



# THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE TOGETHER AGAINST THE VIOLENCE OF GENDERED EXCLUSION

A Learnings and Assessment Report



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**Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP)**  
*An Initiative of the*  
**Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness The Dalai Lama**  
New Delhi

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**Seema Kakran**



# Executive Summary

This report documents the findings of an assessment of *The Medium is the Message: Together against the Violence of Gendered Exclusion* pilot project of Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP). The assessment was carried out between June and August 2016 as an internal review. The WISCOMP project had envisioned that over a short period of three months from April 2016 onwards, youth and educators from Kashmir and National Capital Region (NCR) will be exposed to the messages of the film *He Named Me Malala* and provided space for dialogue on gender equality in India. The project was extended for an additional three month period in July. At the end of the project in September 2016, WISCOMP had brought together over 140 youth and 390 teachers and community leaders from educational institutions in Kashmir and NCR at four training workshops and four screenings of the film, one of which was a stand-alone screening and discussion. This report is based on the workshop processes, the pre -and post-workshop surveys and the feedback received from the participants. It examines the overall relevance and effectiveness of capacity building trainings for youth and educators using educational spaces **to build a public sensibility about the rights of women and girls to lead unfettered lives of dignity, peace, and choice.**

The workshops were able to achieve substantive progress on the objectives that were outlined by WISCOMP at the beginning of the project, including the following:

- Enhance knowledge of participating youth on how gender stereotypes are perpetuated and their impact on opportunities for girls and women.
- Motivate participating youth to play a more proactive role in addressing gender inequality in their personal lives.
- Provide inspiration to participants in an area affected by conflict to face adversity with courage and perseverance and move from the language of ‘despair and victimhood to agency’.
- Improve understanding of participating educators and other stakeholder on the problem of gender inequality in educational spaces, gender discrimination and the links between gender role perceptions and gender based violence.
- Improve awareness of participating educators about best practices on remedying gender inequality in India, especially for girls from the socio-economically marginalized groups.
- Create space for arriving at a common vocabulary on ‘educating for peace’ among educators drawn from diverse ‘security contexts’.
- At inter-personal and institutional levels it ignited dialogue among educators on seemingly ‘taboo’ issues like female sexuality and LGBT rights.

An unintended outcome of the film screening and discussion was its ability to open dialogic space on gender issues between Indian and Pakistani educators at a time when the broader nationalist environment in the two countries is largely hostile to dialogue.

A key achievement of the project is that it has led to institutionalization of gender sensitivity training for Masters’ level students at a partner institution as part of a University Leadership Program. Another partner school is designing gender sensitivity training for support staff of the school.

The Project outputs in the form of a short video, workshop reports and assessment report are the sustainable advocacy tools on girls’ educational rights that can be used on web-based platforms.

WISCOMP will use these learnings to design future action to promote gender justice. It offers these learnings for other organisations with a hope that this report has made a small but meaningful contribution to the discourse on **what works to promote equal rights of girls.**

# Introduction

In March 2016 WISCOMP launched an initiative to transform beliefs and attitudes to counter (and prevent) the violence of exclusion of girls from access to educational rights in India. Envisaged as a pilot, the project was designed for two regions: Jammu and Kashmir and the National Capital Region<sup>1</sup> (NCR).

These two regions were strategically selected for gauging the effectiveness of awareness generation and capacity building on girls' access to education and ultimately to equality of opportunity in diverse contexts. The rationale behind the selection of these two areas was that the National Capital Region, along with other provinces of Northern India, has consistently recorded higher rates of gender based violence and crimes against women.<sup>2</sup> A stark indicator of this is the low ranking of this region on gender empowerment measures and persistently low sex ratios in comparison to other parts of India. As per the Census figures, Sex Ratio at birth in 2014 in Delhi was 896 females per 1000 males. In Jammu and Kashmir it stood at 889 against 942 females per 1000 males in the country. The fact that Kashmir has been a site of a protracted conflict for six decades that adversely impacted the access of young people to schools was an important consideration in project design. The region continues to record very low literacy rates and high dropout rates from secondary schools, especially for girls. In 2011, literacy rate for females in Kashmir was 58.01% against the national average of 65.46%.<sup>3</sup>

Against the backdrop of these deeply problematic figures, the project sought to effect change by striking at the root cause of gender discrimination – the patriarchal mindset that sanctions unequal status of girls and women in society. The core constituencies of the WISCOMP intervention were youth in the 13-25 age-group and educators (both men and women). The project activities also included participation of civil society actors and management of educational institutions. WISCOMP used the popularity of the film *He named me Malala* and Malala Yousofzai's iconic image among young people to maximize impact on the knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes of the participating youth on gender issues. It also used the film as a medium to generate a shared vocabulary among educators drawn from very diverse security contexts in the 'true spirit' of dialogue.

The project sought to bring about change on the basis of two assumptions:

- A. Educational spaces can play a significant role in changing gender attitudes and breaking gender stereotypes.
- B. Exposure to transformative ideas of iconic leaders motivates individuals to change their behaviour and challenge unjust social practices.

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<sup>1</sup> NCR is the designation for a metropolitan area that encompasses the entire National Capital Territory of Delhi, and the urban areas surrounding it in the neighboring states of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. It is India's largest urban agglomeration.

<sup>2</sup> After compiling the crime statistics for the previous year, Delhi police revealed that the year 2014 had witnessed an almost doubling of crime in the National Capital. This led to an intense public discussion. The National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) data revealed that registered cases in the city rose from 73,902 in 2013 to 147,230 in 2014. Violence against women and girls—sexual assault and domestic violence—constituted the majority of these crimes. For the first time, NCRB confirmed that New Delhi was the 'rape capital' of India—with the number of reported rapes in proportion to Delhi's female population higher than any other city in the country. Further, it estimated that 40% married women were physically abused by their husbands.

<sup>3</sup> The status of girls in Jammu and Kashmir is important as it is the only state of India where Muslims are in majority. Only three other states have lower female literacy rates, i.e. Bihar, Rajasthan and Jharkhand. They belong to the pool of most backward states of India. See [http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/data\\_files/india/Final\\_PPT\\_2011\\_chapter6.pdf](http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/data_files/india/Final_PPT_2011_chapter6.pdf)

Based on these premises WISCOMP organized film screenings and discussions on *He Named Me Malala* and facilitated capacity building workshops. The workshop curriculum included expert lectures, panel discussions, other audio visual material and a puppetry performance to enhance understanding on gender equality and stimulate reflection. The goal was to speak to the conscience of the participants—male and female; Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist; rural and urban. The workshops also motivated the participants to take action so that the cultural sanction that often encourages families to support gender stereotypes and view ‘public and private’ spaces as male and female domains was challenged.

The project activities were designed to create a confluence – bringing together youth, educators and other stakeholders within the educational space to collectively build cultures that respect women and girls’ equal access to rights. Each partner institution was treated as ‘one space’ where concurrent capacity building workshops were facilitated for youth and educators. At the outset, WISCOMP sought to directly benefit 200 young people and 80 educators through the activities.

The project implementation benefited immensely from WISCOMP’s wide network of partner institutions and individuals who are committed to positive social transformation based on the constitutional principles of justice and equality. WISCOMP has worked in Jammu and Kashmir for over 16 years and has built knowledge base on constructive engagement despite the difficult political conditions. Similarly in the NCR, it is one of the pioneering organisations that has engaged with educational institutions on building capacity of educators and youth on equality and justice issues over the last one and half decade.

The assessment of the project was carried out on three parameters: the impact of location, gender sensitivity training and gender identity on beliefs about gender equality among the core constituencies of the project. The fulcrum of the assessment are:

- Detailed reports on each of the capacity building workshops (See Annexure A for an excerpt from one of the reports);
- Data collected through the pre-workshop Bem’s Sex Role Inventory filled out by the participating youth that sought to measure gender identity (See Annexure B);
- Data collected using the pre-workshop survey with educators that measured attitude towards gender equality and beliefs about the role of education in promoting gender equality (See Annexure C); and lastly,
- Post-workshop survey with a group of educators who were participants at the WISCOMP capacity building training over a sustained period (See Annexure D).

These different sources of data have been read in conjunction with each other to arrive at some conclusions on what can work to change gendered mindsets in India using educational spaces.<sup>4</sup>

The report begins with the overall relevance of the project activities to the specific issues around girls’ education in India. The second part provides a brief statement on the methodology of assessment. The third part of the report comprises detailed analysis of the activities carried out and the pre-and-post training surveys conducted. It lists out the key achievements of the project. The fourth section enumerates the lessons learnt and the challenges encountered *vis a vis* the workshop content and process. The concluding section lays out suggestions for future work in the areas of intervention and the prospects of sustainability with a view to promote equality and equity in education in India.

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<sup>4</sup> Since this is a pilot and the project implementation period was very short (April 2016- August 2016), the scale of the assessment is modest. The project team spent a month in design of the workshops and pre-training communication with partner institutions and a month to collate lessons learned.

# The Context

## *Gender Discriminatory Practices*

Gender discriminatory practices and violence against women in India have received a great deal of attention, both nationally and internationally, in the last five years as a consequence of what is termed – ‘the Nirbhaya Moment’. The impact of the December 16, 2012<sup>5</sup> incident is being researched by women’s studies scholars, those who theorize on social movements as well as media *pandits*. While women’s status in Indian society has always drawn the attention of scholars and policy makers, the immediacy to address violence against women has reached a new high. This is reflected in the Draft National Policy for Women 2016 where it is acknowledged that, “deep-rooted patriarchal social constructs position women in disempowered social and economic hierarchies that impede in the realization of their rights.”<sup>6</sup>

Recognizing the links between girls and women’s empowerment and achievement of developmental goals, the Indian state has identified girls’ education as a key priority area. Several government programs seek to incentivize girls’ education for families like, *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao* (Trans. save the Girl Child, educate the Girl Child); *Laadli* (Trans. Beloved Girl Child) and special provisions under the *Swaachh Bharat* (Trans. Clean India) Scheme to build toilets in schools which is one of the barriers to girls’ access to schools.

In spite of the launch of these schemes by the central and state governments, girls’ education continues to lag behind. Of the total out-of-school children in India, 62% are girls and they make up two-thirds of illiterate 15- to 24-year-olds. Of these out of school children those from the historically marginalized groups i.e. the lower castes, tribal groups and Muslim communities comprise two-thirds of the total children not in school. This number when placed against the reality that children from these groups make up only 43% of total children in India, reveals the compounding effect that an individual’s social identity has on her opportunities to gain access to educational and economic rights in India.<sup>7</sup> Marginalization for girls from these groups and subgroups is sometimes doubled and at other times tripled.

There is no conclusive evidence on what factors determine girls’ educational access. However, a range of possibilities that are possibly linked to the marginalization of girls from the schooling system are identified:

- a. *Expectations of domesticity*: Girls are expected to contribute to the household at a fairly young age, implicit here is the assumption that girls are ultimately more adept at this role and must also

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<sup>5</sup> This refers to the brutal rape and murder of Jyoti Pandey (referred to as Nirbhaya/ fearless by Indian Media), a young woman, on a Delhi bus in December 2012. The public outcry against the incident led to the constitution of the Justice Verma Committee and fast-tracking of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013 and The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> National Policy for Women (draft), Government of India, 2016, Retrieved from: <http://wcd.nic.in/acts/draft-national-policy-women-2016>, Accessed on June 16, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> See, Nafisa Halim et al., Women’s Political Empowerment and Investments in Primary Schooling in India, *Social Indicators Research*, 125(3), 2016. and Rachel Williams, “Why Girls Are Still Missing Out on the Education They Need”, *The Guardian*, March 11, 2013, Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/mar/11/indian-children-education-opportunities>

hone this ‘natural propensity’. There are also fears that educating girls causes excessive independence which is not conducive to the domestic and inherently secondary role that they perform in society in relation to men.

- b. *Safety*: Safety of girls travelling alone to school is a major concern for families. There is constant fear of sexual violence at all ages but peaks after they reach puberty. The beliefs about girls’ bodily integrity and its connection with family and community honor further hinder girls’ freedom.
- c. *Infrastructure Barriers*: The quality of school infrastructure especially their distance from residence, toilet facilities and pupil-teacher ratios also impact girls’ education. Absence of separate toilet becomes a serious barrier post the onset of puberty and leads to high dropouts.<sup>8</sup>

Despite these barriers India has succeeded in making huge improvements in rates of school enrolment for girls in the last two decades. However, high rates of dropout nullify the gains. Girls’ dropout rates peak in the transition between class 1 and 2 and again in classes 8, 9 and 10. Ease of Access to school, infrastructure at school, mothers’ literacy and parents’ education level correlate with lower dropout rate. Research confirms the importance of mothers’ education in girls’ school enrolment but the importance of school quality in retention and achievement is another significant factor. School quality emerges as an important factor in **creating demand for education**, with higher demand expressed for better schools.<sup>9</sup> School environment, more accessible learning material and teacher attitude can in fact motivate girls to overcome barriers. A more supportive school community can neutralize the disincentives, motivate families to value education and empower girls. Evidence on how this has succeeded in small pockets of the India abound.<sup>10</sup>

However, even a cursory look at human development data broken down by caste, class and religious groups reveals that Indian families, irrespective of the social group they belong to, continue to prefer investing in the education of boys rather than girls.<sup>11</sup> The roots of this gender discrimination within the family lie not only in economic considerations but also in the beliefs individuals hold about the role of girls and boys within society. “In so far as these preferences are deeply held and difficult to change through pro-girl policies such as financial incentives to ‘have daughters’ and educate them, they may represent a significant challenge to erasing discrimination against women.”<sup>12</sup> It is therefore suggested that **interventions into the process of attitude formation and transmission should be the focus of attention of policy and research**. Interventions need to impact the beliefs individuals have about girls’ role in family and society, more generally and not just their preferences about education.

Given these ground realities, the WISCOMP initiative is both timely and relevant.

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<sup>8</sup> See, Gene B. Sperling and Rebecca Winthrop. *What Works in Girls’ Education: Evidence for the World’s Best Investment*. Washington: Brookings Institution: Washington D.C., 2016.

<sup>9</sup> See, Maureen A. Lewis and Marlaine E. Lockheed, Social Exclusion: The Emerging Challenge in Girl’s Education, In *Exclusion, Gender and Education: Case Studies from the Developing World*, M. A. Lewis & M. E. Lockheed (eds.), Centre for Global Development: Washington D. C., 2007.

<sup>10</sup> See the work of Eklavya, VIDYA, Prerna and the Study Hall Educational Foundation, Pardada Pardadi Education Society and Nirantar.

<sup>11</sup> There are some exceptions in this regard. For instance, among some of the tribal communities of India’s North East daughters’ education is given equal importance. Similarly some communities of South India and the Zoroastrian community do not have wide gaps in the investment that they make in education of girls.

<sup>12</sup> Diva Dhar, Tarun Jain, and Seema Jayachandran, *Intergenerational Transmission of Gender Attitudes: Evidence From India*, July 2015, Retrieved from: <http://www.nber.org/papers/w21429.pdf>

## *Gender Attitude Formation*

How do families arrive at preferences and expectations from girls and boys?

Several factors are believed to explain gendered attitudes. ‘One line of research emphasizes historical roots, others see religious beliefs as important influences, still others consider agrarian environment as a causal factor in explaining gender norms’, in the Indian context. How these cultural norms get transmitted within the family and how family norms affect gender attitudes of individuals are currently, an area of research that is underexplored. In a recent study that was conducted in 314 schools in the state of Haryana it was found that while influence of parents’ attitude on the gender attitude of offspring was very strong, **the broader classroom environment had comparable effect on a child’s gender attitudes.**<sup>13</sup>

WISCOMP’s work with schools, over the years, has largely been based on the assumption that interventions with young children that seek to transform attitudes can bring about societal change in the long run. Children, once exposed to the ideas of equality and democracy, are more likely to refrain from discriminatory practices in adulthood. In the context of gender norms and attitudes, this could work in several different ways:

- For the girls, the immediate effect created in the school and in the classroom<sup>14</sup> could lead to change in aspirations for higher education and ultimately actual attainment of economic independence and equality.
- As a long term effect of interventions at the school level, young people (who are also prospective parents) could change preferences and over the course of a generation, lead to a more gender equitable society.<sup>15</sup>
- Boys and girls once convinced of gender equality at a young age will perhaps be less discriminatory in their behaviour in the professional spaces as adults, further denting the public/private divide and making both more conducive to women’s leadership.<sup>16</sup>

The WISCOMP workshops organized under the *The Medium is the Message* Project were designed to initiate such a change and sought to impact gender stereotypes in the immediate future and over a longer time period. While working directly with young people was one aspect of the project, another aspect of the project was the work with educational institutions, especially teachers who are shown to have an important influence on the beliefs of young people both as adult role models and as creators of the school environment. The workshops sought to sensitize educators to the contribution they can make in bringing about change, through curriculum, pedagogy and modelling gender equitable behaviour.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> This can take the form of more sensitive material being used and teacher behaviour.

<sup>15</sup> This is significant because when one analyzes the parent and child attitude correlation, mothers have a greater influence on the beliefs of children.

<sup>16</sup> Although studies that document statistical association between exposure to ideas of gender equality at a young age and attitudes towards rights of progeny are scarce, some preliminary correlations can be gleaned from the studies that have sought to investigate patterns of gender based violence. See, G. Barker, et al, *Evolving Men: Initial Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)*, Washington, D.C.: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Promundo, 2011.

The participating youth, educators and other stakeholders at the different workshops and film screenings were invited to reconsider gender relations and assimilate values of mutual respect, support, partnership, and equity. Implicit here was the recognition of a need to shake the foundations of patriarchal norms and practices that uphold the unequal status of women in Indian society while at the same time being mindful of how such change can be perceived by boys and men as threatening. There was a conscious attempt to include discussion on how inequality and hegemonic masculinities negatively affect men.

The **immediate aims** of the capacity building workshops were:

- a. To ignite debate on the importance of educational rights for girls as a means to empower communities and individuals;
- b. Improve the understanding of gender equality; and
- c. To advocate for the idea that gender equality is a justice and inclusion issue and women's rights should not be used as instruments merely for developmental gains.

The **medium term objective** was to concatenate a process that motivates a diverse group of stakeholders in the educational spaces to become change-agents in their workspaces, families and communities transforming gender relations towards more just and equitable options.

**The overall project goal** ultimately is to build a public sensibility about the rights of women and girls to lead unfettered lives of dignity, peace, and choice.

# Methodology of Assessment

The assessment has used information contained in the narrative reports on each of the workshops, the responses of the student to the pre-workshop questionnaire on gender identity, the responses of the teachers to the pre-workshop questionnaire on gender-role stereotypes and importance of gender equality in education; and the responses of the teachers to the post workshop questionnaire on gender-role stereotypes and importance of gender equality in education. Relevant learnings from each of these were compiled.

For the youth, analysis of the changes in beliefs and attitudes is based on the pre-workshop surveys using Bem's Sex Role inventory<sup>18</sup> and workshop discussion and feedback. Total number of participating youth who completed the inventory was 101, of these 36 were from Faridabad (NCR) and 665 from Kashmir. No post workshop survey was carried out for the student group as change in gender identity or the ability to break out of stereotypical gender traits can only be built over a period of time and is highly unlikely as an effect of one single workshop. The youth perceptions were important for another reason. They provided baseline data on existing beliefs of young people and pointed out the areas where the teachers can make a difference. On the basis of self-reported effects of the workshop process some tentative changes on the youth beliefs can also be gleaned and are presented in the impact section.

Data from the survey questionnaires administered to the educators was entered and analysed using SPSS program. In view of the fact that the number of participants who responded to the questionnaire at each of the workshop was different, the opinion of the teachers on each set of questions was combined to create a Median score for each participant. This score was checked for correlation with the place of residence, gender and long term exposure to gender sensitivity training. Total 193 completed questionnaires were received. The region wise break up was – 28 from Faridabad, 70 from Kashmir and 95 from New Delhi. Conclusions were drawn using simple statistical calculations and correlations. Multivariate regression analysis was not carried out that could have provided in depth understanding of the causal linkages between the different factors that impact the beliefs and attitudes of youth and teachers.<sup>17</sup> Using the data, the beliefs and attitudes of educators are compared for the two geographical areas and the two groups of participants – before and after the workshop.

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<sup>17</sup> Given that the questionnaires were administered only to the workshop participants and a large majority of them were interacting with WISCOMP for the first time (with the exception of educators at one institution), demographic data was not collected. Had the evaluation been introduced to the respondents as action research study, the information could have been collected and the data would have provided deeper insights into the causal processes of gender attitude formation. Since the purpose of administering the questionnaires was to measure change and not go deeper into causal explanations this did not affect the assessment.

<sup>18</sup> S.L. Bem, Sex Role Adaptability: One Consequence of Psychological Androgyny. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 31:634-643., and Cheryl L. Holt and Jon B. Ellis, Assessing the Current Validity of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory, *Sex Roles*, Vol.39(11/12), 1998. Accessed on May 27, 2016.

# Project Outputs

In collaboration with educational outreach partners, WISCOMP had proposed to organize two capacity-building workshops and dialogues (for a total of 80 educators and 200 youth) in Delhi and Srinagar. It was also proposed that WISCOMP will enlist educators from schools that cater to diverse population groups including those from low, medium and high socio-economic strata, religious and cultural minorities, single sex and co-educational institutions, formal and informal educational set ups. The screening of *He named me Malala* was to be used at the workshops to trigger discussion on the issue of educational rights of girls.

WISCOMP organized four sets of workshops and four screenings of the film during the project period. One of the screenings was a stand-alone event while the other three were part of the longer workshops. The first set of workshops was organized for youth and educators at Manav Rachna International University, Faridabad (National Capital Region) on May 3 & 4, 2016. The second set of workshops was organized at Delhi Public School, and Kashmir School of Education Research and Training (KSERT), District Budgam (Kashmir) on May 16-17, 2016 for school students, teachers and civil society actors. A film screening and discussion was organized at Bluebells School International, New Delhi on June 29, 2016 for the teachers. Third workshop was organized at Dharamsala (Himanchal Pradesh) on July 24, 2016 for youth from across India. The participants of this workshop had an opportunity to interact with Nobel Laureate His Holiness The Dalai Lama. The last event under the project, a two-day national workshop for educators, was organized at New Delhi on August 29-30, 2016. The following section provides brief summaries of each of the workshops.



## *Breaking the Silence: Issues of Gender and Equality in India*

**A Workshop for Youth  
Manav Rachna International University  
Faridabad  
May 3, 2016**

This youth workshop enabled participants to critically reflect over some of the societal norms and practices which perpetuate gender stereotypes and become a hindrance to efforts for gender equality. Among the 40 participants, 36 were first-year students from the Masters in Business Administration program and four were faculty members and administrative staff of the Manav Rachna International University. Fifty-five percent of the participants were females.

WISCOMP staff Manjri Sewak and Seema Kakran conducted the workshop where the film *He Named me Malala* was also screened. The facilitators used instances from Malala Yousafzai's life as depicted in the film to raise questions about gender equality, structural violence and how the youth can create a more equitable society.



## *Breaking the Silence: Issues of Gender and Equality in India*

**A Workshop for Educators  
Manav Rachna International University  
Faridabad  
May 4, 2016**

This workshop was conducted by Meenakshi Gopinath, Director, WISCOMP. The workshop provided a dialogic space for about 50 teachers and senior management of the University where they could—through presentation, discussion and sharing—look at the possibility of creating a gender sensitive university campus. Short videos on the power of the ‘girl effect’ that can translate 50 million problems into 50 million solutions; the experiences of women who break gender stereotypes to take on

responsibilities that are otherwise associated with men; and the possibility of being feminine and masculine in sync with principles of equity and justice were foregrounded.<sup>19</sup> At this first of a kind workshop at the University, senior management and faculty came together to discuss the issue of gender equality. As a broader community outreach effort, the local radio channel (FM 107.8) which is run by the student and faculty team of the University (and reaches about 20,000 homes in and around Faridabad) also telecast an interview on girls' educational rights.



### *Parwaaz<sup>20</sup>: Inner Spaces and Outer Expressions*

**A Workshop for Youth  
Delhi Public School  
Budgam, Kashmir  
May 16, 2016**

Over 60 high school students from Delhi Public School, Budgam, Kashmir, explored and discussed their aspirations, the challenges they encounter, and the resources they use to overcome adversity at this workshop.

The youth who were participating at such a workshop for the first time were a little reticent at the beginning. However, once some of the students spoke of challenges ranging from anger, depression, lack of self-discipline and separation from friends, others also opened up. Shreya Jani, trainer in Non-Violent Communication and Director, STEP (Standing Together to Enable Peace), wove instances from Malala Yousufzai's life as portrayed in the film and the messages from her book (co-authored with Christina Lamb), to inspire the participants to think beyond personal aspirations and identify what they would like changed in their community. Many participants expressed a strong desire to continue working with their teachers and make contributions to the betterment of their community.

<sup>19</sup> A detailed report on the proceedings and the learnings from the student and faculty workshop sessions has been published.

<sup>20</sup> *Parwaaz* is an Urdu word meaning 'taking flight'.

At the conclusion of the workshop a group of participants sang songs in Kashmiri that spoke of resilience and fortitude to overcome despair and hopelessness.

*Parwaaz: Inner Spaces and Outer Expressions*

**A Workshop for School Teachers**

**Delhi Public School**

**Budgam**

**Kashmir**

**May 16, 2016**

The workshop at Delhi Public School with the students was complemented by a module for teachers that focused on Understanding Emotions and Aspirations in the classroom. Over 70 teachers from the school participated and engaged with the issue of dealing with emotions using the example of anger. The teachers also discussed how they can assist their students to manage emotions. The workshop facilitator, Dr. Priti Dhawan (Psychologist and Associate Professor, Lady Shri Ram College, New Delhi) urged that the participating teachers make an attempt to probe the cause of student anger and empathize with them so that anger can be transformed and does not fester or lead to aggression/violence.



*Women's Rights in Jammu and Kashmir: Lessons from WISCOMP's Engagement*

**KSERT College of Education**

**Humhuma, Budgam**

**June 17, 2016**

The challenges encountered by girls and women in Kashmir were foregrounded during an interaction with educators from the KSERT College of Education, civil society representatives and students and faculty from other educational institutions of Srinagar. This interaction carried the message of equal rights of girls to the educational community and policy makers in Kashmir. During the interaction, WISCOMP shared lessons from its work on gender equality in Jammu and Kashmir over a 16 year period (2000-2016) with the hope that the dreams of all the girls, whose lives are touched by the participating community members, can be impacted positively. At the end of the interaction several participants expressed the desire to contest gender discrimination more centrally in their work and personal lives. Many who were already working on women's rights through their organizations

noted that they would also involve men as the role of men in achieving gender equality was extremely important. The event was covered in print media and on local television. (See Annexure E)



### *The Role of Educational Spaces in Fostering Gender Equality*

**Bluebells School International  
New Delhi  
June 29, 2016**

Over 100 teachers of Bluebells School International participated at a film screening and discussion facilitated by WISCOMP team of Meenakshi Gopinath, Seema Kakran and Manjri Sewak. *He Named me Malala* was screened to ignite discussion on the role of family, teachers, schools and community in ensuring that girls have the right to a life of dignity and choice. The screening of the film at this school was especially significant as WISCOMP has run ‘a whole-school immersion’ program for the past one and half years at this institution (since 2014). Over this period capacity building workshops on addressing violence against women have been organized for not only the teachers and the student leaders at the school but also for the parents and guardians of the students. The screening of the film provided an opportunity for WISCOMP to gauge responses from an audience that came in with a certain level of sensitivity to issues around gender equality. Confirming the expectations, the educators at the school gave a nuanced response to the film. The key concerns discussed were: Gender-based discrimination by teachers when assigning responsibilities to students, gender-based expectations of family members (for example, resistance to boys joining home science club), and effects of religious beliefs on the position of girls and women within a community. The treatment of girls on the school sports field was another issue that was flagged for change.



### *Secular Ethics: A Youth Dialogue*

**Library of Tibetan Works and Archives  
Dharamsala  
24 July 2016**

A workshop on *Secular Ethics* was conducted on 24 July 2016 which provided an invigorating context for a dialogue on the film *He Named Me Malala*. Held at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Dharamsala, the workshop brought together 35 students pursuing degrees in diverse disciplines at universities and colleges across India. The students spent three weeks in Dharamsala



as part of the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Gurukul Immersion Program. The discussion after the film revolved around a wide range of issues including:

- Freedom of girls within homes;
- The relationship between education, financial independence, land ownership and women's empowerment; and
- The reasons behind families investing in sons' and not daughters' education in different communities.

The participants of the workshop had an opportunity to interact with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and share with him the ideas they were taking back from the workshop they attended and the overall impact the three-week program had on their beliefs about interfaith dialogue and peace.

### *Educating for Social Change*

**A National Workshop for Educators  
India International Center, New Delhi  
August 29-30, 2016**

The last event organized under the project was a National Workshop that brought together over **72 school educators, academics, activists, teacher educators and creative artists** involved in the school space. The group included senior practitioners as well as recent entrants to the field of education. They engaged in a dialogue to explore several questions, including the following:



- What can schools do to more proactively engage with social issues at multiple levels—from the local to the global?
- How can educators contribute towards finding solutions to the problems in their communities?
- What methodologies have worked to build ‘inclusivity’ in education?
- What pedagogical changes can be explored to bring issues of social justice and democratic engagement into the classroom space and with learners from diverse groups?
- How can civil society advocate for the education of girls and adult women?

The senior practitioners shared best practices and lessons learned in the course of their work with the young entrants on the first day of the workshop. On the second day the film *He Named Me Malala* was screened which was followed by a dialogue with an educator from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan (and who belongs to the same community as Malala Yousufzai). The workshop also provided space for the participants to work in groups and chart plans for action. A performance using puppets by the Kat Katha Puppetry Arts Trust team on questioning gender stereotypes and other forms of discriminatory practices concluded the two-day deliberation.

# Project Goals and Objectives

The specific objectives of working with the two sets of participants – educators and youth, were enumerated in the project proposal document. Based on those objectives the checklist below provides a summary of whether a particular objective was achieved or not:

**Table 1 Checklist for Training Objectives**

Objective	Workshop 1 NCR	Workshop 2 Kashmir	Workshop 3 NCR	Workshop 4 Dharamsala	Workshop 5 NCR
<b>TEACHERS</b>					
<b>Build awareness</b> on the constitutional rights of girls.	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes
<b>Enhance knowledge and sensitivity</b> to the problem of low enrolment and high dropout rates of girls	Yes	Yes*	No	NA	Yes
Provide a <b>safe space for dialogue</b> on cultural sanction	Yes	Yes*	Yes	NA	Yes
Motivating educators to <b>take action</b> though work with families and community	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	NA	Yes
<b>YOUTH</b>					
<b>Generate awareness</b> on equal rights of girls and boys	Yes	No	NA	Yes	NA
<b>Gain understanding of structural violence</b>	Yes	No	NA	Yes	NA
To provide a <b>space for</b> discussing issues of gender inequality	Yes	No	NA	Yes	NA
<b>Motivate young</b> people to raise their voice against discrimination and take action in their community	Yes	Yes	NA	Yes	NA

\* To a limited extent

WISCOMP was able to keep into focus the objectives of the trainings with youth and educators as laid out in the proposal to a large extent. The only exception were workshop sessions at the school in Kashmir with the youth and the teachers where the focus on gender issues was not very sharp and an additional civil society interaction was organised to bring together various stakeholders to foreground these issues. During these workshop sessions at Kashmir, the film could not be screened and instead Malala's story was used to trigger discussion on the interlinkages between education, aspirations and agency. At the teachers' workshop the issue of girls' education was tangential. The focus remained on the gender neutral issue of management of emotions using the example of anger.<sup>21</sup>

WISCOMP had envisioned that the pool of workshop resource persons/facilitators will be education policy experts, women's rights activists, dialogue facilitators and media persons. The intent was to include resource persons not only from Delhi-NCR, but also from different parts of India so that there is cross-fertilization of best practices and lessons learned from diverse experiences across the country. The workshops benefited from the participation of eminent educators from Kashmir, in-house WISCOMP education policy experts and in-house senior educators at Manav Rachna International University. The participants interacted with senior experts from the fields as diverse as sociology, psychology, education, NGO community, performing arts, government and management of educational institutions during the workshops.

Through the project WISCOMP reached out **directly to over 530 educators, school and college students and civil society actors within a short span of five months (April–August)**. Given that 400 of these total participants were educators and other NGO actors, it can be estimated that the key message could impact about 40,000 young people indirectly in the National Capital Region, Jammu and Kashmir and several other parts of India. These indirect beneficiaries will be the young people who are taught by the educators and come in contact with other civil society actors who have attended the WISCOMP capacity building workshops organized under the project. Since over 400 educators and community leaders attended the workshops even if the change in their beliefs and behavior impacts 100 young people, the effect will be felt by 1000s of students. In India, on average one middle/high school teacher teaches about 150 students in one year. If one were to see a long term impact on even 25% of the workshop participants and they changed their classroom practice, over a ten-year period, the impact on young people could be enormous. The following section provides a more detailed analysis of the impact WISCOMP has created.

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<sup>21</sup> It is important to note here that the detailed workshop report talks about the differential anger sensitivity scores of male and female teachers. The facilitator observed that the male teachers showed high levels of repressed anger and even the female teachers had very high levels of anger in comparison to teachers in other parts of the country. This learning has substantial implications for future capacity building work with educators in Kashmir. See Diksha Poddar, *Parwaaz: Inner Spaces, Outer Expressions*, WISCOMP: New Delhi, 2016.

# Project Impact

An abiding concern for those seeking to bring about change in the beliefs and attitudes of people through community based interventions is the complexity of attribution of benefits and quantification of impacts. Measuring the impact that is created by the capacity building workshops on the beliefs of the educators in the absence of any opportunity for embedded observation or long term monitoring of practices and behaviour is difficult. And when there is an opportunity of observation and change is witnessed in behaviour, it is difficult to attribute change to the specific effects of the training. However, a modest attempt is made here to capture the impact created by the project in the following pages, using self-reported change by the participants at the conclusion of the workshops. Given the short time frame and limited resources this was the best available option.

The results of the project have been analysed along the following terms – involvement of multiple stakeholders; improvements in understanding on gender issues of the stakeholders and the beneficiaries; changes in commitment towards gender equality and continued learning; and lastly, production of locally produced training material that resonates for the target population.

## ***Youth***

The idea that gender identity is a social construct is widely acknowledged. Literature in sociology and social cognitive theory identifies belief in one’s own ability as a key mechanism for personal agency, and shows that this belief is highly correlated with educational aspirations and subsequent occupational choices. Interventions affecting these beliefs can influence long-term behavior. Gender disparities in beliefs about personal agency and social role, in turn, are important factors behind the differences in male and female aspirations, especially in leadership. The same literature also suggests that role models can challenge prevalent stereotypes and help reduce this gap.<sup>22</sup>

Exposure to female leaders improves perceptions about female abilities and weakens gender stereotypes about roles and norms among both boys and girls, men and women. Female role models also significantly increase adolescent girls’ aspirations for their own education and careers. In fact, gender gap in educational attainment decreases in communities with more exposure to female leaders, and girls in these communities perform fewer household/domestic chores<sup>23</sup>, which is a clear break from stereotypical gender roles. Women in leadership positions therefore have the potential to pave the way for long-term change.<sup>24</sup> The film *He Named Me Malala* and Malala Yousufzai’s exemplary story were used during the project, for this purpose.

WISCOMP believes that interventions with young children that seek to transform attitudes on gender equality can use schools as important sites for change as they bring together family and community for a common goal – the welfare of children. The effect created in the school and in the classroom

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<sup>22</sup> See, Beaman, Lori, et al, Female Leadership Raises Aspirations and Educational Attainment for Girls: A Policy Experiment in India, *Science* 335(6068), 582–86, 2012.

<sup>23</sup> See, two studies undertaken in India: Beaman, Lori, et al, Female Leadership Raises Aspirations and Educational Attainment for Girls: A Policy Experiment in India, *Science* 335(6068), 582–86, 2012. Abdul L. Jameel, *Raising Female Leaders*. Policy Brief. Cambridge, Mass.: Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, 2012.

<sup>24</sup> See, Gene B. Sperling and Rebecca Winthrop. *What Works in Girls’ Education: Evidence for the World’s Best Investment*. Brookings Institution: Washington D.C., 2016, p. 259.

can go a long way in changing girls' aspirations for higher education and ultimately actual attainment of economic independence and equality. Since the parent and child attitudes are strongly positively correlated (with mothers having greater influence), targeted interventions at the school level can change preferences of prospective mothers and over the course of a few generations lead to a gender equitable society.

'At all ages boys are more rigidly gender typed than girls. They engage almost exclusively in activities that are considered to be either masculine or gender neutral, while girls fairly often engage in activities stereotyped for boys. This is reflective of male avoidance of feminine stereotyped activities and not just from their preference for masculine-stereotyped ones.'<sup>25</sup> Taking a cue from this theorization on social identity it was expected that boys will display more gender typed responses since they belong to the higher status group. They face greater pressure to conform to group boundaries. They were therefore also expected to have more **rigid** gender stereotypes. Conversely, it was expected that girls who wish to increase their status would identify themselves with masculine traits and would be more expressive about breaking stereotypes.

Youth perceptions on gender identity in the NCR area and in Kashmir were largely conformist and most of the male participants had high masculinity and females had high femininity scores. About 32% participants were willing to identify themselves with traits that are labelled androgynous in Bem's inventory. This is indicative of their willingness to break stereotypes. An interesting finding was that girls in Kashmir were more conformist than boys in Kashmir or girls in Delhi. This could be attributed to the Kashmir conflict. Due to the long years of conflict there is a great deal of pressure on females to conform to gender roles. As was expected 40 per cent girls from the university in Faridabad were willing to break gender stereotypes and identified themselves with androgynous traits. The male participants at the Faridabad workshop (who belong to a region with very high levels of gender based violence) displayed strongly masculine traits, only 12% of them could identify with androgynous traits.

There is no inherent or ideal limit on the capacity for gender sensitivity or willingness to break stereotypes –it is both a process and a goal, therefore comparison were made over time of the beliefs of the same group of individuals. It was found that post the workshop, many participants reported that their views on gender roles were shaken. About 15 per cent of the participants spoke of how their beliefs about the roles of women and men changed. An overwhelming 82 per cent were inspired by the courage and leadership provided by Malala as depicted in the film. The film was able to inspire female participants to challenge discrimination and fight for their rights within their immediate environment. Post the screening of the film the participants shared that they were deeply moved by the courage and conviction of Malala Yousufzai and that she was an exceptional orator and an inspiring individual. Many also noted the important role played by Malala's father in her life and the significance of men joining hands with women to create a more equitable society.

Although, the data collected during the project demonstrated that both boys and girls largely identified themselves with gender stereotypical traits. Interestingly, the girls from the university group who were in some senses already breaking stereotypes by seeking Masters' level education in a largely conservative context were willing to perform more masculine roles. They were also assertive during the workshop when females were stereotyped as being incapable of 'true friendship'. However, the

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<sup>25</sup> See, Campbell Leaper, Gender Development, In How Child Develop (Third Edition), Robert Siegler at al (eds.), Worth Publishers: USA, 2011, 583-622.

girls did not talk about sexual harassment in the course of the discussion. It was a male participant who brought up this issue.

In an article in *The Guardian* in March 2013<sup>26</sup>, the author told the story of a girl in Delhi who was being taunted by boys on the way to school. She was afraid to tell her parents, for she thought that they would prevent her from attending school, if she did. Such stories are not isolated incidents, rather, this is an endemic and very gendered problem in economically disadvantaged India. It was therefore not surprising that girls at MRIU workshop were not open to sharing the sexual harassment they faced in public places or on the campus.

The impact of the three workshops with youth on their gender beliefs was modest but positive. An important learning from the workshops was that in the film *He Named Me Malala* can be used not only to ignite discussion on gender but also interfaith dialogue among young people from diverse faith traditions.

### ***Educators***

Concern for gender equality in the educational spaces and the role of educators in promoting gender justice is a long term one. In order to implement positive changes either in the classroom, the institutional space or in the community, the first step has to be an acknowledgement of the complexity of the issues and understand and analyse relevant evidence. There is a need to dissect the ways in which inequalities are produced and reproduced in the educational spaces (schools/colleges/universities) and make an attempt to address these. Ultimately, change would require support from management at the educational institutions as well as at the state policy level. However, success at the individual classroom level or institutional level cannot be discounted. Educators who play an important part in determining the quality of teaching-learning process can be instrumental in catalysing such change.<sup>27</sup>

During the project, engagement with the educators was based on the assumption that once they are motivated to mainstream gender into the teaching process; provided knowledge on the use of gender sensitive materials and convinced of the need to equip students with critical thinking skills, their actions in the classroom will effect student beliefs and attitudes about gender roles positively. Girls and boys will be more sensitive to gender prejudices, the discrimination girls and women encounter, and the connections between social practices and gender based violence, among others. Since gender behavior is deeply engrained among individuals, it was assumed that discriminatory practices cannot be prevented with disciplinary measures by the teachers and management. Such measures can only make a superficial impact. It is when teachers reflect on their own gendered behavior and help the students to reflect on their behavior through classroom discussions that gender inequality issues can be transformed through education.

Even if it were to be assumed that changes that teacher make in their behaviour may not lead to a dramatic impact on the gendered interaction that takes place in the classroom, it could still provide an opportunity to draw the attention of the youth to the issues which often go unchallenged. They can also encourage youth who are making an attempt to battle discrimination and unfair norms at the peer or familial levels. These changes can lead to individuals challenging unfair practices.

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<sup>26</sup> *Op.cit.*

<sup>27</sup> See, Hilary Claire, ed., *Gender in Education-3-19: A Fresh Approach*, Association of Teachers and Lecturers, UK: 2004.

Another important indicator of success in changing minds can come from gauging if teachers are sensitive to significant changes in society and adjust pedagogy and classroom interaction, accordingly. In order to measure the current beliefs of the participating educators at the workshops, WISCOMP used a questionnaire for the teachers that asked them about their opinions on a set of statements using Likert scale (Strongly agree-Strongly disagree) to measure the following:

1. Their beliefs about the inherent differences between boys and girls
2. Their beliefs about the social role of men and women.
3. Their beliefs about role of teachers in promoting gender equality.
4. Their beliefs about strength of existing teacher training programs on promoting gender equality.
5. Their self-assessment of promoting gender equity through teaching practice.

WISCOMP expected differences among the women educators and male educators about gender equality issues since most women experience gender discrimination more strongly/frequently. It was expected that females will hold stronger views on equality and they will be more open to promoting equality through education. Given that educators in the NCR region get more opportunities to learn about current gender sensitization policies it was also expected that they will be more sensitive to equality issues in comparison to their peers from Kashmir and Faridabad. Lastly, WISCOMP expected that the teachers from Bluebells school where an existing gender sensitization program is underway will be more sensitive to the issues of gender discrimination and hold stronger views on the role of educators in promoting gender equality. Teachers' perceptions about gender equality demonstrated that there were significant differences between those who were and those who were not exposed to prior gender sensitization training.

The analysis revealed that place of residence and gender identity of the respondent was strongly correlated with their views on social roles of men and women, beliefs about inherent differences between boys and girls and the views on the ability of existing education programs to promote gender equality. The correlation coefficients are reported in Tables 2-6.

<b>Table 2</b>			
<b>Place of Residence and Overall Views on Teacher Education Program</b>			
		Del MRIU	Overall TE
Del MRIU	Pearson Correlation	1	.243**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	193	193
Overall TE	Pearson Correlation	.243**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	193	193
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

**Table 3**  
**Place of Residence and Views on Role of Education in Promoting Gender equality**

		Del MRIU	Eduprog Equity
Del MRIU	Pearson Correlation	1	.196**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.003
	N	193	190
Eduprog Equity	Pearson Correlation	.196**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.003	
	N	190	190

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

**Table 4**  
**Place of Residence and Male and Female Stereotypes**

		Del MRIU	Avgbias
Del MRIU	Pearson Correlation	1	.387**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	193	191
Avgbias	Pearson Correlation	.387**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	191	191

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

**Table 5**  
**Place of Residence and Belief in Superiority of Men/Boys**

		Del MRIU	Malestren
Del MRIU	Pearson Correlation	1	.288**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	193	191
Malestren	Pearson Correlation	.288**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	191	191

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

<b>Table 6</b>			
<b>Place of Residence and Role of Men and Women in the Family</b>			
		Del MRIU	Social Role
Del MRIU	Pearson Correlation	1	.359**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	193	191
Social Role	Pearson Correlation	.359**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	191	191

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

<b>Table 7</b>			
<b>Views on the Role of Men and Women Within the Family by Sex</b>			
		Social Role	Male/Female
Social Role	Pearson Correlation	1	-.617**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	N	191	115
Male/Female	Pearson Correlation	-.617**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	
	N	115	115#

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).  
 Data on sex of the respondents was missing at one of the workshops as there was an error in printing the questionnaire.

Among the educators, those from the schools (as opposed to university) were more sensitive to issues of gender equality, critical of existing policies and willing to play an active part in promoting equity. Those at the college level, not only refrained from critiquing existing policies but were less motivated to play an active part in promoting gender equity. These findings indicate that if values are not allowed to enter into pedagogy and classroom, ‘managerialism’ sets into teaching. Teachers begin to see themselves as transacting curriculum. The differences in the views of the university level teachers and the teachers at the school level, even within Delhi, is testimony to the fact that school teachers see themselves as *building values* of young people. Once the belief in the role of schools in value building is taken into consideration, individuals then assess if they are capable or not of effecting positive change. At the university level, educators did not see themselves as performing any role in building values. The implication of this finding on future work to promote equity is enormous. Capacity building needs to be customized to the educational level where intervention will be implemented - school and the university level.

It is interesting to note that at the workshop held at the school in Delhi where a long term ‘whole-school immersion’ program on gender sensitivity is underway, two of the participants refused to share their gender. Their responses were: “we should be known as individuals rather than male/

female. It doesn't matter" (sic) and "does not matter" (sic). One of the two participants also stressed that he/she 'strongly disagrees' with the statement 'women's place is at home' by marking the same box several times to emphasize her disagreement.

<b>Table 8</b> <b>Perception about one's own Gender Neutrality in Teaching Practice and Beliefs about Men and Women's Role in the Family</b>			
		Social Role	Self Assess
Social Role	Pearson Correlation	1	.135
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.062
	N	191	190
Self Assess	Pearson Correlation	.135	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.062	
	N	190	192

However, it was observed that there was no correlation between how the educators assessed themselves as promoters of gender equality and what they saw as 'social role' of men and women. Perhaps this was an indication that most teachers see a limited role for themselves in affecting the social reality within the family. This could be due to a perception of impenetrability of beliefs about women's position within the family and the perception that a teacher's role is limited to bringing about transformation in the public space and not in the 'home'. Future interventions should explore how teachers can be convinced of the indirect effects of their actions on the 'private' space. Most of the teachers during the workshops talked about change in the school and personal life not families that are connected to be school space, more broadly.

There were some exceptions to this at the workshop organized at Bluebells School International. One of the participating educators poignantly said, 'Malala's story reminds us of the vital role that parents, especially fathers, can play in helping their daughters to realize their full potential and use their agency to affect social change'. The discussion at the workshop revolved around women's everyday experiences of violence, their resistances, the victories and the challenges that still remain in the path of gender justice. Many educators in the audience also commented on the portrayal of Malala's mother in the film, noting that detailed attention was not paid by the film maker to her persona or her relationship with Malala. One of the educator observed that an important take away for her from the film was to think of 'what she was doing to change conditions around her. As she put it, 'what are we doing beyond expressing our sympathy for those girls who are denied their rights'.

The educators from all three locations- Delhi, Faridabad and Kashmir demonstrated high awareness about stereotypes on 'inherent abilities' of boys and girls. The educators were also more strongly in favour of a stereotype about women if it was a positive one – like women being neat (55%). It is important to note that this was mirrored by youth, who held similar views. They often arrived at a consensus during the workshop when the stereotype was a positive one; of women being caring and adept at multitasking. 87 per cent of the educators strongly disagreed that a women's place is in the home but on the statement 'men should be heads of household' only 54 % disagreed. Almost 42 percent agreed or expressed neutrality demonstrating that male dominance within the home is not

Table 9 Perception about one's own Gender Neutrality in Teaching Practice and Beliefs about Teacher's Role in Promoting Gender Equality			
		Self Assess	Teacher Role
Self Assess	Pearson Correlation	1	.519**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	192	192
Teacher Role	Pearson Correlation	.519**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	192	193
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

challenged by even a group of educators who hold very strong views about providing women opportunities outside the home.

There was strong and significant correlation between the teachers' own positive/negative self-assessment about gender neutral practice in the classroom and their views on the role of teachers in promoting gender equality. This indicated that increased awareness does motivate educators to take up more proactive role in promoting equality.

Through this pilot project, WISCOMP sought to move beyond merely *gender sensitivity* towards awareness and self-reflection that impacts curriculum, pedagogy and ethos of the educational spaces in transformative ways. This implies that awareness of gender inequality and knowledge about change gets reflected in the actual experiences of girls and women in tangible ways. The significance of how and to what extent the workshop curriculum stimulated critical reflection and made an impact on the attitude of the educators and young people can be gleaned from some of the comments made during the workshops and provided in the written feedback to WISCOMP. (See Annexure G for one of the feedback received) Some of these statements and responses by educators are shared in the following section.

*'I would like to practice, in my classroom, one thing that I learnt here, which is to give more space to learners' experience and learn from them; make them active beings in the learning environment.'*

Another stated, *"The workshop left me overwhelmed. [It was] a huge (sic) learning experience. The space in a classroom must be truly democratic, not threatening but encouraging. Teaching must be a process and a teacher must perceive her/his role as a facilitator not a dictator. Diversities must be used positively. No gender or class bias must exist. Finally, we must look horizontally and not [just] vertically [when building linkages] – to see how much we can give."*

One of the participating educator stated that the assertion: "male are strong and female are weak" is incomplete and did not wish to respond to it.

In response to one of the statements on the questionnaire: "I use gender equitable language in my lessons" one of the participants responded that she 'agrees' with the statement but added that she tries – "I try!" This is indicative of the depth of self reflection the trainings were able to catalyse among the participants.

In their post workshop feedback, an overwhelming majority of the participants (over 95%) expressed that the workshop either completely fulfilled their expectations or exceeded the expectations they came with. Many shared that they not only learnt new ideas but also learnt to question pre-conceived beliefs about education, gender sensitivity, diversity, conflict, safety, rights, peace education, role of educators and, about Islam.

*“Coming into contact, closely interacting with and literally hanging out with all the different people from Peshawar, Jammu and Kashmir, Calcutta, Bombay... It was an eye-opener in many ways. The session with the educator from Pakistan was very interesting, and the final group discussion brought all of us into an intimate area where our concerns as teachers could be [discussed and] debated.”*

# Key Achievements of the Project

- Enhanced knowledge of participating youth on how gender stereotypes are perpetuated and their impact on opportunities for girls and women.
- Motivated participating youth to play a more proactive role in addressing gender inequality in their personal lives.
- Provided inspiration to participants in an area affected by conflict to face adversity with courage and perseverance and move from the language of ‘despair and victimhood to agency’.
- Improved understanding of participating educators and other stakeholder on the problem of gender inequality in educational spaces, gender discrimination and the links between gender role perceptions and gender based violence.
- Improved awareness of participating educators about best practices on remedying gender inequality in India, especially for girls from the socio-economically marginalized groups.
- Created space for arriving at a common vocabulary on educating for peace between educators drawn from diverse ‘security contexts’.
- At inter-personal and institutional levels it ignited dialogue among educators on seemingly ‘taboo’ issues like female sexuality and LGBT rights.
- An unintended outcome of the film screening and discussion was its ability to open dialogic space on gender issues between Indian and Pakistani educators at a time when the broader nationalist environment in the two countries is largely hostile to dialogue.
- The project has led to institutionalization of gender sensitivity training for Masters’ level students at a partner institution as part of a University Leadership Program. Another partner school is designing gender sensitivity training for support staff of the school.
- The Project outputs in the form of a short video, workshop reports and assessment report are the sustainable advocacy tools on girls’ educational rights that can be used on web-based platforms.

# Lessons Learnt and Challenges

The response to the film, *He Named Me Malala* was very diverse. The students at Manav Rachna International University were deeply inspired by the life and actions of Malala but at the same time expressed that the context in which she was placed was very different from their own. They believed that economic development and peace in the immediate environment positioned them in a qualitatively different environment. However, female participants observed that, like Malala, they were supported by their families in their quest for equality, dignity and justice.

At Dharamsala, the participants were deeply inspired by Malala Yousafzai and found her to be a shining example of the exemplary courage, empathy, and forgiveness that practitioners of Secular Ethics are called upon to embody. Significantly, the largely Hindu and Buddhist audience found deep inspiration in a young Pakistani Muslim girl which is not only a testimony to the power of the film (and the sensitivity which the filmmakers bring to the narrative), but also provides great hope for the potential of understanding between the world's religions and healing in contexts of violence and despair.

As one of the participating educator at Delhi stated, *He Named Me Malala* gave one message and that is “*the strength of listening to your inner self and making choices. Having dreams and being extra ordinary, yet being humble.*”

One of the responsibilities of an organization that is engaging with a community in an area of protracted conflict is to ensure that the work it is doing does not place the participants in harms' way. In such a situation hard won gains can be lost and situation can evolve in a manner that it worsens rather than improves conditions. Having the flexibility to change the design and content to ensure that the intervention does not impact the community negatively were built into WISCOMP project implementation process. When taking the film to Kashmir WISCOMP was very sensitive to the local circumstances and the broader conflict context.

Contrary to expectations, the film was received very differently in the overwhelming Muslim majority school in Kashmir. A challenge that WISCOMP faced was that the school authorities could not allow the screening of the film as the depiction of the Muslim clergy in the film was considered problematic. The school authorities informally communicated that a foreign made film that talked about life in Pakistan could pose a problem for the school, given the tense atmosphere that prevailed in Kashmir. They were apprehensive that the screening of the film may be misunderstood and misreported in the news. In view of the sensitivities involved, WISCOMP used Malala's story instead of screening the film for the students and organized a separate interaction outside the school premises with educators and civil society. The message of girls' equal right to education in an area of protracted conflict was considered very important by the educators and civil society actors who participated at this interaction. There was overwhelming support for interventions on the themes of girls' equal rights, quality education and women's empowerment. The workshop with the teachers and interaction with the members of civil society that focused on gender equality were received very positively and also responded in the media.

A few weeks after the WISCOMP workshop, one of the schools in Srinagar came under attack because the administration had reprimanded a teacher for wearing the *Abbayah* to school. The parents

and students of the school started an agitation over this issue and the school had to be closed down for several days. When WISCOMP's experience on the screening of the film is read in conjunction with this incident it demonstrates the importance of context sensitivity. It also underlines that future use of the film with a largely Muslim audience in India needs to be undertaken with caution. Whetting the workshop content well before the program is advisable.

Another challenge that the organization encountered and which impacted the quality of interaction between the facilitators and the participants was the physical arrangement of the workshop spaces. WISCOMP was unable to break the hierarchy and convince the institutional partners to arrange a non-hierarchical seating arrangement at two of the workshops in Delhi and Kashmir. WISCOMP was unable to use a seating arrangement that subverted the power dynamic among the participants and between the participants and the facilitators. This impacted the quality of interaction at the workshops. In Dharamsala and at the educators' workshop in Delhi, the workshop space transformed the dynamic and palpable difference was seen in the quality of discussion, the openness and comfort of the participants. These workshops successfully engaged Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists, Kashmir and non-Kashmiri and Indian and Pakistani educators. This reinforces the power of participatory methodologies and the links between spaces that subvert power dynamics and strengthen 'agentive' movements.

# Sustainability

One of the ways in which gender sensitivity trainings can impact organizations is that as the culture and mindset changes, new and better ways of doing things are introduced and new services are developed. In the context of the WISCOMP project an example of this could be seen at the MRIU. After the workshop was conducted with the faculty members and senior management, gender sensitization has been included as a mandatory component of leadership training for all entrants to the management program at the University. This change in the curriculum can be attributed, at least in part, to the impact created by the WISCOMP workshop. It can be assumed that after the exposure at the workshop there was attitudinal change in the faculty and they were more open to the idea proposed by the management that gender sensitization workshops should be mandatory for the students. Some of the gender sensitization work in the form of training and knowledge dissemination processes will be sustained independently by the university after the WISCOMP project has ended.

Similarly, Bluebells School is a long term partner of WISCOMP and has carried out simultaneous gender trainings for the students, staff and parents that were facilitated by WISCOMP staff. The school staff has experimented with different methods of peer learning to take the message of equality beyond the direct participants of the workshops. The school is now planning to include the support staff in the capacity building trainings on gender equality. It will also liaise with theatre practitioners and writers who can mentor students and seeks to take street plays to the neighbourhood community of the school.

The school principal shared at the August workshop that one of the challenges in the whole-school immersion program is the difficulty in assessing the qualitative movement towards desired change. Since the program is process and not outcome driven, this is becoming daunting due to time, capacity and resource constraint at the school level. WISCOMP plans to assist the school in the near future to design an assessment tool so that change can be monitored and progress indicators developed. These are the long term contributions of the pilot project.

The key messages of the project about educational access of girls, gender equity, education as empowerment and educators as change agents will be sustained after the project through the resources WISCOMP has generated. These resources in the form of a short film, reports on the workshops conducted which have been disseminated to the participants and are available online. The assessment will be disseminated to stakeholders in Delhi, Kashmir and other parts of India. WISCOMP will continue to use these resources in its future work with educational institutions.

# Conclusion

The review process has revealed, quite starkly, the need for engaging with educators on the issue of gender equality in diverse settings – from the Muslim majority Budgam District of Kashmir to the urban development hub – Faridabad to the heart of New Delhi. The reasons for taking up gender transformative policy and practice may be different but the subtext is very similar, i.e. the connection between the violence experienced by girls and women and the undervaluing of their role in every sphere – social, economic and political. The assessment also demonstrates that hope lies in direct action by the youth themselves. In men, who are open to changing their views on the role of women in society and in their personal lives and who are willing to adapt to the new development paradigm. In women, who demand that their rights be valued as much as those of men and those of the community.

There is growing consensus among educators on building breadth of skills in children so they become healthy and active members of society. This breadth cannot be achieved only by adding additional content or subjects to the curriculum or adding a new class with its own assessment, but rather requires a different way of teaching the academic subjects already prioritized in a country's curriculum.<sup>28</sup> But this change in learning dynamic inside the classroom from “a banking model” to one where the teachers are co-creators of knowledge with the students requires a rethink on teacher preparation and the kind of support that is provided to them.

WISCOMP is planning to use the learnings from the initial activities as part of *The Medium is the Message* project to design future workshops with youth and educators focusing more on the following:

- Moving from merely awareness of gender stereotypes towards willingness to change behaviour;
- Reflecting on how individual level belief change can be carried not only to students and children but to the parents and elders in the families of young people;
- Share the strategies of schools/organizations that have achieved greater success on increasing girls' aspirational levels

The workshops organized under *The Medium is the Message* project sought to impact skills, attitudes and knowledge of the participating educators. While the impact on skills is immediate, tangible, easier to measure, attitudes that are critical to improving professional standards and knowledge needed for in depth analyses and take longer to get effected and are harder to measure. The project has made some gains on these counts.

The success of the project was not seamless. Several challenges were encountered in bringing the message of equality to the two contexts that experience political and social violence almost every day. The issue of gender equality was confounded by the broader context of violence. There were instances where both men and women cited tradition, custom and even biology as significant barriers to achieving equality. The views were most rigid when the issue of leadership within homes was discussed. However, hope for change was restored in an almost unanimous expression of desire of educators to bring the issue into the classrooms and begin dialogue.

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<sup>28</sup> Rebecca Winthrop, *Accelerating progress in Education with hands-on, minds-on learning*, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2016/07/14/accelerating-progress-in-education-with-hands-on-minds-on-learning/> (Accessed 19 July, 2016).

Taking on board the learnings from this project WISCOMP in its future interventions hopes to work around the challenge of male resistance. An important learning from the project is that the integration of gender concerns into the existing school/university curriculum will depend a great deal on the ability of the designers to work with the cultural beliefs of individual teachers. This may be a longer drawn process but it needs to be accomplished if truly transformative change and not just superficial acceptance of egalitarian values is to be achieved. The success of the film – *He Named me Malala* in generating quality dialogue is a case in point. The film was in a sense able to build bridges of dialogue across several divides of nationality, region, religion as well as gender. The efficacy of multiple mediums to convey the messages of equality and justice has been firmly established by the WISCOMP Project and the broader outcomes fuel enormous optimism.

# Annexure A

## Excerpt from the Report **Breaking the Silence: Issues of Gender Equality in India**

“To gauge the participants’ understanding of the distinction between sex and gender, the facilitators projected a list of statements on the screen. The participants were asked to state whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement and whether the statement was related to the biological differences between women and men or gender differences between them. The statements included the following:

1. Women give birth to babies, men don’t.
2. Little girls are gentle, boys are tough.
3. In one case, when a child brought up as a girl learned that he was actually a boy, his school marks improved dramatically.
4. Amongst Indian agricultural workers, women are paid 40-60 per cent of the male wage.
5. Women can breastfeed babies, men can bottle-feed babies.
6. Most building-site workers in Britain are men.
7. In Ancient Egypt men stayed at home and did weaving, Women handled family business. Women inherited property and men did not.
8. Men’s voices break at puberty, Women’s do not.
9. In one study of 224 cultures, there were 5 in which men did all the cooking, and 36 in which women did all the house building.
10. According to UN statistics, women do 67 per cent of the world’s work, yet their earnings account for only 10 per cent of the world’s income.
11. Women do homework because men can’t.
12. Men are capable of managing affairs of the outside world, women are not.

The participants were able to separate the statements that were related to biological differences between women and men and those related to sociology of gender quite clearly. However, on statements 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10 which were related to gender role perceptions and gender discriminations, few participants displayed accurate information. There were three or four notable exceptions in the group who displayed understanding of how gender identity is reinforced socially and the strategies women and men use to negotiate around the expectations of the family and community.”

# Annexure B

## Questionnaire for Educators

Please read each statement and mark a check (✓) in the most appropriate box:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Boys can handle pressure situations better than girls					
2. Male are strong and female are weak					
3. Male students generally do better in mathematics than female students					
4. Boys generally possess more scientific skills than girls					
5. Females are better in reading than their male counterpart					
6. Boys are naturally better at most sports					
7. Boys are more active and outspoken than girls					
8. Girls are well dress and neat than boys					
9. Men should be the head of the family					
10. Women's place is at home					

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Teachers should encourage male and female students to carry out the same activities					
2. Teachers should devote more time to encouraging girls than boys					
3. Girls/women should be encouraged to enter traditionally male jobs such as engineering, medicine or architecture					
4. There should be concerted efforts to raise students with a non-sexist orientation, at home and in universities					
5. Teachers should be involved in shaping their students' perceptions about gender roles					
6. Teachers should discourage students from acting out gender-stereotyped roles					
7. Boys and girls should be given equal opportunity and not treated differently					
8. I use gender equitable language in my lessons					
9. I obtain and use instructional materials which are gender neutral in my lessons					
10. I try to discourage gender stereotyped behavior in my classes					
11. My classroom practices encourage students to respect other gender					
12. Every student needs to learn about gender issues					
13. Awareness about the gender-stereotyped issues should be incorporated into all university subjects					
14. Schools and government are not doing enough at the moment to create awareness about gender issues in school					

# Annexure C

## Bem's Sex Role Inventory

Attribute	Never	Rarely	Neutral	Often	Always
1. Self-reliant					
2. Yielding					
3. Helpful					
4. Defend own beliefs					
5. Cheerful					
6. Moody					
7. Independent					
8. Shy					
9. Conscientious					
10. Athletic					
11. Affectionate					
12. Theatrical					
13. Assertive					
14. Flatterable					
15. Happy					
16. Strong personality					
17. Loyal					
18. Unpredictable					
19. Forceful					
20. Feminine					
21. Reliable					
22. Analytical					
23. Sympathetic					
24. Jealous					
25. Leadership ability					
26. Sensitive to other's needs					
27. Truthful					
28. Willing to take risks					
29. Understanding					

Attribute	Never	Rarely	Neutral	Often	Always
30. Secretive					
31. Makes decisions easily					
32. Compassionate					
33. Sincere					
34. Self-sufficient					
35. Eager to soothe the hurt					
36. Conceited					
37. Dominant					
38. Soft spoken					
39. Likeable					
40. Masculine					
41. Warm					
42. Solemn					
43. Willing to take up a stand					
44. Tender					
45. Friendly					
46. Aggressive					
47. Gullible					
48. Inefficient					
49. Acts like a leader					
50. Childlike					
51. Adaptable					
52. Individualistic					
53. Does not use harsh language					
54. Unsystematic					
55. Competitive					
56. Loves children					
57. Tactful					
58. Ambitious					
59. Gentle					
60. Conventional					

Are you Male / Female?

# Annexure D

## WORKSHOP FEEDBACK FORM

Dear Participant,

Please take a few minutes to fill this form as it is an important tool for receiving feedback and for designing future WISCOMP workshops. Thank you!

**1. What were your expectations from this workshop?**

**2. Did the workshop meet your expectations?**

**(Put a tick mark against the statement that best describes your feelings and *briefly explain*)**

Please Explain Briefly
Yes, it did completely
Yes, it did to some extent
No, it did not

**3. What was your most useful learning at this workshop? Please be specific.**

**4. Please describe concretely how you plan on applying learnings from this workshop to your own classroom/ professional practice. If you feel the workshop content resonated with you and you have some concrete example, describe it.**

**5. Which session/s at the workshop did you like? Briefly explain why.**

**6. What is your take away from the film *He Named Me Malala*?**

**7. Did you feel the workshop was interactive and everyone had an opportunity to speak/participate?**

**8. What were the limitations of the workshop?**

**9. What other themes do you suggest for future workshops?**

**Female/Male:**

**What best describes you professionally (tick one) :**

- a. School teacher**
- b. NGO professional**
- c. Teacher Educator**
- d. Other .....(please write)**

**Your Name (optional):**

# Annexure E

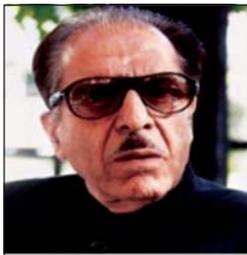
## Press Coverage of the Workshop at Budgam, Kashmir

Wednesday, 18 May, 1.16 pm



<http://m.dailyhunt.in/news/india/english/greater-kashmir-epaper-greaterkashmir/present-education-system-irrelevant-prof-soz-newsid-53359094>

Present education system irrelevant: Prof Soz



Senior Congress leader Prof Saif uddin Soz on Tuesday said the present day education system has no relevance with the society and was promoting large scale unemployment in JK state.

Soz was speaking during an interaction session organized by WISCOMP– a non government organisation in collaboration with Delhi Public School Budgam, at KSERT college of education, Humhama.

“Our education system is not relevant to the society. It is prompting unemployment which is growing enormous,” Prof Soz said, adding that the education system sans the job oriented courses in state. “We don’t have a job oriented system of education except a few subjects in science stream, Arts and other subjects don’t provide employment opportunities to educated youth. Schools and colleges must teach such subjects which are socially relevant.”

He however said despite being strife torn, youth in valley are bringing excellence by making to the civil services. “Our seven aspirants from valley got selected qualified the IAS 2015 examination which is an achievement for the whole state,” he said.

The senior Congress leader also expressed concern over the less number of working days being available for the schools to function and impart education to children. “Our schools get only 90 working days which is a serious concern for us.”

During the interaction session organized by Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace. (WISCOMP) focused was given on the women empowerment in strife torn valley wherein women have been the worst sufferers.

“Children and women suffered most in strife and Kashmir Society has not be able to reach to women who suffered,” Prof. Soz in his address said. Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath Principal, Lady Sri Ram College, Delhi who was the chief guest on the occasion said the voice of people particularly women need to be heard to address their issues. “Kashmiris are not being heard. They need space in higher platforms and which can be done by students who are the educated lot here,” said Dr Meenakshi who is also the founder director of WISCOMP.

She however expressed concern over what she termed as labelling students as stone pelters.

“But students now are called as stone pelters here. Young people are finding ways to get heard and we as society have to make their voice constructive,” Dr Meenakshi said.

She said there is a discrimination wherein a particular section which is being treated as a reflection of the society. “There are the two realities of valley. one is voting, even by women who chose their representatives and another reality of Kashmir is a teenager with a Stone in his hand. Alienation is there which cant be ruled out.”

She said the Women and children are worst sufferers of the conlfit who however have the heighest stake in institution building. Expressing concern over the current scenario in schools she said the classroom were not reflecting the society. “Our focus should be how teachers should teach in classes in order to make it relevant to the society. With this every young person will becomes a life long learner.”

Dr Meenakshi also reacted to the statement of Prof Soz saying that educated youth should not wait for the government to offer them government jobs however should become self dependent and must have entrepreneurship skills in them. Prof. Neerja Mattoo, who presided the function, said that all that can be done for women would amount to great service to humanity.

Later a Power Point presentation was made by Seema Kakran of WISCOMP group to showcase their contribution towards women empowerment and in education sector of JK state. Vice Chairperson DPS Budgam Mumtazunnisa Soz was also present at the occasion.

At the end Principal of DPS Budgam Mehfooz Aslam presented vote of thanks.

<http://www.nyoooz.com/kashmir/468499/dr-meenakshi-interacts-with—students>

### **Dr Meenakshi interacts with students**

- **Greater Kashmir**
- **Kashmir**
- **Tue,17 May 2016**

Summary: Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath told the students that they had to shoulder the responsibility of the leadership in various social spheres in future and it was time for them to devote their time properly to develop the qualities of leadership in them.

One of the most prominent educationists of India, Dr Meenakshi Gopinath (Principal Lady Sri Ram College New Delhi) and Founder Director WISCOMP (Women in Security Conflict Management



and Peace) held an interactive session with the senior students and teaching faculty of DPS, Budgam, organizers said in a statement. They said, Dr Meenakshi was accompanied by a team of experts including Seema Kakran, Priti Dhawan, Shreya Jani and Diksha Podder. Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath told the students that they had to shoulder the responsibility of the leadership in various social spheres in future and it was time for them to devote their time properly to develop the qualities of leadership in them.

<http://www.risingkashmir.com/news/meenakshi-interacts-with-dps-students-faculty>

Principal LSR College interacts with DPS Budgam students  
Published at May 17, 2016 02:47:55 0Comment(s) 58 views



Rising Kashmir News

### **Srinagar:**

One of the most prominent educationists of India, Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath (Principal Lady Sri Ram College New Delhi) and Founder Director WISCOMP (Women in Security Conflict Management and Peace) today interacted with the senior students of DPS, Budgam.

According to a press statement issued here by school authorities, Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath also had interactive session with the faculty of DPS, Budgam. Dr. Gopinath was accompanied by a team of experts including Seema Kakran, Priti Dhawan, Shreya Jani and Diksha Podder. Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath told the students that they had to shoulder the responsibility of the leadership in various social spheres in future and it was time for them to devote their time properly to develop the qualities of leadership in them.

She said that this could be done by learning the prescribed courses well and simultaneously having a look on what they could do for the society around them.

Dr. Gopinath emphasized that proper development of a personality could take place only when the learners understand the needs of the society and build the faculty in themselves to respond properly, now and later.

She urged the school administration and the students to ensure that every girl child in the neighbourhood got into the school. It was an interesting session and students raised interesting questions which Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath answered to their satisfaction. Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath had also separately, a very absorbing interactive session with the faculty of the DPS. She explained how the cause of education could be best served when teachers took imparting of knowledge as a

mission in their life. She told the faculty further that they would succeed in their profession only when they were sensitive to know how best they can build a purposeful communication and understanding with the students. She explained further that no amount of money could give them as much joy as the understanding and communication with the students. She told the faculty categorically that they could command respect from the students only when they succeed in winning their hearts and minds. Vice Chairperson, Mumtazunnisa Soz, Mehfooz Aslam, Principal DPS and Shobhna Sirohi, Headmistress, Mudasir Mir, General Manager thanked Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath and her team for the interesting and purposeful interactive sessions with the students and the faculty of DPS, Budgam.



First online News Agency  
of *Jammu & Kashmir*

## The Kashmir magazine

WISCOMP holds function in DPS Budgam  
Prof. Soz speaks on the occasion



Srinagar, May 17 (KNS): Women in Security, Conflict, Management and Peace, (WISCOMP) in collaboration with DPS Budgam, organized an impressive event at the KSERT College Complex, Humahama, today.

While Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath, founder Director WISCOMP was the Chief Guest, Prof. Neerja Mattoo presided over the function. Prof. Saifuddin Soz was invited by WISCOMP to speak on the occasion.

Dr. Meenakshi made her commitment clear that, apart from her concern for protection of human rights in Kashmir, she and her colleagues in the WISCOMP, would see how best this organization could serve the womanhood in Kashmir.

Dr. Meenakshi said that she had taken notice of Prof. Soz's agenda for a credible survey on what went wrong with women in Kashmir during the recent years and how best relief and reparations could be organized in a systematic manner.

Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath agreed with Prof Soz that the Civil Society outside the J&K State did not do what it could do for Kashmiris, particularly for women. She also elaborated that the civil society in Kashmir must concentrate its attention primarily on Education as it is only Education that is an effective instrument of Social Change.

Prof. Neerja Mattoo, who presided the function, said that all that can be done for women would amount to great service to humanity. Prof. Neerja assured Dr. Meenakshi that colleagues from Kashmir associated with the WISCOMP, would work resolutely with her for realizing the objectives of WISCOMP.

Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath thanked Mrs. Mumtazunnisa Soz, Vice Chairperson, DPS Budgam, Mehfooz Aslam Principal, DPS Budgam, Bushan Lal Kher, Principal KSERT College, Humhama, Mrs. Shobna Sirohi, Headmistress DPS Budgam and all others who were also present in the function.

Earlier, in his initial remarks Prof. Saifuddin Soz explained certain features of life in Kashmir. He (Prof. Soz) also presented his own perception on what agenda WISCOMP should follow in Kashmir. On this occasion, Prof. Soz sought help from Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath to help through her advice as to how to make education in this state socially relevant and job oriented. Prof. Soz said that as of now, our system of education swelled ranks of the unemployed and it was a dangerous trend.

Prof. Soz thanked Dr. Meenakshi for her sustained interest for promotion of cordial relations between India and Pakistan. He said further that he knew it personally that Dr. Meenakshi was one of the founders of Neemrana initiative to bring India and Pakistan together.

Prof. Soz shared the feeling with the audience that Dr. Meenakshi was like him an incorrigible optimist for friendship between India and Pakistan and both of us hope that one day, India and Pakistan will be together for everlasting friendship and peace.

Mehfooz Aslam, Principal DPS, Budgam proposed a vote of thanks. Authorized for circulation to be press by Mehfooz Aslam, Principal DPS, Budgam. (KNS)

<http://www.knskashmir.com/news.aspx?news=WISCOMP-holds-function-in-DPS-Budgam-7804>

WISCOMP holds function in DPS Budgam, Prof. Saifuddin Soz speaks on the occasion



**Rouf Pampori**

5 Dariya News

Srinagar, 17 May 2016

Women in Security, Conflict, Management and Peace, (WISCOMP) in collaboration with DPS Budgam, organized an impressive event at the KSERT College Complex, Humahama, today. While

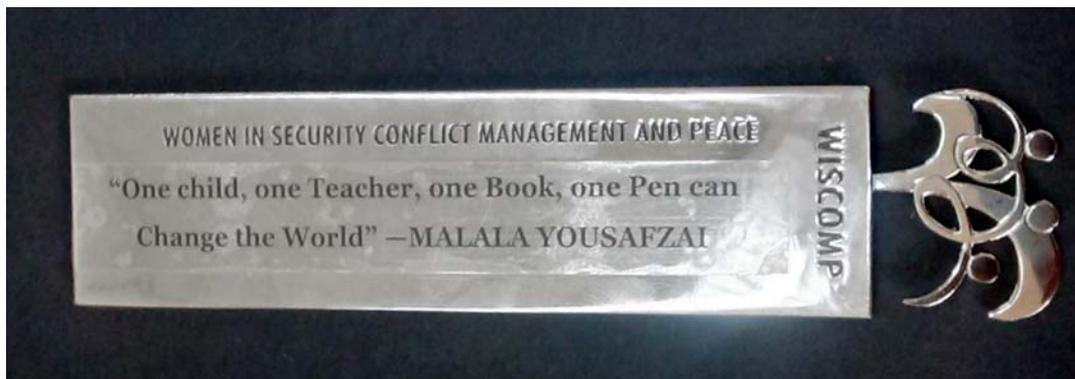
Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath, founder Director WISCOMP was the Chief Guest, Prof. Neerja Mattoo presided over the function. Prof. Saifuddin Soz was invited by WISCOMP to speak on the occasion. Dr. Meenakshi made her commitment clear that, apart from her concern for protection of human rights in Kashmir, she and her colleagues in the WISCOMP, would see how best this organization could serve the womanhood in Kashmir. Dr. Meenakshi said that she had taken notice of Prof. Soz's agenda for a credible survey on what went wrong with women in Kashmir during the recent years and how best relief and reparations could be organized in a systematic manner. Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath agreed with Prof. Soz that the Civil Society outside the J&K State did not do what it could do for Kashmiris, particularly for women. She also elaborated that the civil society in Kashmir must concentrate its attention primarily on Education as it is only Education that is an effective instrument of Social Change. Prof. Neerja Mattoo, who presided the function, said that all that can be done for women would amount to great service to humanity.

Prof. Neerja assured Dr. Meenakshi that colleagues from Kashmir associated with the WISCOMP, would work resolutely with her for realizing the objectives of WISCOMP. Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath thanked Mrs. Mumtazunnisa Soz, Vice Chairperson, DPS Budgam, Mehfooz Aslam Principal, DPS Budgam, Bushan Lal Kher, Principal KSERT College, Humhama, Mrs. Shobna Sirohi, Headmistress DPS Budgam and all others who were also present in the function. Earlier, in his initial remarks Prof. Saifuddin Soz explained certain features of life in Kashmir. He (Prof. Soz) also presented his own perception on what agenda WISCOMP should follow in Kashmir. On this occasion, Prof. Soz sought help from Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath to help through her advice as to how to make education in this state socially relevant and job oriented. Prof. Soz said that as of now, our system of education swelled ranks of the unemployed and it was a dangerous trend. Prof. Soz thanked Dr. Meenakshi for her sustained interest for promotion of cordial relations between India and Pakistan. He said further that he knew it personally that Dr. Meenakshi was one of the founders of Neemrana initiative to bring India and Pakistan together. Prof. Soz shared the feeling with the audience that Dr. Meenakshi was like him an incorrigible optimist for friendship between India and Pakistan and both of us hope that one day, India and Pakistan will be together for everlasting friendship and peace. Mehfooz Aslam, Principal DPS, Budgam proposed a vote of thanks. Authorized for circulation to be press by Mehfooz Aslam, Principal DPS, Budgam. (KNS)

- See more at: <http://www.5dariyanews.com/news/149720-WISCOMP-holds-function-in-DPS-Budgam-Prof-Saifuddin-Soz-speaks-on-the-occasion#sthash.VUwOMQbu.dpuf>

# Annexure F

## Advocacy Materials



# Annexure G

A Completed Feedback Form from One of the Participating Educators

**Educating for Social Change**  
**A WISCOMP Workshop**  
**August 29-30, 2016**  
*New Delhi*

**FEEDBACK FORM**

Dear Participant,

Please take a few minutes to fill this form as it is an important tool for receiving feedback and for designing future WISCOMP workshops. Thank you!

**1. What were your expectations from this workshop?**

**I was worried this might be a purely academic session, more a conference, than an exchange of ideas and inspirations. It was wonderful interacting with educators around the country doing some interesting, groundbreaking work, in varied contexts, in varied capacities.**

**2. Did the workshop meet your expectations?**

**(Put a tick mark against the statement that best describes your feelings and *briefly explain*)**

	Please Explain Briefly
Yes, it did completely	The workshop far surpassed my expectations. Dr Meenakshi's opening key note address, followed by Prof Batra's incredible talk set the ground and the tenor of the workshop. Theory was constantly linked to practice. Most complex questions raised, from gender notions to the aims of education in society today, to the role of teachers, to questions of inclusiveness to the struggles of running schools in places of conflict...it raised many questions, evoked responses, both intellectual and emotional, got us thinking on our own practice, made us listen to different, at times, divergent perspectives, perspectives, which some of us sitting in urban spaces rarely hear, or understand and reinforced the idea that teaching is a complex task, needs to be constantly contextualised, demands constant self-examination and open-mindedness from the teacher, honest space for vulnerability, both of the teacher and learner, is always an intervention in this landscape of social inequity and misplaced hierarchies and ulterior government agendas.

Yes, it did to some extent	
No, it did not	

### 3. What was your most useful learning at this workshop? Please be specific.

Too many to list. I'll share with you things that people said at different points in the workshop, thoughts and responses it evoked in me, and questions that re-surfaced during this workshop for me. I'll list them as pointers, more as points of inquiry in my personal practice.

1. The catastrophe of childhood is that the tragedies are internal. Do we as educators address the mundane, invisible, everyday violence?
2. Can schools be spaces of healing? Can classrooms be spaces of healing? For both the teacher and the student? A place where vulnerability is not just expressed but valued, for both the teacher and the student? As a theatre practitioner and educator, that is a perpetual quest.
3. I personally resonate with what Prof Batra said about pure intellectual engagement not taking us too far as teachers. How it needs to be coupled with inner self, the physical with the spiritual. As a teacher at least, to engage in both these modes, the intellectual and the spiritual, is part of one's daily sadhana.<sup>29</sup> One looks at knowledge very differently then.
4. Before we go into the classroom, it will be healthy to evaluate our own positions in society- have I been othered or been involved in othering...how does this honest self-evaluation and the consequent self-awareness translate in my interactions, negotiations in the classroom?
5. How can we as teachers learn to be open to engaging with multiplicity of ideologies, perspectives and consequently, promote that in the classroom?
6. Education not just meant to create professionals but people.
7. What does it mean when we say we are cultivating citizens for tomorrow? Is it just vertical citizenship? My rights, what I can get from others? How about horizontal citizenship. Duties and obligations towards my immediate community, family. Empathy towards those who differ from me. 'You can't learn citizenship by litigation' Dr Tandon's quote summed it up well.
8. Since all content is downloadable in today's world, what is the role of the teacher? To promote reflection on that reality via that content? To bring an informed, well-thought out perspective
9. I found this too very insightful. Can we create a safe learning environment for both students and teachers to undergo the pain of unlearning? Where is the space for unsocialisation of teachers? Considering we all carry our own prejudices, biases, our conditioning in the classrooms, we run the risk of imposing them? Have we examined them? Are we willing to re-examine them? Are we open to questioning?

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<sup>29</sup> Sanskrit for daily spiritual practice

10. I noticed discussions on gender happening without mention of class and caste. Aren't all these factors connected? An upper-class, upper-caste woman's issues are different from lower-caste woman's issues, who would be on the lowest rung of the hierarchy? We need to be more nuanced when we look at gender in the class and connect it to class, caste
11. The word change often bewilders me, especially in the context of education. What does change mean? How much can you measure? Is change students giving us what we want to see, what we want to hear? Can all of it be measured? Isn't change a messy process? Doesn't it involve at times being torn, slipping back, falling into older patterns, but slowly, moving forward with the constant self-awareness of one's own patterns and need to break them? Doesn't it involve some churning? Is change just like learning non-linear, imperceptible? What happens if change is achieved, not necessarily in a manner as we teachers would like to see? So I appreciated when Suman Kumar fleetingly acknowledged in the context of the gender sensitization workshop in her school that some changes are visible, some may not always be immediately apparent or measurable. One presentation concluded with an image of a student holding a kite as a metaphor for education, it seemed so sanitized and simplistic. Do we really believe that? Isn't that metaphor an indication of a very problematic idea of education?
12. Some words in some presentations made me uncomfortable. I think Anandini picked on those in her session. Moulding students, building a character, giving them values...all noble things but there are certain assumptions inherent in them. That I am the source of all knowledge and I will equip you with knowledge...what about the student's agency? What about their experiences, stories, knowledge, that they bring with them? Shouldn't that also be considered 'legitimate' knowledge? What does building character mean? How much space there is for questioning, critical thinking, disagreement? And the question that was raised by one student-while presenting our success stories, where is the acknowledgment of failure and reflection and learning from it as an institution? Doesn't that journey come with its own learnings and often more insightful? I hope the institution acknowledges the importance of failure in their school spaces too?
13. My group had the reflection paper. I found both the paper and the discussion with her both insightful. The three levels of reflection-and how the dialectical thinking-with its questions on the ethics, morals of the choices we make as teachers is the kind of thinking we need to aspire to. And the model-reflection beginning with a felt difficulty, then looking at it dispassionately and putting it in perspective, then looking for possible solutions from our past repertoire of experiences, then applying, then evaluating its success or failure-at times we do these things, but this kind of put it in a nice theoretical framework for it-and brought awareness as to how we think, reflect-and how we can deepen the process-[other group leader] and I while planning the presentation, were reflecting on our own reflection-and it kind of followed the same pattern
14. Also I can't emphasize the role of arts education enough. Being a drama facilitator, we are dealing with human bodies here as theatre is fundamentally a physical interaction, play of bodies in space. And body has memories, stories. And the drama space becomes a space of individual-expression, spontaneity, overcoming inhibitions, developing self-awareness, observing patterns, looking at multiple perspectives, building trust, sharing one's stories, listening to each other, empathising with another human being by stepping into their psyches and a space where vulnerability is a natural state of being. Where there is no right and wrong.

Only the complexities of being human. Prof Batra spoke about the possibility of schools being healing spaces, and theatre, actually, all art-based interventions most certainly offer that possibility, if by healing we also mean self-expression, self-awareness, being heard...

4. Please describe concretely how you plan on applying learnings from this workshop to your own classroom/ professional practice. If you feel the workshop content resonated with you and you have some concrete example, describe it.

I have answered some of this in the previous question. How it will concretely translate I am still to figure. But I know the thought that will go into my planning will consider all the aforementioned questions.

5. Which session/s at the workshop did you like? Briefly explain why.

Prof Batra's and Dr Gopinath's talk, Dr Tandon's succinct insights, the film I am Malala, the questions, concerns raised by the participants, perspectives brought by fellow educators from Kashmir and Pakistan

6. What is your take away from the film *He Named Me Malala*?

Understanding the context- socio, political, cultural context of the story. As I shared the other day, what is Malala's story about? About competing narratives of Islam. Someone wrote about the current war between ISIS and the west as the clash of civilizations. Isn't the same evident in Malala's struggle too? Malala grew up during the most turbulent period in Pakistan. Also a period which was witnessing gradual radicalization. We need to understand what made her who she was, the forces that shaped her, in whose opposition she found herself...It's almost as if Malala was caught in the collision of these two forces-radical Islam and western imperialism...to understand Malala, one has to examine the history of Pakistan, how the world has changed after 9/11, the idea of 'satanic secular' curriculum versus scriptural curriculum, democracy versus theocracy, position and agency of women in Pashtun culture existing within the larger practice of Islam in Pakistan, one has to look at the price one has to pay when one becomes a symbol at the age of 15-16, of losing your home for good, of living in exile for the rest of your life, of having your personal life being microscopically assessed, of the burden of growing up faster than the others, of being derided by your own countrymen. Also Malala looks at modern education as the panacea of all evils plaguing human society. Is that true? One can understand the context she inhabits and why she feels the importance of that education to get ahead in a globalised world and economy. But is modern education really the panacea? What do we mean by that?

This is the context of Malala's journey. And as educators, we need to look at her story in its complexity, look at alternative narratives, even the criticism that has been leveled at her and then present it to the students, who can develop their own nuanced perspective on Malala

7. Did you feel the workshop was interactive and everyone had an opportunity to speak/participate?

It was very interactive and inclusive. And created a safe space for all opinions to be heard. It was both humbling and inspiring to hear fellow educators from Kashmir and Pakistan speak.

8. What were the limitations of the workshop?

Maybe if it was a three day workshop, things could have been staggered. And more dialogue and discussion could have happened. I felt to facilitate a session of reflection, 8 to 10 mins wouldn't

be enough, even though I couldn't stay till the end. I am sure each of the presentations would have evoked rich ideas and thoughts in the participants. Also thinking, a part of the third day, could have ended in developing a concrete plan, that each one takes with them, a plan which is formulated in conversation with other participants, based on the many things that emerged.

9. What other themes do you suggest for future workshops?

The importance of arts or arts-based interventions in classroom

Inclusive classroom-what does that mean?

Schools/classrooms as democratic spaces-how?

Spirituality and Education- Schools as healing spaces?

Teachers as mediators of content in an information age, where technology is the dominant narrative

Teaching history to understand the contemporary—(look at how partition is taught, the Babri Masjid demolition, the riots, the Mandal Commission report and how current prejudices, opinions manufactured based on a certain reading of these events)

Teaching as a political intervention

Female/Male: Male

What best describes you professionally (tick one) :

- a. School teacher
- b. NGO professional
- c. Teacher Educator
- d. Other ... Theatre practitioner and drama teacher

Your Name (optional):

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