight into dealing with survivors with compassion and respect, as well as a complex understanding of the principles of transformative justice, is a necessary component of sensitisation efforts.

• **A holistic and wide-ranging approach to sensitisation**, one that includes all communities and groups on campus, as well as beyond, is crucial. For instance, the sensitisation of harassment committees must be supplemented by independent bodies that can act as support groups for survivors (such as the CASH support groups set up at Ashoka University in India) to guide, enable and provide care for survivors throughout the process. Such support groups for survivors can also become the means for involving the student body and activist organisations into the sensitisation process, strengthening the fight against SGBV on campuses by expanding the conversation beyond the legalistic confines of policy, that reduce these issues to contractual matters between administration and students.

• We must adopt a **dynamic strategy for sensitisation efforts**, one that goes beyond standardized forms of one-off 'training sessions' that threaten to become nothing more than bureaucratic formalities. Considering the androcentric nature of knowledge production, curricular reforms and feminist pedagogical interventions should constitute important components of the sensitization process. The mere inclusion of 'gender-related topics' would not suffice by itself, and a **pedagogical shift** that is critical and self-reflexive must be effected to challenge the very patriarchal structure of research and education in the university. In our experience, courses on gender and sexuality which are explicitly

geared towards exposing student to critical feminist perspectives, and use participatory approaches and experiential learning have spearheaded important conversations not just within campuses but also within families and wider communities.

• **In a post COVID 19 world** where education has shifted into the digital space, there are additional challenges. The spectre of **cyber bullying and online forms of harassment** that range from calls at odd hours, unwarranted requests for video calls, gender biased comments and inappropriate language are real and can have devastating consequences. Institutions must adapt themselves to the newer challenges and develop effective responses to create safe spaces in the online forums.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Participants
Anushka Ganguly, Ayesha Kidwai, Nikita Agarwal, Rachel Vogler, Sandra Fernandez, Shailza Sharma (facilitator), Swati Simha

How can institutions be held accountable?

Considering the institution:

• We need to consider who we want accountability from- whether it's from the state, ICCs, institutional processes or larger student population. We should also consider how much interference we want from them and on whose shoulders this falls on (often adds to labour load for women).

• We also acknowledge that these institutions are inherently sexist and patriarchal and we should be clear about how much accountability we wish to have from them.

Who is the institution?

• Participants began by recognising that everyone had varied conceptions of the 'institution'

• The group recognised "the state" as an institution on the basis that institutions are structures that hold the law or have some sense of norms/legal recourse.

• When the institution is easily identifiable, you have some entity to appeal to, for accountability, however this is not always the case. GSCASH is a good example of this. As GSCASH was dismantled in JNU in 2018 by the oppressive right-wing university management, other institutions of accountability (within and outside the university) were also falling apart. In that case who do you appeal to for accountability in this instance?

• The group also recognises that individuals are not always neutral subjects before the law and this affects our ability to hold institutions accountable.

When Accountability looks like co-option:

• We recognise that accountability can often look like co-option on the part of university management and this is designed to be difficult to spot and can be magnified in contexts where the student union is particularly stretched for resources.

• The group shared many examples of this, including one student union being co-opted by the University to represent the institution's interests and in exchange, the University covered costs of their campaigns.

• The group also recognised that issues can arise when faculty, university admin and student union teams all have different ideas about where to set the bar for good practice.

• Many universities will say that they are accountable to their processes but still majority of people do not feel comfortable using these processes. Hence, entire mechanisms need to reconsidered.

Good Practice for Enabling Accountability:

• Ensuring organised ways of talking about these issues.

• Ensuring the presence of dedicated forums -General Body Meetings (GBM) are a good example of this. GBMs and separate reading groups with sessions on caste, sexual harassment and capitalism which encourage scholarship on intersectionality are immediately needed. They are indeed critical to the functioning of any successful campaign.

• Documenting campaigns and movements and finding ways in which strategies can be exchanged between different activist groups and campaigners and lessons learnt and best practices passed on.

How can we encourage institutions to create a safe environment for students, staff and workers on campus?

Good Practice:

• Maintaining a culture of activism. Every stakeholder within the campus needs to play a part in it.

• Is there any merit in trying to understand if there is something inherent to SGBV that we can organise around? How can we remove individualised activism but also present ourselves as a force which is autonomous and then approach institutions? We need to think through these things to give everyone the best chance of success.

• Rejecting the marketisation of higher education

What kind of a relationship should exist between institutional policy and the criminal justice system?

• Largely survivors of SGBV do not report the violence that is actually taking place. This is a global trend. Considering the historic failures of the justice mechanisms and its inherent prejudices, do we still encourage people to report to the institutions?

• We also need think about institutional backlash. Multiple cases were discussed about men in powerful positions being charged with multiple accounts of SGBV and them being protected both by the university and right-wing groups. Activists protesting and campaigning, on the other hand, have also faced backlash and threats and even been silenced

• What role does the SU need to take in this?

What Challenges Does the Post Covid-19 Landscape Present in Tackling SGBV in HE?

• The advent of the pandemic changes how we think about bodies, bodily privacy and bodily violation. There is a lingering threat that as with crises in the past, the burden will be placed on women, queer folks, trans folks and people from other minority communities to "endure until things get better". We need to consider "what is normal for the body" because the threat of contagion will impact what we consider unacceptable interpersonal

exchange.

• The digitalisation of the campus life is directly tied to the marketisation of the university but also what constitutes an institution and how this is changing. Access to digital platforms and methods of learning, while viewed as positive and designed to be universally accessible, are in reality, leaving out those that are already vulnerable. Remote learning has historically had many problems, including high dropout rates. In the Indian context, the popularisation of the MOOC (Massive open online course) has meant the halving of the strength of Indian universities while tripling their enrolment. In the UK context, international students regularly suffer lack of support from universities, and with many currently abroad and still vulnerable to abuse, the question of how to provide adequate support is even more pertinent.

• Questions raised in discussion included: how to conceptualise communal spaces when they are digital, how to construct university spaces online, how to construct spaces for collective action online, how to create online protocols, ways to penalise and ways to rehabilitate, how to rebuild activist momentum upon return to campus, how to change methods when necessary, and what this new activism will look like.

• Some suggestions included: maintaining work hours as much as possible (9am – 5pm), especially in the case of one on one meetings with students. Ensuring lecturers regularly check on the breakout rooms they set up for seminars and lectures so that they are aware of what happens in those spaces. University services maintaining drop-in style digital spaces to supplement the existing methods of meeting by appointment.

• Do universities have mechanisms in places or even the understanding to tackle the myriad forms of violence online. How do we include this in our activism and how do we shape our demands? We need an urgent conversation about that.

Account For This

The Account For This (A4T) SOAS campaign was formed in 2017 as the response and outcome of an ongoing struggle by a group of students at SOAS, University of London to address the institution's inefficient and indifferent responses to complaints of SGBV. Since then they have campaigned to challenge the ways in which SOAS' existing policies and practices consistently fail not only to hold perpetrators of such violence accountable, but also fail to recognise the need for providing infrastructural and social support to survivors seeking justice within the existing patriarchal institution.

As a result of their campaigning, a SGBV steering group was set up in SOAS that included representations from the different stakeholders in the University community such as staff, students, management, students' union, UCU, Unison and security staff and a new SGBV policy has been implemented in SOAS in 2020.

Here are some important resources created by the campaign:

- Survivor testimonials

- A4T initial demands

- A4T petition

- Report of 'Lets Read Poilcy' workshop series

Figure 4: Short description of the Pinjra Tod movement

Pinjra Tod (Break the Cage)

Pinjra Tod is an autonomous collective effort to ensure secure, affordable and not gender-discriminatory accommodation for women students across Delhi. The Pinjra Tod movement began in 2015 when the students of Jamia Millia Islamia, a central university in New Delhi wrote an open letter to the Vice Chancellor of the university complaining about the regressive gender-biased rules for the women's hostels. From then on, the campaign gained momentum and was transformed into the call to end all restrictions on women in the name of safety and securitisation. Pinjra Tod has been attentive to gender-based discrimination and its relation to other forms of discrimination based on caste and class. It was able to attract university students across the country to raise similar issues on their own campuses.

The movement has used innovative campaigns such as reclaiming public transport at night (important especially in regard to the Nirbhaya rape case), conducting jan sunwais or public meetings on women's in public, movie screenings, guerrilla postering, graffiti drives, etc. Over time the movement has attracted the ire of right wing student bodies such as the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), and university administrations.

The movement has seen internal dissension led by former members who accused the Pinjra Tod of not being inclusive or representative of women from marginalised race, castes and religion. Nonetheless, Pinjra Tod participation in the anti-CAA protests in India has led to direct targeting and imprisonment of its activists Devangana Kalia and Natasha Narwal, under draconian anti-terror laws such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

SOME LESSONS INDIA AND THE UK CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER

The model of many Indian universities was originally based on the UK higher education structure. Indian universities are also only beginning to see the dismantling of bodies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC), while governing bodies similar to the UGC were dismantled in the UK in the 1970s (Collini, 2017). Since then, the UK has seen extensive marketisation of their universities, while India is only now beginning to see these changes now.

Following the **Vishakha judgement** in 1997, Indian academic moved to tackle SGBV in universities much earlier than the UK, resulting in efforts such as the **Gender Sensitisation Committee Against Sexual Harassment (GSCASH)** framework to deal with SGBV within an institutional context. The **Saksham report** published in December 2013 is a must read for all academics and practitioners working in the area. This report examined safety of students and members of staff from the perspective of guaranteeing their freedom, autonomy, and privacy and it speaks out strongly against what it calls 'the problem of protectionism'. For example, the report advocates setting up of mandatory sexual harassment cells, to mandatorily provide counselling services by 'well trained full-time counsellors' not by untrained teachers, ensure the regular training and gender sensitisation for all its staff including security staff, the provision of transportation to and from campus , better lighting on campus, the provision of women's toilets with sufficient water, student-led programmes and training on gender equality and the provision of fair hall of residences.

Further the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 is a legislative act in India that seeks to protect women from sexual harassment at their place of work. Though this act is not without its drawbacks, it does provide a universal, unified framework to deal with SGBV in an institutional context. This act mandates that every institution must have an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) to investigates cases of SGBV and every ICC should have the same structure- three internal members and one external member. The existence of a common, universal framework regulating all workspaces including universities in cases of SGBV means that even if survivors and perpetrators come from different institutions, their cases can be taken up and investigated using the same guidelines (See figure 1).

In the UK there are no such central legal frameworks that offer recommendations to universities on how to deal with cases of SGBV. Universities in the UK rely on non-statutory guidance from two sector organisations- Universities UK (UUK) and Office for Students (Ofs). Universities UK, a lobby group representing the HE sector, introduced guidance in 2016 on student-student sexual violence, and in 2021 the Office for Students, a new regulatory body for England only, outlined a 'statement of expectations' that HE institutions are expected to comply with. The sector guidance produced by the 1752 group and McAllister Olivarius on how to address student complaints about staff sexual misconduct is an exceptional resource. Keeping survivor interests at its core, this guidance details on how to adapt or modify the current processes in Universities to ensure a fair and transparent procedure for all parties involved. This guidance also follows from the report titled Silencing

[Students: Institutional Responses to Staff Sexual, Misconduct in UK Higher Education](#) that explored institutional responses to sexual misconduct carried out by academic staff against students in HE.

Figure 5: Short description of the 1752 Group and McAllister Olivarius Sector Guidance to Address Staff Sexual Misconduct in UK HE

The 1752 Group and McAllister Olivarius Sector Guidance to Address Staff Sexual Misconduct in UK HE

This guidance provides detailed recommendations for higher education institutions processing student complaints and makes key recommendations during the main steps within the end-to-end procedure:

• Initial submission of complaint and risk assessment

• The Investigation

• The decision-making procedure

• The review processes

• Confidentiality of outcomes and protection of the complainant

• Data recording and management

In the UK, there is also no statutory requirement to have **compulsory and trained investigating committees** while it is mandatory in India for the Universities and other government and private institutions and workspaces to have Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs). However, the constitution and scope of any investigating body with HE needs further debated. While the committee takes up enquiry in Indian universities, the investigation can be outsourced to an eternal body in UK. Further in UK investigations are carried out often by an individual private investigator or agencies and not by designated institutional committees. These individual investigators and agencies often display inherent sexist and patriarchal prejudices and operate for their own profit and the institutions interest rather the survivors.

Anonymous and third person complaints are generally not taken up in India and UK. It might become important in some cases to take initiative Suo Moto with the survivor's consent. For example, Delhi High Court allowed anonymous complaints, which inspired

some Universities to do the same

UK universities have also struggled with the issue of **group complaints**, even though many staff/faculty perpetrators and student perpetrators appear to target multiple people. Groups of women (eg: one named complainant and others anonymous) should be allowed to make complaints together. There is some great work going on around **anonymous complaints** in the UK by Culture Shift, an NGO. They analyse data from anonymous complaints in order to find out whether they are happening in a particular area of the university or if there are patterns to the anonymous complaints.

The past few years have also seen debates around **relationship policies** within universities. Some of these policies are: UCL, Sussex, Manchester and Roehampton. Further, there is a growing acknowledgement that every student does not have equal access to the elite space of UK HE or benefit equally from the UK university experience. Substantial inequalities persist throughout the student lifecycle between students of different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds and that also intersects in the ways gendered violence is experienced and dealt with on campuses.

One area of mutual learning is the **range of penalties** for the proven cases. In the Indian context, only one penalty is given ranging from apology to holding back of promotions and administrative positions (as in case of staff members), and, it is not generally conveyed or revealed to others. But in the UK context, measures such as employer being made aware, rewards and awards to the respondents later, entry in the service register are some of the possibilities. And, another related area where mutual learning is possible is the issue of relocation of the survivor/perpetrator. The survivor should not be suggested to re-locate in the name of safety unless they request for it. Protection of the survivor's rights should be the priority and safe guarding measures must be put in places where needed.

If the complainant or respondent is unhappy with the outcome, they can write to the executive authority and **appeal** to the court of law in India. In the UK there is an appeals process built into the complaints process, but this is not always independent enough to be effective. Legal cases are possible but they are expensive. For students, there is an ombudsman for complaints but they are not as effective as they need to be.

One very important point highlighted throughout the workshop was the need for an **intersectional understanding of SGBV**. Both UK and India should learn from each other how to understand and articulate the importance of diverse identities such as gender, class, sexuality, disability, age, caste, race, region etc. Identities such as caste are very often invisiblised when speaking about SGBV. For example, when students in the UK have tried to register cases at the intersection of gender and caste based violence, they often fail due to the lack of understanding of caste based oppression and how that manifests in campuses in the Global North. Despite active campaigning by anti-caste activists and organisations, caste was not recognised in the Equality Act in the UK, making it even more difficult for survivors to file complaints. Further, many international students have been advised by UK universities to file police complaints or pushed to pursue their cases using

criminal justice procedures. However, most international students are on visas. Due to their precarious immigrations status and the need to reveal any ongoing criminal cases in future visa applications, deter them from seeking justice and a number of cases go unreported. In my activist work I have also encountered harrowing stories of racism faced by survivors not only from institutions but also from counsellors and mental health professionals in the UK. Survivors on precarious work contracts find it extremely difficult to report cases and speak out due to fear of job loss in an academic market which is exceptional volatile with few opportunities. Knowing this, perpetrators have also targeted international students and women in other precarious living and work conditions. Hence a truly inclusive and decolonial policy must include questions such as caste, nationality, immigration, work etc.

Universities both in India and UK need urgent conversation on **power dynamics and SGBV.** The #MeToo movement in India highlighted in the extent of staff on student violence. The 1752 Group advocate using the concept of 'professional boundaries' in the UK as a way to get both staff and students to reflect on what appropriate behaviour is, so that it is easier for complainants and bystanders to have a shared understanding of what is acceptable. Similarly, some Indian Universities have an orientation/training programmes for students to educate them about power, identities, interactions and consent. Such training programmes need to become part of continuous orientation, in different forms, for the University community. Students need to be actively involved in this, for instance in the form of student-led initiatives and movements.

The need for **transparency of mechanisms** was also discussed. For example in India, all GSCASH details, maintaining anonymity of names, are made available on the University website. This is followed in a few UK universities, but it is mainly about the numbers of complaints, rather than including much or any discussion on types of complaints and issues that need to be discussed more widely. In UK, data protection and privacy laws are interpreted very narrowly in ways that protect the respondents. Names and recommendations of the Committee are not made public. An idea suggested, both in case of both UK and India, was having regular newsletters with updates circulated among the University community to establish transparency, raise awareness and encourage survivors to seek justice.

The relationship between students and universities in the UK is one of business/customer, turning academics into service providers. So, when students demand **accountability** it comes in the form of "getting what they paid for" instead of demanding what should be a basic human right (gender justice, free education and a safe place to acquire said education). Institutions treat sexual misconduct as an afterthought to existing policies, which results in mismanagement of the situation, untrained mediators, and the use of mediation in cases where the survivor might be at risk of harm. Keeping this in mind, it becomes important to re-think how to frame demands and shape campaigns that can result is larger structural changes.

At the same time in the Indian university context, there is no longer an institution to demand

accountability from. As universities have co-opted independent committees formed in order to actively attack and silence survivors who appeal to them and both universities and right-wing groups have actively protected men in powerful positions were have been accused of sexual misconduct.

In the Indian context the practice of **feminist politics is always in conflict with the state.** This is in part related to how student unions are structured and links to the greater issue of institutional agendas. UK student unions are charities mostly funded by the university, creating the spaces for a particular power dynamic. Elected officials of student unions are legally trustees of the university and as such are liable and can be taken to court if the union does something that violates the code of conduct. Elected officials also cease to have any privacy in terms of social media; anything they say on social media is equally subject to the terms of the codes of conduct (they are also technically employees of the university since they are paid by them). The UK also has the Zelleck Guidelines which dictate that universities cannot investigate cases of potentially criminal misconduct, contributing to long, drawn out investigations which grind down the survivor involved. Indian student unions are effectively chapters of larger political parties and operate on campus often with party agendas in mind. So, the fight against SGBV within HE is incomplete without the fighting the patriarchal and neoliberal state. Each of these institutions are intrinsically connected through various bodies and practices. Our activisms and accountability processes needs to take that into account.

This shows that there are number of ways in which HE institutions both in the UK and India can benefit from knowledge exchange about key policy and practices. Universities in the UK cans greatly benefit from universal national framework and implementing the GSCASH/ICC model in dealing with SGBV within academic institutions. Indian universities can learn from UK about consent workshops, health and wellbeing services and bystander initiatives. Since many universities in India are structured on the model of University of London, a knowledge exchange between UK and India can not only be beneficial but structurally simple to implement. Such knowledge exchange can also be efficient, saving costs that would have gone into developing new models for a solution.

Currently studies on the problem of SGBV in HE primarily being focused on the Global North making the voices of survivors from the Global South and the pathbreaking strategies, initiatives and activism developed there, invisible. This project aimed to break that silence and start conversations where new theories, policies and practices in the field can be developed through collaboration and communication, and in that process, strive to **decolonise the discipline** by shifting the imperial geographies of knowledge production.

Finally, a question we also urgently need to think about is- **how do we pass the baton** and make sure these movements go on and their collective memory and histories of dissent and not erased by neoliberal, patriarchal and Brahmanical institutions.

CONCLUSION

This is not the end of a conversation but the beginning of one. We hope that other academics, activists and policy makers can pick up these questions and reflections and keep adding to it. We also aim to extend this conversation in the future to other contexts and bringing in more voices from both the Global North and South.

This workshop taught us that our struggles and connected. These are testing times, but they also extend opportunities for new forms of resistance. The global Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the cracks of a failing neoliberal system, presenting to us new opportunities to rethink alternatives. It also made visible care work and how in order to ensure both wellbeing for survivors and larger cultural changes, it becomes imperative to centre care not only as a service but as a direct strategy/approach.

It is time to learn from feminist struggles across the world from the past and the present. We also need to remember and celebrate the struggle of our comrades and sisters who have given us what we have today, many of whom are women of colour, Dalit, queer folks, trans folks, indigenous people, workers, trade unionist and women from other marginalised backgrounds.

But this time we not only learn but we have push even further to topple the entire systems that are built on patriarchy, class exploitation, racism and casteism. We need a complete overhaul of our institutions and ways of thinking. We need new imaginations. And we need to develop truly internationalist movements. It is possible to transform institutions, but it must be feminist, it must centre black liberation, caste annihilation, concerns of indigenous people, queer and trans freedom, it must be decolonial, it must centre care and empathy and abolish all carceral systems. It's time to educate, agitate, organise.

I want to end with a few lines from a poem called **We Sinful Women by Kishwar Naheed**. On day 1 of our workshop we got hacked by right-wing trolls from India. This shows the extent to which right-wing forces would go to stop us from talking. But be it fascists forces, patriarchal states or neoliberal institutions- know that they are scared. They can try to stop us from speaking out, but our voices of dissent will only become louder.

<div align="center">

It is we sinful women
while those who sell the harvests of our bodies
become exalted
become distinguished
become the just princes of the material world.

It is we sinful women
who come out raising the banner of truth
up against barricades of lies on the highways

</div>

who find stories of persecution piled on each threshold
who find that tongues which could speak have been severed.

It is we sinful women.
Now, even if the night gives chase
these eyes shall not be put out.
For the wall which has been razed
don't insist now on raising it again.

It is we sinful women
who are not awed by the grandeur of those who wear gowns...
who don't bow our heads
who don't fold our hands together.

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Anushka Ganguly is an activist working with the Pinjra Tod (Break the Locks) movement in India, a feminist collective that campaigns against securitisation and the policing of women's bodies on university campuses.

Alice King is a 2nd year PhD Candidate at Warwick Law School, University of Warwick. My research is concerned with understanding student attitudes towards sexual violence and common sexual behaviours at elite (Russell Group) institutions in the UK and situating these attitudes within broader discourses relating to power and gender. My work is informed by feminist and post-structural theories of power and gender. Prior to starting my PhD at Warwick, I completed an LLM in Jurisprudence and Legal Theory at UCL and hold an LLB from Queen Mary, University of London. On a broader scale, I am interested in the relationship between gender and the law particularly in the context of sexual violence.

Anna Bull is a senior lecturer in sociology at the University of Portsmouth and a founding member of The 1752 Group. Her research focuses on gender and class inequalities in music education and higher education. She led on work with the National Union of Students on behalf of The 1752 Group in producing the report 'Power in the Academy: staff sexual misconduct in UK higher education' in April 2018. She is lead author on the report produced by The 1752 Group 'Silencing Students: Institutional responses to staff sexual misconduct in UK higher education', published in September 2018.

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Megan Reynolds is a PhD Researcher at STARC Research Lab in the School of Psychology, Queen's University Belfast. Her research focuses on investigating unwanted sexual experiences (USE's) and the impact of this on the psychological well-being of university students in Northern Ireland. Further, her research explores the role of alcohol

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Ngozi Anyadike-Danes is a PhD researcher with specific interests in sexual violence, rape myths and comprehension of consent. My PhD project focuses on the extent to which comprehension of consent impacts the outcomes of unwanted sexual experiences of university students in Northern Ireland.

Nikita Agarwal is a feminist advocate working with the Jagdalpur Legal Aid Group and is a part of Women Against Sexual Violence and State Repression (WSS).

Rachel Vogler is involved in community organising and campaigning to end violence against women and girls. Her background is in student campaigning for arts universities and informal education for young people. She currently works for a domestic violence charity in an outreach and education role, working with young people aged 16-15 around the UK. Rachel founded Houselights, a grassroots project to tackle sexual harassment in the Entertainment industry through workshops on safe working practice in drama schools, theatres and other arts organisations. Rachel also works with Intimacy Directors International, who are leading the way for good practice in the Entertainment industry and is about to begin her MA in Gender Studies at SOAS.

Ruth Lewis is Associate Professor at the Department of Social Sciences in Northumbria University. Her research focuses on gender-based violence and feminist activism and spans Sociology, Criminology and Gender Studies. Recent work examines gender-based violence in universities and activism about it.

Sandra Fernandez received her PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of St Andrews in 2018. She worked with anti-sexual harassment movements in Cairo, Egypt, for three years as part of her PhD research. She has also written about and trained students in the roles of gender and race in conducting field research. In addition to these areas of research, Sandra is specifically interested in the role of masculinities and men's experiences of gendered violence, and the shifting understandings of how sexual harassment is defined and perceived.

Sara Kazmi is a street theatre activist and feminist performer from Lahore. She is currently pursuing a PhD in the Department of English, University of Cambridge. Her research examines Left-wing, anti-caste, and feminist Punjabi writers in East and West Punjab, and in Britain.

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