



Gender Training in Delhi

Research report

Amanda Gilbertson, University of Melbourne
Rukmini Sen, Ambedkar University Delhi

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List of research participants

Workshop

Chaitali Halder – Jagori

Deepa – Sama

Meeta Sen – Breakthrough

Nastasia Paul Gera – Sangat South Asian Feminist Network

Purnima Gupta – Nirantar

Purwa Bhadaraj – Nirantar

Rachana Sharma – Partners for Law in Development

Rakhi Sharma – Centre for Social Research

Rituparna Borah – Nazariya

Suhasini Mukherjee – Centre for Social Research

Sunita Banehta – Centre for Social Research

Interviews

Abha Bhैया – Sangat South Asian Feminist Network and TARA (Training and Research Academy)

Gouri Choudhury – Action India

Jayawati Shrivastava – Jagori

Juthika Banejee – Gender Training Institute, Centre for Social Research

Jyotsna Roy – TARA Human Development and Facilitation Consultants and formerly Gender Training Institute, Centre for Social Research

Kamla Bhasin – Sangat

Madhu Mehra – Partners for Law in Development

Madhu Bala – Jagori

Purwa Bhadaraj – Nirantar

Ritambhara - Nazariya

Runu Chakraborty – independent consultant

Satish Kumar Singh – Centre for Health and Social Justice

Shalini Singh – CREA

Sunita Menon – Breakthrough

Sunita Kujur – CREA

Executive Summary

Literature review

History: Gender training emerged in India in the mid-1980s and had strong links with the women's movement. Informal consciousness raising workshops were followed by programs such as the Women's Development Programme of Rajasthan and Mahila Samakhya. These initiatives were influential in international development circles. Frameworks for gender training for development practitioners were developed in the US and UK from the 1980s, which in turn began to influence gender training in India. From the 1990s, the number of new organizations offering gender training in Delhi began to proliferate.

Types of gender training: Several typologies of gender training are based on the degree of transformation involved from the instrumental, technical, project-oriented and one-off, to longer-term initiatives that seek to transform social structures rather than mitigate inequality.

Objectives: These included sensitization, mainstreaming, de-institutionalization of male privilege, conceptual clarity, creating a feminist consciousness, empowerment, strengthening grassroots struggles, and motivating young women to join the women's movement. Some authors highlighted that there are limits to what gender training can achieve and that a broad strategy is required.

Depoliticization: Several authors expressed concerns that gender training was being depoliticised due to the proliferation of instrumental non-transformatory approaches, the commodification of gender training and its transformation into a technical issue separate from feminism and women's struggles.

Engaging men: Around 1990 demands for workshops on gender for/with men began to emerge from different groups including women who had been 'trained' and felt their men needed to be too, activists and development workers who felt that an approach that reached out to only women and girls would have limited impact, and donors and gender trainers who felt that men within various (development) organizations needed greater gender awareness to address gender dynamics within their organizations and in their development policy and planning.

Challenges: Some of the key challenges identified in the literature include the ability to address broader structural challenges, conveying the complexity of gender concepts, the demand for quick one-off events and standardized modules, the need for better evaluation, and dealing with participants' stereotypes about feminists.

Recommendations: Some of the key challenges identified in the literature include: highlight connections between the personal and the political, and use participatory methods that break down hierarchies within the training experience.

Workshop and interviews

Objectives: Most participants described the objective of gender training as involving understanding of some kind – gender, social constructs, discrimination. Some described the objectives as including equality, sensitivity, and building feminist perspectives.

Becoming a gender trainer: Older trainers had come to gender training from diverse professions and had developed their skills through practice, whereas new trainers are increasingly coming from professional degrees such as Women's Studies and Social Work and have the opportunity to

participate in 'Training of Trainers' workshops. Some older trainers associated this shift with young trainers who lack commitment, only want to work 9-5, are unwilling to learn from others on the job, and demand high salaries.

Doing gender training: Participants talked about how methods of gender training had evolved over time through experience, in response to changing issues, and in response to increased gender awareness among the general population. Key changes included the broadening of the audience for gender training and an increasingly intersectional approach.

Participatory training methods: The key dimensions of participatory and feminist training methods discussed by research participants were: no hierarchy between trainers and trainees, encouraging trainees to come to their own conclusions, the use of creative mediums such as theatre and song, and a focus on the personal.

Dealing with resistance: Participants described resistance from trainees, particularly men and people in senior positions. Some felt that change cannot happen without discomfort and antagonism, whereas others felt that it was better to make trainees feel comfortable and avoid argument and conflict.

Duration and standardization of training: One of the most frequently expressed concerns about gender training was the reduction in time that was being spent with each group of trainees. Many participants used the phrase 'capsule courses' to refer to the short, standardized gender trainings that are becoming increasingly popular.

Language: Participants talked about how 'gender' had entered the vocabulary, alternative Hindi terms for gender, and the lack of resources available for translation. The key theme in relation to language, however, was discomfort with the terms 'train' and 'trainer'. Many participants preferred terms like 'workshop', 'consciousness raising', and 'facilitator'.

Connections to the women's movement and activism: Many participants saw their gender training as having emerged from the women's movement and as distinct from the approach to gender training found in international development organizations. Others aligned themselves more with international development and were more cautious about the relationship between gender training and the women's movement/activism. Some suggested that the relationship between activism and gender training had declined, whereas others suggested this relationship was ongoing.

Feminism and patriarchy: Some participants said that funders and donors were increasingly resistant to words like feminism and patriarchy. Most responded by tackling the same concepts using different words. Some talked about a loss of feminism and the challenge of training people who have very misguided ideas about feminism. Some felt that not all those working in gender training had a feminist perspective.

Depoliticization and professionalism: A number of participants made it clear that they saw gender training as political, but a common theme throughout interviews was the professionalization and depoliticization of gender training. Some participants felt that gender training had become a business and suggested that as gender training had become compulsory for many organizations, a tick-box approach was becoming more common.

Engaging men: Many participants noted that men had always been involved in gender training but the specific focus on men and masculinities was new. Reasons given for the increased focus on engaging men included the need for men to take more responsibility for equality, the impossibility of change without men, men and boys feeling threatened by programmes for girls and women, and donor agendas. Some were critical of an instrumental approach to engaging men and argued that patriarchy has negative effects for men too. Some participants spoke about moving beyond gender binaries and including all who are marginalized on the basis of their gender, and some talked about continuing to prioritise work with women.

Evaluation and the limits of gender training: Participants gave behaviour, attitude and perspective changes as examples of evidence that a person has been successfully trained. They emphasised that change is often not evident immediately. Some felt that funders are problematically focused on numbers and immediate change. In talking about the limits of gender training, participants reiterated the need for follow-up and long-term interventions supported by other activities beyond training.

Introduction

Gender training has been a tool for promoting gender equality in Delhi for over 30 years. A growing number of organizations offer such training to an increasingly diverse range of participants – all genders, rural and urban, police officers and other government officials, private sector professionals, college students, marginalized communities, etc. Alongside these developments, training manuals and reports on training programmes have proliferated. However, remarkably little has been written about the history of gender training or the diversity of contemporary practice.

This research project, led by Dr Amanda Gilbertson from the University of Melbourne and Dr Rukmini Sen from Ambedkar University Delhi, sought to understand the history that has shaped the contemporary practice of gender training. Key research questions were:

- Why was gender training conceived as necessary at a certain historical moment?
- What have been the key changes in the approach to gender training in Delhi over time?
- What factors prompted these changes?

This project involved:

- a two-day workshop with gender trainers from a number of different organizations in Delhi;
- interviews with 15 gender trainers; and
- a literature review

During the course of this project it became increasingly apparent that the history of gender training in Delhi (and India) could not be separated from the broader project of women's empowerment. We realised that it might be less the case that the history of gender training had not been written, and more that we had not appreciated when reading the histories of consciousness-raising initiatives such as *mahila sanghas* that these were to some extent the origins of gender training as we know it today. The challenge of this project, then, particularly in relation to the literature review, has been to limit the scope to a manageable focus on gender training, while also remaining sensitive to the extent to which gender training is intertwined with other women's empowerment initiatives.

Gender training can be broadly grouped into two categories – Women in Development (WID) or Gender and Development (GAD) approaches, and grassroots consciousness-raising approaches. While the former aims to bring gender-aware change to development organizations, the latter aims to bring such change to communities. In India, consciousness-raising approaches have their roots in the Indian women's movement – the consciousness raising and feminist study groups that emerged organically as part of the women's movement developed into more formal women's empowerment and feminist training workshops. Saheli, Jagori, Action India and the Mahila Samakhya Programme are central to this history. The Gender and Development approach has its roots in international development organizations. As it was realised that development initiatives often did little to ameliorate gender inequality and in some instances exacerbated it, efforts were made to increase the gender sensitivity of development work by providing gender training to development planners and practitioners. The United Nations' declaration of 1975-1985 as the International Women's decade, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action that resulted from the Fourth World Conference on Women held in September 1995 are central to this history.

Most of the organizations we had interacted with prior to this project were providing training to the community/grassroots/general public as opposed to people working in the planning,

implementation and evaluation of development programmes. We had, as a result, not appreciated the extent to which the story of gender training is a story of Women in Development and Gender and Development. Most of the literature identified through online searching related to gender training for development professionals and it took some time for us to realise the extent to which the boundaries between the two types of gender training – for community and for development workers – are blurred, and the many ways in which their histories intersect. In this project, we discuss training for development workers (primarily in the literature review), but we do not consider the variety of approaches to planning/auditing/evaluating development initiatives that are often included in such trainings.

These interconnected histories in part explain the variety of terms in use today. In this project, 'gender training' is used as an umbrella term to refer to a variety of approaches to promoting knowledge or understanding of gender, usually in a facilitated workshop format. Readers should be aware, however, that a number of participants in this project used different terms for their work – feminist training, for example. In addition, several participants felt uncomfortable with the label 'trainer' and preferred to identify themselves in other ways – for example, as 'facilitators'. The implications of these different terminologies are discussed in detail later in this report.

Literature review

Literature for this project was gathered through an extensive online search (by Amanda Gilbertson) and from the libraries of two NGOs (Jagori and Nirantar) and one research institute (Centre for Women's Development Studies) in Delhi (by Abhilasha Chattopadhyay). This literature search identified a large number of gender training manuals as well as many reports on specific gender training programmes or workshops. We also identified a few reports on workshops with gender trainers in which the challenges of gender training were discussed. The review below focuses on the more analytical and historical literature that outlines how gender training came into being, how it has changed over time, and the strengths and limitations of this approach to promoting gender equality.

History

According to Ranjani K Murthy (1998b: 36), in South Asia in the mid-1980s, the women's movement developed gender-transformative training programmes that were predominantly directed at women in the community and at women activists in NGOs and social movements. The concept of patriarchy was more common than that of gender, and the focus was on sharing experiences of women's struggles to promote their strategic interests. In the history of the NGO Jagori (2004), written to mark 20 years of the organization, we learn more of this early history. In the late seventies, there was a heightened phase of activism, particularly around dowry-related deaths. During these campaigns, needs were identified for a crisis intervention centre and a resource centre. Saheli, an autonomous women's group, was conceived to meet the need for the former and Jagori followed some time later to address the latter need. The organization was founded by a group of seven people in 1984 as a "Women's Resource and Training Centre" to develop communication materials, to collect resources for feminist study groups that had emerged, and to spread feminism to rural areas.

Around this time, the language of 'women's empowerment' emerged (as opposed to 'women's welfare', 'women's development', and 'women's upliftment') in response to two factors: (i) discontent with the prevalence of largely apolitical and economistic Women in Development and Gender and Development models; and (ii) the popularity of Paulo Freire's (2000 [1970]) 'conscientisation' approach as part of his 'liberalisation theology' (Batliwala 2007). Feminists, progressive government policy, and aid agencies anxious to do something new came together to develop some particularly innovative programmes. In 1984 the Women's Development Programme of Rajasthan (WDP) was set up as a result of collaboration between state and central governments, local voluntary organisations, and the women's studies wing of the Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur. It mobilised rural women to perform leadership roles in the community, especially as volunteer *sathins* (helpers) in development projects, and engaged in various consciousness-raising activities around employment and wages, political participation, the challenge of child marriage customs, and promotion of education (Ramachandran, Jandhyala, and Govinda 2014).

The WDP was followed in 1989 by the Mahila Samakhya programme. It was initiated by the Department of Education, Government of India with joint funding from the Dutch government. It had a hybrid government-organised NGO form (Sharma 2006), and women's movement activists and organizations (including Jagori) as well as civil servants were involved from the inception (Jagori 2004). Mahila Samakhya was a programme for the education and empowerment of rural poor and

marginalised women. It was launched in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Karnataka and has since spread to nine states. The design of the program was informed by the redefinition of education for women “as an enabling and empowering tool that goes beyond basic literacy and numeracy” (Jandhyala 2012: 213). Central to the programme was the establishment of collectives of women called *mahila sanghas* that would initiate and sustain social change processes (Ramachandran, Jandhyala, and Govinda 2014, Murthy 1994: 24-25).

Parallel to this emergence of gender training in India, gender training in an international development context began around 1985. By this time, the failures of development for women were becoming increasingly clear and gender training to make planners and development practitioners more ‘gender-aware’ was seen as the solution. Methods for gender training were developed in both the USA – the Harvard method or gender-roles framework (Overholt et al. 1985) and the UK – the Moser method or triple roles framework (Moser 1989). Janet Seed suggests that these frameworks had the appeal of being simple, but were also attractive to some organizations because “they appeared to be value-free and not feminist. These methods could be used to present gender analysis as a technical solution, without necessarily engaging with personal or political issues, and without challenging male power” (Seed 1999: 312). Unlike these organizations, Oxfam, according to Seed, was influenced by women’s groups in Latin America and India who had adopted Freire’s approach to participatory learning, disliked the use of terms such as ‘training’ and ‘targeting’, stressed the importance of connection and collective reflection, linked gender to caste and class, and worked from the personal to the political. This is reflected in *The Oxfam Gender Training Manual* (Williams, Seed, and Mwau 1994), which combines self-awareness work with training methods in gender analysis.

This ‘gender training for development practitioners’ approach soon began to have an impact in India. The Gender Planning Training Project (GPTP) was initiated in 1993 as a collaboration between the governments of India and the UK. This was a one year ‘training of trainers’ programme that brought together trainers and potential trainers from diverse agencies: government training institutions and departments, academic institutions and NGOs. The core goal of the project was to mainstream gender within policy-making bodies and implementing departments (Subrahmanian, Kabeer, and Mathur 1999). In 1997 the Gender Training Institute was established by the Centre for Social Research to mainstream gender into all aspects of development.¹

In the 1990s a number of organizations entered the field of gender training, including specialised NGOs focusing on training of grassroots activist and community groups as their main activity (Batliwala 1997). According to Murthy, most of the training programmes on offer during this time were gender-neutral or gender-ameliorative (see below for further discussion of types of training), with more transformatory forms of gender training primarily provided by groups associated with the women’s movement, a few donor agencies and research/academic institutions (Murthy 1998b: 36). Writing a decade later, Batliwala (2007: 562) echoes Murthy’s concerns about the nature of gender training being provided. She argues that “the broad-based, multi-faceted, and radical consciousness-raising approaches fostered in programmes like Mahila Samakhya in the 1980s and early 1990s have more or less disappeared” replaced by self-help groups that engage in little else but savings and lending, and reservations for women within local self-government bodies. This, she contends, has been accompanied by shifts from empowerment to a ‘rights-based approach’, from prioritising marginalized women’s agency and informal institution to prioritising professional intermediaries and

¹ <http://www.csrindia.org/what-we-do/gender-training-institute>

formal structures, and societal and systemic to individual change (563). The discussion that follows suggests that the shifts described by Batliwala may have been paralleled by a rise in instrumentalist gender training, as power and social transformation slid off the agenda.

Types of gender training

As is clear from the preceding history, a number of different types of training can be identified.

Josephine Ahikire (2007) describes three types of gender training:

1. Capacity building – specifically women-focused and aims to build women’s capacities in areas such as income generation and public politics.
2. Training of trainers – involves imparting skills in areas such as gender analysis and gender responsiveness to enable participants to carry out an intervention or to conduct similar training
3. Self-awareness building – aims to enable women and men to identify sources, manifestations and consequences of gender inequality in their lives and in the institutions in which they operate.

She argues that the first two approaches to gender training are dominant in development practice by both state and non-state actors (Ahikire 2007: 40).

Ranjani K Murthy describes five broad approaches to gender training (1998b: 38-43): (1) conceptual approach; (2) policy-analysis approach; (3) empirical approach; (4) action-reflection approach; and (5) experiential approach. The key difference between these approaches is their starting point: (1) concepts of gender, patriarchy, and feminism; (2) women in development policies; and (3) empirical data establishing women’s subordinate status in society. Both the action-reflection and the experiential start with the personal and work experience of participants, but the former focuses on societal change whereas the latter focuses on individual change. Murthy writes that the experiential approach is the least common and is “perhaps unique to the South Asian region”. It is interesting that she finds that this approach has not been tried (at the time of writing in 1998) with members of the community.

Most other typologies differentiate between different types of training based on the level of transformation involved. Kamla Bhasin (1997), for example, differentiates between two types of gender training, which she sees as being on a continuum, rather than pure categories:

- Transformative – aims to “challenge patriarchal gender relations and other related hierarchies of class, caste, race, north-south, man-nature” (8).
- Development or project-oriented – aims to “make projects more efficient, involve women in them and ensure that women are not left out or further subordinated by development” (9).

For Bhasin, while transformative gender training is a political struggle that is transformation oriented, development/project-oriented training seeks to maintain the status quo but make it more efficient and inclusive.

Naila Kabeer’s (1994) analysis of gender training is concerned specifically with training for development professionals. She differentiates between three different training frameworks: the Harvard method or gender-roles framework (Overholt et al. 1985), the Moser method or triple-roles framework (1989) and the social-relations framework. According to Kabeer, the Harvard method is a ‘safe’, technocratic project-oriented analytical tool that adds women to existing planning traditions, while the TRF seeks to establish a distinct and separate planning approach based on different gender

roles and needs but offers a bureaucratized version of gender politics (Kabeer 1994: 298). Kabeer is in favour of the SRF which emphasises gender relations as relations of *power*, and highlights that gender inequality is embedded in institutions such as the household, the community, the market and the state. The SRF “attempts to *rethink* existing policy approaches, concepts and tools from a gender perspective” (Kabeer 1994: 299) and aims to bring about institutional transformation (see also Mathur and Rajan 1997: 70).

Ranjani K Murthy builds on Kabeer’s framework to propose four ways in which gender has been present or absent in development training in South Asia: gender-blind training, gender-neutral training, gender-ameliorative training, and gender-transformative training (Murthy 1998b, 2001). She describes a ‘Asian feminist perspective’ on gender training, which critiques dominant frameworks for gender training (Moser 1989, Overholt et al. 1985), and emphasizes participatory methodologies, non-hierarchical relationships between participants and trainer, and time for developing awareness of one’s own body and feelings as well as intellectual growth (Rao et al. 1994: 20, Murthy 1994: 24). According to Murthy, feminist activists and trainers emphasize principles and process rather than content and outputs because they “believe that training is sensitive to gender issues only if all its different facets – its vision, objectives, content, methodologies, process of design, resource persons, and resource materials – reflect a gender perspective (Murthy 1994: 24). She gives the Mahila Samakhya programme as an example of this type of training.

Reporting on the 2007 international KIT (Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen/The Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam) conference on gender training, Kirsty Milward differentiates between instrumental training and gender training as part of an ongoing process. She suggests that instrumental training often happens in the context of funder requirements for gender training, which produces a demand for “one-stop technical interventions to equip agencies with the language of gender in order to respond appropriately to checklists” (Milward 2007: 7). She locates this event-oriented, workshop-bound form within a generalised technical approach to gender mainstreaming since Beijing that attempts to insert gender into organizations that are often more concerned with mitigating rather than transforming the structures that produce inequality. By contrast, longer-term strategies for gender education may span several years, are concerned with the embedding of gender knowledge in personal identity, and have explicit objectives of consciousness raising and building collective identity in order to transform social relations through collective struggle.

Objectives of gender training

From literature produced by experienced gender trainers we get a sense of the perceived objectives of gender training, ranging from political mobilization through to ‘mainstreaming’. Anchita Ghatak (1998), for example, describes the objectives of the different trainings she has been involved in as a ‘feminist trainer’ with Sanhita Gender Resource Centre:

- training with NGO workers – aims to “empower participants to strengthen and initiate processes that resist patriarchy” (2)
- training with women of poor communities – aims to “strengthen grassroots struggles” (3)
- training with school and college students – aims to motivate young women to join the women’s movement (4)

Overall their gender training workshops “aspire to make participants believe that they have a significant contribution to make in transforming gender relations” (5) and to “strengthen feminist struggles” (8).

Different objectives for different types of training are evident also when you compare the objectives authors located more in the consciousness-raising context of gender training and those located more in the development organization context. The objectives of the Sangat South Asian Feminist Capacity Building Course are described as capacity building and conceptual clarity as well as creating/ developing a feminist consciousness which would challenge patriarchy (Bhasin and Nandy-Joshi 2009). Srilatha Batliwala (1997: 5), writing of training grassroots activists for women's empowerment states that empowerment "is essentially about changing power relations" and empowerment interventions aim to equip women with "the analytical, strategic, and practical skills to lead the process of social transformation". By contrast, Kabeer (1994: 264), describes gender training as "an important means by which feminist advocates and practitioners were seeking to de-institutionalize male privilege within development policy and planning". Ranjani K Murthy (1998b: 37) identifies the objectives of gender training as sensitization, mainstreaming, and movement strengthening.

Interestingly, Kirsty Milward reports that participants in the 2007 international KIT conference on gender training expressed "widespread caution around making claims for what gender training can achieve" (Milward 2007: 18). They stressed the need to be clear about what outcomes were being sought in specific training contexts (18) and to recognize that gender training is "merely an entry point from which broader structural and social change can be gradually addressed" (11). Murthy (1998b) similarly highlights the limitations of gender training and suggests it needs to be provided alongside other initiatives such as collective organization and women's spaces. Likewise, Subrahmanian argues that gender training "must be viewed as part of a broader strategy of seeking to offer alternative values" (in Subrahmanian, Kabeer, and Mathur 1999: 405).

Depoliticization

It is clear from the typologies of gender training presented above that one of the key challenges associated with gender training is the potential for depoliticization and a focus on mitigation rather than transformation. Some have identified depoliticization as a trend in gender training (Murthy 1998b: 48) and many are critical of the tendency to make gender a technical issue, separate from feminism and women's struggles (Bhasin and Nandy-Joshi 2009: 44, Seed 1999: 316, Milward, Mukhopadhyay, and Wong 2015: 76). Rohit Dasgupta (2007: 36) asserts that the feminist project of social transformation and the feminist questioning of assumptions about knowledge have been lost in "the brief 'gender sensitization sessions' that can barely do more than provide them with politically correct behaviour norms". Ranjani K Murthy (1998a: 207) explains why such an approach is at odds with that of many trainers:

Gender trainers in India with a socialist-feminist perspective believe that it can have such an impact only if it is political in nature: that it questions the gendered nature of development, clarifies the concept of patriarchy, perceives gender relations as social relations of power, and links these concepts with a reflection on the individual, and on NGOs as institutions. For us, 'gender training' refers to training programmes with such a perspective.

Milward, Mukhopadhyay, and Wong (2015: 78) highlight that the exclusion of the political message of feminist social transformation from gender training "is in itself intensely political" and suggest that it results in the subversive complicity of gender trainers in wider projects of governance.

Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay (2014: 360) gives some sense of what this complicity might entail, arguing that the transformation of gender from a form of structural inequality into a set of technical and administrative skills has made it possible for organizations to 'do gender' without addressing structures producing inequalities in general, not only gender inequalities. Several scholars and practitioners have suggested that depoliticization is more a problem in some contexts than others. Kamla Bhasin (1995: 2) associates the problem with "the main gender analysis and training modules developed in the North for and through big official development agencies". For Naila Kabeer (1994: 265) it is similarly Northern aid agencies and development banks that demonstrate greatest resistance to a transformatory agenda that stresses gender as a power relation and the need for change at the personal level.

Writing on gender training in Uganda post-Beijing, Josephine Ahikire (2007) considers the implications of gender training for the feminist intellectual and political project. She argues that, since Beijing, there has been an "inclination towards reporting mechanisms and the whole emphasis on gender mainstreaming" which resulted in an increased bureaucratization and professionalization of the gender equality crusade, and a demand for 'gender experts', 'gender consultants' and 'gender specialists', rather than feminist activists and scholars (41). She suggests that gender training is situated within a context of developmentalism and anti-intellectualism that strips gender-related concepts of their political significance, their history within feminist engagement and social theory, and their critical edge. Ahikire is critical of the limited time invested in gender training (3-day workshops), instructions from those requesting gender training to exclude feminism, the fact that gender trainers are more likely to be accepted if they sound more neutral and technical (42), and the tendency to individualize gender-based power in the approach to empowerment typically adopted. For her, the central message in gender training should be "the project of the feminist movement, which is to transform gender relations, to transform society" (44). She concludes by asserting that gender training has diverted energies from activism to technical doing and that politics and feminism need to be brought back in to reaffirm the gender agenda "as a political rather than a technical project" (45).

Reporting on the 2007 international KIT conference on gender training, Kirsty Milward (2007: 3) notes that participants felt that there had been an increased separation between gender and feminism and that this was closely related to the proliferation of instrumental non-transformatory approaches to gender training. Participants wondered whether they may have underestimated the extent to which development is apolitical, formulaic and incremental. Gender training, by contrast, "seeks political consciousness, real and substantial transformation, and highlights the significance of learning processes", and this disjuncture may limit the ability to insert gender knowledge into the context of development discourse and practice (12). The commodification of gender training was also seen as threatening its transformatory potential by de-linking training from advocacy and isolating gender knowledge dissemination from the social movements: "'doing gender' has become a set of skills packaged as a new kind of job" (14). Key recommendations of the conference were for gender trainers to maintain strong connections to the women's and other social movements (8), acknowledge more clearly that working on gender is political and involves conflict, and develop strategies for responding to requests for 'quick and dirty' gender trainings (20, 24, 26).

Other challenges and recommendations

A number of additional gender training challenges and tensions as well as recommendations were identified by scholars and practitioners, many of which relate directly to the broader issue of training's transformatory potential.

Tensions and challenges:

1. Difficulties of translating gender into different **languages** and cultures (Milward 2007: 4, Subrahmanian, Kabeer, and Mathur 1999: 395)
2. Ability to address broader **structural challenges** including North-South power relations, local-level inequalities, and liberalisation processes that exacerbate them (Milward 2007: 13, Sexwale 1994: 52, Bhasin 1995)
3. Demand for **practical** tools and skills versus need for **theory** (Milward 2007: 18, Mukhopadhyay and Appel 1998)
 - “the complex, relational and symbolic nature of gender concepts tended to get lost” (Mukhopadhyay and Wong 2007: 19)
4. Demand for **one-off events** versus need for institutional and social change:
 - Training alone is not enough: preparatory methods, follow-up plans, organizational/institutional strategies, and (at the grassroots) efforts for collective organization are needed (Seed 1999: 314, Subrahmanian in Subrahmanian, Kabeer, and Mathur 1999: 404, Mukhopadhyay and Appel 1998, Murthy 1998b, Batliwala 1997:7, Mathur and Rajan 1997: 74-75, Murthy 2001)
5. The demand for standardised **modules** versus the need for diversity and flexibility to accommodate different sites/contexts and objectives (Murthy 1998b, Subrahmanian, Kabeer, and Mathur 1999: 404, Asmita 2001: 186, Bhasin and Nandy-Joshi 2009: 31, Milward 2007: 20, 24)
6. Requests for **'quick and dirty'** gender trainings (Milward 2007: 20, 24, 26, Shivdas 1997: 3)
7. The need for better **evaluation**, impact assessment methodologies, and mechanisms for mutual accountability (Milward 2007: 23, Murthy 1999)
 - “There should be a shift from assessing impact through feedback at the end of the workshop to actually assessing the change brought about at the personal, organizational and societal institutional level” (Murthy 1998b: 48)
8. Dealing with participants' **stereotypes** about feminists, and trainers' stereotypes about bureaucrats (Murthy 1998a: 209, Subrahmanian, Kabeer, and Mathur 1999: 402) and evolving strategies to deal with resistance (Murthy 1999)
9. The importance of **full participation** versus the tendency for organizations to send staff out of direct or indirect compulsion from funding agencies (Murthy 1999)

Recommendations:

1. Highlight connections between the **personal** and the **political** (Bhasin and Nandy-Joshi 2009: 3, 34, Milward 2007: 19)
2. Use **participatory methods** that break down hierarchies within the training experience, especially the hierarchy between trainers and trainees (Batliwala 1997: 8, Bhasin and Nandy-Joshi 2009: 31, Murthy 1999).
3. Match choice of **participants** with goals and objectives

- Tendency to train **junior staff** who do not have decision-making power to bring about institutional change (Mukhopadhyay and Appel 1998, Thakur 1997: 12, Batliwala 1997:7, Murthy 1999: 388).

Engaging men

There was little discussion of engaging men in the gender training literature. Some scholars and practitioners noted the need for more gender training programmes for men, at both the community and the development organization level (Murthy 1998b, Bhasin and Nandy-Joshi 2009: 39, Shivdas 1997: 2). For Kamla Bhasin this work should start a “movement of men towards families and family kitchens” (Bhasin and Nandy-Joshi 2009: 43). Some write of the value of having men on the trainer team, particularly in situations where women trainers “are branded as ‘feminists’ trying to push down concepts alien to ‘our culture’” (Mathur and Rajan 1997: 74-75) and where men who are being trained get defensive (Ghatak 1998: 8, Bhasin 2004: 28). And some suggest that training women and men together can be problematic (Asmita 2001: 186).

According to Kamla Bhasin (2004: 3), the early focus of feminist training was on creating women activists who would lead activities to challenge patriarchy, but around 1990 demands for workshops on gender for/with men began to emerge from different groups. Rural women who were members of women’s groups felt it was time for their men to be sensitized. And women activists and development workers as well as donors and gender trainers felt that men within various (development) organizations needed greater gender awareness to address gender dynamics within their organizations and in their development policy and planning. Some of the lessons from Kamla Bhasin’s experience of training men are:

- the need for gentleness, diplomacy and reassurance to tackle insecurities and hostility
- the need to begin with the personal
- the need to communicate that this is about a system, not men versus women, but that all systems are kept going by the actions of individuals
- the need to communicate that “it is not feminists but all the inequality, injustices, power struggles, which exists within the family, which are weakening the institution” (2004: 15).

Bhasin suggests that whereas in workshops with women she and other women facilitators/trainers have never felt the need to use their authority or power, “with men, to be effective and to move the discussions forward, we cannot always reject the use of power completely” (Bhasin 2004: 28).

As mentioned above, the vast majority of the literature on gender training relates to training for development planners and practitioners. A common challenge identified in this context is the perception that gender training is for women (e.g., Murthy 1998b: 48). In the context of gender training that has involved the community/ grassroots/ general public and has grown out of women’s empowerment initiatives, we found that rather than coming under the umbrella of gender training, literature on efforts to engage men and boys was usually framed in terms of primary prevention initiatives for violence against women (VAW) or gender-based violence (GBV), or the inclusion of men in women’s rights/gender justice programmes. Related literatures on whether feminism is about women (Menon 2015) and whether men can be feminists (Sircar 2015, Chowdhury and Baset 2015) have some relevance here.

‘Engaging men’ has become an increasingly common element of violence prevention work across the globe, a trend clearly evidenced by the second MenEngage Global Symposium (Men and Boys for Gender Justice), held in Delhi in 2014, which attracted 1100 participants from 94 countries. Misra

and Marwah (2015: 67) suggest that men have become the new 'silver bullet' and UN agencies and bilateral donors have begun to work with men and men's organisations to promote gender equality. There is a growing body of literature evaluating the effectiveness of VAW-prevention interventions that specifically engage men (Anderson and Whiston 2005, Clinton-Sherrod et al. 2009, Fulu, Kerr-Wilson, and Lang 2014, Murray and Graybeal 2007, Noonan and Gibbs 2009, Ricardo, Eads, and Barker 2011, Vladutiu, Martin, and Macy 2011, World Health Organization 2007). The international literature suggests that some well-designed interventions have been effective in preventing and reducing men's violence against women (Flood 2015: 2-3, Fulu, Kerr-Wilson, and Lang 2014: 19-24). However, a number of risks associated with involving men in the work of preventing violence against women have been identified, including the marginalization of women's voices and leadership, diverting resources away from support for survivors of violence, diminishing the legitimacy of women-only and women-focused programmes and services, and the propensity to reinforce rather than challenge hegemonic masculinities through the use of stereotypically male role models and discourses of 'real men as protectors' (Flood 2015, Chant and Gutmann 2000: 270, Meer 2011). Recently there have been calls from academics to assess the assumptions that underpin this work (Flood 2015), particularly the focus on attitudinal change rather than changes in structural relations and social practices (Pease and Flood 2008). This project was conceived to some extent as a response to those calls.

In the Indian context, one of the first initiatives to reach out to men was MASVAW (Men's Action for Stopping Violence Against Women), established in 2001 by a group of 'gender-sensitive male community development workers' who had been working on women's issues for over a decade. While most were enthusiastically supportive of this work, a few "felt it was far less important and detracted attention from the more fundamental task of empowering women and bringing about structural changes that affect gender relations" (Das and Singh 2014: 70). MASVAW conducted training programmes with male workers of community development organisations, as well as with journalists, schools, colleges and universities in Uttar Pradesh. They also ran public campaigns by men on violence against women (Das et al. 2012, Mogford, Parveen, and Das 2009, Singh et al. 2011). Two key figures in MASVAW, Abhijit Das and Satish K Singh went on to establish the Centre for Health and Social Justice in New Delhi, which has continued to work with men and boys, including a United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) India project aimed at improving gender relations across 100 villages in Maharashtra.

Representatives from the feminist human rights organization CREA (established in 2000), write that in their work on gender justice it was becoming increasingly clear that men and boys were crucial stakeholders, and that an approach that reached out to only women and girls would have limited impact and could be counterproductive (Misra and Marwah 2015: 63). The participation of many men and boys in the anti-rape protests of December 2012 increased debate about the need to engage men and boys in gender justice work, and what a feminist approach to doing so might look like. Misra and Marwah differentiate between an intrinsic approaches to engaging men – for their own sake, because they too suffer the effects of hegemonic masculinity – and an instrumental approach – for the benefit of women and girls. They find that most Indian organizations working with men and boys combine the two approaches – they start from the perspective of women's rights or empowerment but also acknowledge the adverse effects of patriarchy on men. Misra and Marwah assert that instrumentalist approaches should avoid patriarchal protectionism (women-as-victims and men-as-saviours) and intrinsic approaches should avoid suggesting that men are equally vulnerable to patriarchy: "work with men needs to recognise how patriarchy implicates them and make them accountable for it" (Misra and Marwah 2015). They highlight the importance of an

intersectional approach to power and inequality and raise the issue of which men and boys are involved in gender justice campaigns – does involving men as fathers perpetuate heteronormative family norms? Misra and Marwah (2015: 68) conclude that progressive men who identify as feminist cannot replace women's groups and women must lead the struggle for gender equality.

Key themes from workshop and interviews

This project began with a few interviews with experienced gender trainers to identify key research questions. These interviews were followed by a 2-day workshop with gender trainers from several organizations in Delhi. We then conducted additional interviews with gender trainers who had been unable to attend the workshop. Fifteen interviews were conducted in total. The key themes that emerged from the workshop and interviews are summarised below.

Objectives of gender training

In the workshop, we asked participants to each write down one key objective of gender training. The word 'understanding' was one of the most common in their responses. Participants mentioned:

- understanding the various realities that women live with that are influenced by gender, caste, class and all such categories
- understand the social constructs that direct behaviour patterns that lead to rigid and sometimes restrictive gender identities and the consequences thereof.
- understand the concept of gender, to identify discrimination
- understand the world around them
- understand and explain where discrimination takes place in a person's life that greatly affects their self-respect ... We need to understand violence to be able to reclaim our rights and respect.

Only a few described the change that this understanding was intended to bring about:

- The main objective is to try and bring equality into the society ... To do so you are coming up with strategies to do away with social, economic and political inequality.
- To establish equality and sensitivity in all aspects, and at the mental level as well.
- Gender training makes people more sensitive and humane
- To build feminist perspectives. Particularly to connect personal challenges with knowledge of larger systems of oppression (patriarchy) so that participants can challenge both of these in their personal lives as well as at a larger societal level.

Most participants felt that although issues and audiences have evolved over time, and although there is increasing time pressure on gender training, the overall objectives have remained relatively unchanged.

The focus on understanding led us to ask whether gender training is a form of education.

Participants said:

I think when you are talking about gender you are educating someone and you are making them understand certain things and that's why they can become more aware about their situation and the kind of situation they are facing.

- 1: When we're doing a three-day session only, then no. Capsules don't work; it's not an education. But when we integrate it into other aspects of our lives, then it is an education...
- 2: And though these cases are rare, there have been girls who've raised a voice against their child marriage. The reason I say this is that training definitely is empowering girls and in that sense it definitely is education...

3: I would say gender trainings are more of an unlearning of concepts that you have already been taught throughout your institutional process or whatever societal conditioning that has happened.

The words sensitize and awareness came up again and again during the workshop, so we discussed with participants what these words meant to them. In their responses, participants talked about a desire to connect with people beyond the level of information and knowledge. They talked about wanting participants to *internalize* their new knowledge and understanding.

We asked participants about 'changing mindsets' as an objective of gender training because this had been a strong theme in earlier research, and they had a range of responses. Some felt that the idea of changing mindsets captured the cognitive and affective dimensions of gender training, whereas others felt that mindsets did not address the changes in knowledge and in institutions that they were hoping to achieve:

I challenge this issue of mindset. It's not about mindset; it's finding the knowledge base and building on that new knowledge.

I think this mindset is good and it's good that they [young people] are talking about it because it's moving from a technical and mechanical approach to a more human and compassionate way of looking at it.

In the workshop, you can only change mindsets. You work with ideas and ideas are about our minds. So that's the first step and we hope that with that mindset, the body set will change, the culture set will change, the systems will change, but the workshop can only be about that ... I think it is to analyse, to look and then to examine our mindset and then if they need change, you change.

The politics and the ideology that I have been indoctrinated with says that mindsets is important but you need material practical changes too, institutional changes. I need to see changes in other things, in institutions, in distribution of power and resources. Mindset was part of it.

We used to use that quite often in our earlier days but now if you see our work is more around norm change ... So it is about mindsets in a certain sense but that mindset would only shift if you also kind of work at multiple levels.

Becoming a gender trainer

The gender trainers we spoke to described diverse and organic, rather than deliberate, paths to gender training. Many talked about their involvement in other fields – law, education, development – and being drawn to gender work after their realisation that gender was a significant aspect of so many spheres of life.

Those involved in the earliest gender workshops emphasised that in those times nobody had received training in how to be gender trainers:

We were no bloody trainers, nobody had done a TOT [training of trainers] with us. So this was really experiential, participatory sharing thing and the job of a trainer was to bring people together, to facilitate things, to arrange for food and stay and all that and to get the money. So maybe we were more organizers than trainers in the beginning.

By contrast, new trainers today have the opportunity to participate in gender training workshops run by their own and other organizations, to attend 'Training of Trainers' workshops and to slowly build their skills and confidence as gender trainers by first assisting others and then gradually taking on more responsibility.

Our senior trainers used to provide training and they used to take me with them. In the third session, having observed two sessions, my trainer told me choose an issue that I would feel comfortable presenting myself. I felt I understood issues of power and patriarchy well. The trainer took the whole training but she gave me the last one hour session, but at that time I had a little idea about how to engage people and how to conduct activities.

Whenever trainings happened we ensured the new people who joined they must accompany us for trainings and they were given the work of documentation ... If you have done some documentation in the past, then in your third training you must come in as a co-facilitator and they were given session.

A number of trainers also mentioned that their personal experiences had shaped their thinking about gender.

I think life teaches us a lot ... I will not discount counselling training, but there's so much we learn from our lived realities.

Even now more than training I feel one learns from their experiences ... and this is a life long journey.

For some, field experience was also important. One participant complained that people in senior positions in gender and development NGOs have little or no field experience. Another explained how field experience shaped her own understandings:

What is important is field visits and trainings with the community especially with the women that I was involved with. It is here that I learnt a lot about gender and intersectionality and sometimes often when we planned something, it would not materialize exactly how it was planned so one had to immediately be spontaneous. And often, according to your participants, you need to tone down your framework.

A number of participants described a change that had occurred in the past 2-4 years – young people joining organizations with degrees in relevant subjects such as Women's Studies, Human Rights or Social Work. Some perceived this shift as creating problems – young people who lack commitment to the cause and think they already know how to do things. Others felt that the underlying concern was that these young people were asking for higher salaries.

The young group are mostly coming with the professional degrees ... They think sometime or most times that 'our professional life is different from my personal life. So I am professional

between 9-6 or 10-6, but beyond that my personal is different' ... They think they are taught everything they need in the university so they don't need any training; they are quite capable. So it means they don't believe in the participatory, they don't believe in the adult learning. They are taught everything but they don't believe ... You have never applied because university never gave the opportunity where people apply it and learn there so there was no practice.

We asked people what some characteristics of a good trainer were and they talked about the ability to connect with people and handle resistance, the ability to simply explain complex concepts, listening skills, using power and authority but also being vulnerable, humility, and political conviction.

Doing gender training

A number of participants talked about how methods of gender training had evolved over time through experience, in response to changing issues:

So the process and the methodology, etc. hasn't changed fundamentally, but it has evolved. Out of experience it has become better. Issues keep changing all the time, you know like when we started there was no issue called honour killing, there was no issue like acid throwing, there were no issue like cybercrime, there was no issue like trafficking at this scale. When we began, there was no issue like sex selective abortion ... Our issues are related to changes in patriarchy, changes in class and caste and communal discords. So since South Asia is changing, so our issues have to change.

We still use the concept of gender roles and norms but we have also kind of expanded and started looking at gender in broader ways ... We have moved across from various movements tribal, Dalits, disabilities movements and we are evolving in our pedagogy.

One participant said that it was no longer necessary to start from scratch as everyone has some basic understanding of gender concepts. She went on to explain that the examples she uses in her training have changed along with social changes. For example, instead of talking about sex-selective abortion and women's ability to enter the temple when menstruating, she now talks about women in public space – at the cinema and at tea stalls. Today she asks: "Why is it that women only step out for work but men to eat *paan*, samosas, to drink chai?"

Another participant felt that much of the impetus for change in the approach to gender training had come from work on sexuality:

Work on gender has not evolved as much as sexuality has ... Maybe because gender was being equated to women, so a lot of work around women's rights kind of held that portfolio so to say. And then HIV/AIDS allowed work on trans to emerge and then there was sexuality ... A lot of the work was to do with violence against women ... Slowly, slowly from there we moved to: 'we have to talk about the rights. We can't talk about protecting women' ... Organizations that have started their work with sexuality, gender or related issues, actually have moved a little ahead of the herd in terms of these issues. Whereas organizations that

began their work much earlier with sexual violence and all, I think they're still caught in that discussion – everything is sexual violence.

One of the key changes participants described in relation to gender training was the target population. To a large extent this entailed a shift towards engaging men and boys, which is discussed in a subsequent section, but there were other ways in which the audience for gender training had changed:

- 1: The target population has not changed but it has grown ...
- 2: Government policies are also a reason behind the change of audience because now we have Asha workers and Anganwadi workers ... When speaking of gender, police training has been happening for a while, but presently lawyers are also involved in the training and now we have to train journalists and do media training.

One participant talked about the wide range of different methods her organization uses to reach different audiences:

We have different methodologies for different sets of people... So community mobilization for the bystanders ... So the traditional audience would be your young people, teachers, frontline workers, community-based organizations, civil servants, police so on and so forth and it continues to be so. And we are also expanding; not just doing physical trainings but we are also reaching out through online trainings. Or we have conversations through Twitter and Facebook, creating spaces for young people from across the world to talk about these issues. So that's also one of the spaces that we are opening up.

Perhaps the most commonly discussed area of change in gender training was intersectionality. Although some felt that gender/feminist training had always been intersectional (“always our analysis has been intersectional you know without knowing the word”), many felt that awareness of intersectionality had increased:

I think the understanding was very linear: ‘there is women and all women fitted into that’. I think it was only much later where the understanding that a Dalit woman or a poor woman or x, y, z had other concerns. I mean it kind of intersects. I think now definitely the trainings are more nuanced than they used to be because you are looking at various axes through which the training is being provided.

I remember initially we used to say that all of us women are one, and there was a lot of discussion about this. But with time we realized that we may all be women, but we are all different and face different issues because of the different contexts we belong to ... I think now we have started talking more about intersectionality.

Another way in which intersectionality came through in interviews and focus groups was in relation to capitalism. Several participants mentioned that capitalist patriarchy was a particularly dangerous form of patriarchy:

The modern form of patriarchy which is capitalism ... capitalist patriarchy or patriarchal capitalism that has had ruinous effect when charged with the Hindu patriarchal; it's a very lethal combination.

At times I feel that patriarchy in some ways is stronger today ... When we were growing up ... capitalist patriarchy wasn't there in this present horrible form ... Inequalities are increasing so the material conditions for patriarchy are not going anywhere.

Participatory training methods

Throughout interviews and the workshop, participants emphasised that they use participatory or feminist training methods. There were a number of dimensions to these methods. The first was that the hierarchy between trainer and trainee should be broken down, and trainees should be encouraged to question, share and come to their own conclusions:

Feminist processes through the 70s and 80s tried to break the hierarchies of what they called the trainers and the participants. They did not want to recreate the hierarchies of power within those spaces. So I think it is not as if we are just teaching, but we are learning together and ensuring that we are not creating hierarchies.

As a feminist you don't try to tell others what to think. Your job is to make them question, observe and decide for themselves whether the views being presented in front of them are right or not. Otherwise it's very easy to use your power as a trainer to impose certain opinions.

We don't emphasize that our perspective is the right one. One is entitled to have their own opinion; we can only introduce them to other perspectives.

A second dimension of participatory training methods mentioned was that dance, song, theatre, film, games, yoga, etc. are often important parts of the learning process:

Feminist training is not just about increasing knowledge on certain issues, but also trying to reconnect with our bodies because many of us have become separated from our bodies through the violence done on us that isolates them from their bodies. We have meditation and yoga ... That is transformative; not just providing knowledge on particular issues but also connects to the mind by means of music, dance, theatre and the other ways and mediums.

We had created a street play called Om Swaha and we travelled. First we did a hundred street plays around the city, you know, group of about 15-20 women, and we would do this once a week, twice a week. The next year another group took it on, the third year another group took it on so for three years there was a massive education programme of the public and the amazing thing was when we did the play, people on the streets would join in the dialogue because they related to it, you know. We would do it in colleges, parks, slum communities, in the middle of Connaught Place, everywhere.

After delicate and painful sessions, we would ensure we uplift the person by series of singing and dancing and lots of enjoyment and also massaging and oiling and helping them relax.

A key element of the participatory methods discussed by participants was the focus on the personal lives of trainees and trainers. Many participants used the phrase 'the personal is political' when explaining this:

[My organization] began by saying let's start with where women are and what is most pressing in their lives. So we started actually exploring the personal as political. It became very easy for us to unfold women's realities and then based on their realities, conceptualize.

Without exploring the self, how can you say that I will change society? So self-exploration to me is very important.

Some emphasized that it was important for trainers to also share experiences from their personal lives:

We expect others to share their lives but we don't share anything. In that sense sexuality trainings are different because there the distinction between a trainer and a trainee is blurred because the sharing is two way. In gender training that doesn't happen, because some "empowered woman" has come to teach you about gender empowerment so it becomes one sided ... The more we give instances from our lives it becomes easier for people to understand what we're talking about.

A few suggested that the focus on the personal might have become depoliticized in recent years, i.e. the personal as individual rather than political:

I think that shift has taken place with younger generation really because there is so much about me and my life, me and my choices and that itself has made it like very centralized on the personal than looking at it as a political issue and having political implication.

While participants agreed that participatory gender training should allow trainees to develop their own opinions, incorporate activities such as song and theatre, and involve a focus on the personal, there was a little disagreement on the role of theory. Some participants stressed the importance of conceptual understanding and felt that reading was a good way to develop this understanding.

It's extremely important that conceptual foundation is made very strong so that every act can be actually located or examined against that conceptual framework ... Reading is very important to really understand it more deeply as to what it is so. That people don't do very much these days, less and less reading culture, but we create a space where people have to read and present what they have read.

Others were critical of an excessive focus on the theoretical, the conceptual or the abstract:

I'm sorry but academics have ruined the training because they've theorized so much that there's a clear distinction between trainers and participants ... I think this abstraction is something which is a hindrance to self-realization.

Dealing with resistance

Participants talked about some of the challenges of trying to 'train' or sensitize a resistant audience. Many focused in these discussions on resistance from men, which is addressed in a subsequent section of this report, but the more general comments about dealing with resistance are presented here:

In the present scenario during the trainings we often get to hear “Yes we know what is gender discrimination and we have sufficient knowledge”. A lot of people say that and all they want to learn is the technique to merely reduce gender discrimination: “That’s all that is necessary. Just teach us that”. It is almost as if popping a capsule will end the problem of gender discrimination ... People think that once they understand what sexual harassment is, they have sufficient knowledge. And they want a technique to reduce gender discrimination ... People want solutions.

Several participants said that people in senior positions were the most resistant to gender training:

All people who are very senior ... when they come for the training, they will show you that “We know everything. We don't need you in the first instance” ... They will give you this look: "Where have you come from? Why have you come?" And it becomes very difficult to talk to them about anything.

Many participants identified misconceptions among trainees about feminism as a particular challenge:

They also have a very kind of twisted notion of what is feminism because feminism is against men, against you know, marriage, it's about lesbianism. So all that is kind of really not fitting into the political understanding of what is patriarchy and what is feminism and what is feminist movement all about.

There is no other ism which is more maligned than feminism.

Participants differed in their views on the role of conflict or antagonism in gender training:

We cannot afford to antagonize we need to create a dialogue.

Sometimes you have to take a certain stand that I am not going to take them to a certain level immediately because you can get this sense that this person is really apprehensive, not in a mood to talk about this issue the way you want her or him to understand ... But sometimes what has happened is that the other person who is doing training with them is very adamant to show you the real picture in a very drastic way. And then this leads to an argument and then people are not ready to listen at all. So such situations also happen many times. And that's why I don't grill people that “No you have to agree”. ... I just feel that “Okay, even after this if you are not ready to think, don't worry we will drop this issue. If you want to think, you can think later some time” ... Of course, working calmly sometimes it works. Participants are not feeling threatened that you are forcibly trying to make them agree.

Change only happens in discomfort zone so we have to create the space ... We take the responsibility, "No we are going to challenge you”.

Duration and standardization of training

Perhaps the most frequently expressed concern about gender training was the reduction in time that was being spent with each group of trainees. Many participants used the phrase 'capsule courses' to refer to the short gender trainings that were being increasingly demanded.

1: Trying to capture gender courses in 30 minutes and inculcate all about gender in half a day. Understanding and knowledge are two separate entities. People are in a hurry to learn the 'knowledge' but not patient enough to grasp the 'understanding' ...

2: Today everybody is only concerned about the image. So this is true of gender also. And politically correct means you have to be sensitive towards women. So what? For example, the health department, they got me to do trainings for the trainers of their ASHAs. So now they wanted capsules. I have to write small, small modules for them - patriarchy, gender - two hours or one and a half hours. This is the aim, these are the concepts and these are the questions, in one and a half hours ... Earlier people had the patience and the intellectual honesty to go about it much deeper... So changing mindsets can't be done in a 2-3 day workshop. One workshop can't do everything. So it's always a series which does it and some duration should be there.

The people's behaviour, attitude is learnt from the many, many years. Try to change in three-days training, or four days training, it is impossible. This is the limitation. You can start only the reflection. So many people, many organizations, funders ask for two days, three days training and think that will be changed; it is not change. Training without the follow-up will not change. Training and follow-up without the mentorship also will not change so you have to have training, you have to develop the follow-up plan and the follow-up plan needs to ensure mentorship support ... Training was earlier the five days training, before that one week training, before that ten days training before that 15 days training.

The pressure to provide short training was related in participants' narratives to the pressure to standardize training. Most participants emphasised the need to tailor gender training to the particular group who are being trained and were resistant to modules and manuals:

For the last forty years of my trainings, I have never given an agenda like that because it's artificial, because it doesn't make sense. Even I struggle all the time when people invite me to do trainings as a consultant or something. So they say, "please send us an agenda". I said "I don't know the agenda". "Why don't you know?" I said, "Because I don't know the participants". How can I sit in Delhi and make an agenda for people in Dhaka? How much do they know of gender? Do they know what gender is? Do they know what patriarchy is? So only after meeting them, knowing them will I know and will I stop them from asking a question? I refuse to create a manual because I think manuals take away creativity from trainers ... For me, these courses, these workshops are live things between live people.

Sometimes I prepare my agenda beforehand but most of the times actually I have changed the agenda depending on the group. So I start the training and then see what's happening and if need be, then I change ... You need to be flexible. And I always inform the organizers in advance that I am giving you this agenda but this is a draft agenda.

However, some had themselves been involved in the production of manuals and modules or had standardized their training to some extent:

In terms of earlier when we used to get called then we would design the programme based on the needs of the situation. It was catered to the specific audience and this thing. Over a period of time, you really know what works so a lot more standardization has happened, the scale of it is much larger. We still design the content and curriculum based on the different target audience, but we already have a lot of material and tool-kits.

Language

Several issues under the broad umbrella of language were identified during the workshop and interviews – specific words used in training, the challenges of translation, and the terms used to refer to training. In terms of the words used in training, a number of participants pointed out that the word ‘gender’ had not always been a part of their vocabulary. Several participants located the source of the word ‘gender’ in the ‘western academic feminist world’ and some said there had initially been resistance to the term:

We didn't use the word gender at all when I started my training work. It was in 1976 and I heard the concept of gender only in '86 ... We felt it was an academic concept brought by academic women who now come with degrees to us from somewhere. They have done no work in the field. And gender also sounded too wishy-washy. If you say gender equality, who is unequal, men or women? Gender equality doesn't say that. When you say gender-based violence, who is being violated. So we used to say that the concept of gender is an academic concept whereas the concept of patriarchy is a struggle concept. It calls a spade a spade; names, in 90 percent cases or 95 percent cases, who is suffering.

In terms of current terminologies, some participants used *samajik ling* (social sex) for gender but most preferred the English word gender.

We always use gender. We have never used *samajik ling* and all those terms. And I think we decided these things and started using this term early on.

Actually we used to use both *samājīk* [social] and *prākṛtik* [natural]. Now we only use gender. When discussing social and natural [gender], we see two binaries which remain divided. It is difficult to move beyond this.

In terms of translation, several participants talked about the fact that most resources for gender training are in English and explained some of the challenges of translation:

It's always Hindi to English when we talk, so for sexuality we say *yaunikta*. But *yaunikta* is also a very academic word. If I have to go to a village and speak with *panchayat* women, there I will not use *yaunikta*. Maybe I will frame my sentences like “What do you feel about your body, your desires or what do you think about how people look at you because you are a woman? How does your body have an effect on your life?” So I can talk in many different ways.

One participant also talked about how translation issues can affect the evaluation process, particularly when evaluators are not familiar with how language (e.g. Hindi) is used in specific places and when participants vary in their ability to articulate themselves in pre- and post-training questionnaires.

The blurred boundaries identified in the literature review between 'gender training' and less contained forms of consciousness raising and capacity building were also evident in participants' discussions of changing terms used to refer to gender training.

In a way these [early 'trainings'] were for us like what in the American feminist tradition were called consciousness raising things. I mean, we never called it that and I don't think we called them trainings. We called them workshops even though they were week-long. We called them workshops because the word training didn't sound good to us, and still doesn't sound good. It's too hierarchical a thing. What we do is actually not a training, it's actually a dialogue, a multilogue, a discussion; so a workshop where we work things out together ... I don't use the word training ... it's always *karyashala*, workshop because training is a hierarchical thing that the trainer knows it all and the trainees will come.

I think that gender training is a word that came later. This was consciousness raising. A lot of women were just trying to figure out their own experiences ... So consciousness raising is when you place yourself at the centre. It's very feminist. It's more political. It's more personal. And you politicize your personal so the trainer has to be willing to share her own stories and so does the group. So training is a shorthand which people understand – donors understand, government understands. So you sort of work with that because it's a wide variety of stakeholders who find your work legitimate. There may not be the kind of time for consciousness raising today as there was earlier when we were not driven by projects, where we could have conversations.

Early on it was not even women's empowerment. It was earlier community development. I was a community development person – a community organizer, grassroots worker. But then in the 1980s after the Shramshakti report by the planning commissions, women's empowerment came. Gender came much later. I think in mid 90s. Maybe it was there but for me it entered only early nineties ... Gender training, as far as my information and understanding, was introduced by the UN and Oxfam.

A number of participants who were or had been involved with Jagori pointed out that while most organizations were doing what could legitimately be called 'gender trainings', Jagori does 'feminist training': "We have never called our training gender trainings. We always refer to our training as feminist training and feminist training methodology".

Several participants had issues with the word 'train' and preferred the terminology of facilitation.

I don't see myself as a trainer. For building an organization of women, how can I be a trainer? I don't even know what their challenges and strengths are. I can only facilitate their process.

Training per se nowadays is like a bad word so we use facilitation because that's like the methodology of how you facilitate rather than tell people what to do or what is right or what is wrong.

Another alternative term for train was 'sensitize':

Some people will say 'Oh we have to go and do police training', and somebody will train the magistrates. Then somebody will say, 'No you can't *train* them, you have to *sensitize* them ... We talk about *narivadi nazariya* ... So *nazariya* means gender lens. I think gender lens is now being used more and more. More than you know, gender sensitization. Even non-women's groups have begun to use, 'How do you look through gender lens?'

Many people are using 'empowerment', 'sensitization'. They are making more gender sensitive people but I have not used these words ... 'Gender sensitization', actually this sounds as a very government-*wala* term ... In many government institutions also they use this term 'women empowerment', workshop on women empowerment, and if they are doing something with students that's 'gender sensitization'.

The women's movement, feminism and depoliticization

Several participants had been at the centre of the history of gender training – in the women's movement of the 1970s and '80s and as founders of the early feminist and women's organizations. They emphasized the way gender/feminist training had emerged organically from the women's movement. Some participants who had become trainers more recently were also aware of this history:

I think people started talking about gender because of certain kind of experiences. And I think maybe in the 1970s and '80s ... people used to discuss things related to women and then this process gradually turned into a training kind of thing ... I would invite [someone], "Please come to my organization and talk on this issue". So that discussion gradually became as a training kind of thing.

One participant talked about how 'feminist workshops' had emerged from the women's movement and then 'gender training' had been introduced by donor agencies and then implemented by NGOs and the government. Another interviewee emphasized how different these donor-driven 'gender trainings' were from the more feminist methodologies of local women's organizations:

They were discussing Harvard framework. They were discussing Caroline Moser framework. They were discussing these foreign frameworks in a totally alienating language and idiom with nothing on patriarchy, with nothing on personal experiences, just those concepts and sit down and do those concepts.

Several participants said that discussing the history of the women's movement was an important part of their gender workshops. Others were more cautious about the relationship between the women's movement/activism and gender training and saw their work as potentially changing this relationship:

We believe that the movement has been for a very select few activists, but now trainings are broadening that base. There are some of you who believe that there are some rights that we stand for, but how far is this political discourse going into the community? How does it reach

that audience? So a protest at Jantar Mantar is all very well but ... there are several men and women who are brought there who have no idea what they're there for ... That is where I believe gender trainings play a role.

I would see it in a rather larger perspective where organizations like us and the women's movement per se is actually aiming for the same goal ... When we started off in our history, we felt that just talking to the converted is not the answer ... We wanted to kind of open it up and talk to the unconverted so it was not just the UNs and the NGO sector or the women's movement people but people in the field, in the homes, in the factories, in whichever spaces.

One participant initially felt that the women's movement was not a part of gender training but changed her mind as she thought through it:

Trainings can be part of a movement but movements cannot be part of training ... A movement is like a journey. There's a time limit for trainings but no time limit for a movement ... By going to villages and conducting trainings with people on say gender, we are developing agency within that group. When I say movement, I don't necessarily mean a protest or demonstration; just a conversation within my family can also be a part of the movement. So in that way I'm saying that when we are giving trainings we are empowering people and making them part of a movement.

Others talked about how 'seasoned activists' were sometimes not the preferred trainers for specific audiences, because the activist trainers were seen as more likely to get angry with trainees.

Somebody told me recently ... we want *them* to do it as opposed to a seasoned activist because they get angry with everybody so everyone feels like they have been out to, you know, get a thrashing and so people don't want them.

Some participants highlighted the close relationship between activism and gender training in the early years and suggested that this had changed in more recent years.

In the beginning we were talking about, you know, how women can become activists and how women can play more active role in the community ... Initially when we started working, for us, lot of politics was on the street ... That is in a way becoming little less, that kind of coming together ... We had an activist women's conference every two years, three years. Now that has stopped completely ... The younger generation did not see it as an essential component of the feminist movement where ideas were shared, thousands of women met together.

Others talked about how mobilization was an important part of their work today too and suggested that the relationship between gender training and the movement was an ongoing one:

1: I think the two [training and the movement] are extremely interconnected. Large movements have always had an impact on the way trainings take place. For instance, in the 80s there was a strong movement against dowry so a lot of discussions were centred around that, but as soon as the Bhanwari case happened the focus shifted to workplace sexual

harassment and other related issues. The groups that we need for a movement sometimes emerge through these trainings which then give strength to the movements.

Purnima: I don't think we can really say that trainings aren't a movement in themselves. I've heard of cases where while a training is going on a specific issue was raised by one woman which led to all the women going to her place and directly addressing the issue...

2: I remember once during one of Jagori's trainings everything was cancelled on the third day because all participants went for some protest that was taking place at Jantar Mantar. At that time people were more interested in being there rather than attending the scheduled discussion...

3: I think many of the women who come for these courses come from political parties or from a space of working with Dalits or many different types of spaces and when you bring these women together it's very interesting how the movement can evolve. Because you're bringing all these perspectives into the so called mainstream feminist movement, which maybe leads to the feminist movement developing a more Marxist lens and women who may not have earlier identified with a Marxist ideology may go back and start to see things from this perspective, or maybe not. But the point is that the training creates a space where many movements can come together and the feminist movement can further develop

Given the prominence of depoliticization as a theme in the literature on gender training, we were particularly interested to understand how different individuals and organizations understood their relationship to feminism. As discussed above, one organization rejected the label 'gender training' in favour of 'feminist training'. One participant differentiated between the 'feminist approach of sharing' and a 'technical and systematic management way' of doing gender training. Many stated that they identified as feminists, some specifying that they were 'socialist feminists'. One participant said she had stopped identifying as a feminist: "somewhere along the line I have stopped calling myself a feminist. I don't want to call myself a feminist. What I see around, especially in the urban areas, where feminism has also brought in a lot of aggressiveness. So it becomes a mirror of patriarchy". Some participants felt that some organizations and individuals doing gender training are not feminist: "The interesting thing is that a lot of people do gender trainings, even though some of them are not associated with the women's movement or are not feminists". Another felt that there are many different types of feminism: "So always and also there is no one feminism and there is no one-way of looking at gender so there are feminisms and there are myriads of gender perspectives". Most organizations explicitly stated that they include feminism as part of their training:

A lot of other major issues got integrated in our training. So we also integrated issues of history of feminism, what is feminism all about, what kinds of feminisms emerged in the West and within our country like the Gandhian women's movement, the Communist Party women's movement and things like that. So we could actually gather information and share it with our participants, how the women's movement has emerged and how old it is, where are the recorded histories and what is the shift that feminist organizations have made in terms of the politics on women's rights issues.

Some participants talked about the resistance they were experiencing from funders/donors to words like feminism and patriarchy:

In the last two years, we've experienced that organisations like UNICEF, Care, etc. specifically ask us not to use words like patriarchy, feminism and empowerment while conducting gender training.

I feel very tense sometimes also when people say “Teach equality; don't teach feminism. Teach women's rights but don't teach patriarchy.” ... Even the university don't want to use the feminism and the patriarchy because those are coming from the rights-based movement work. So people believe in the development work, so gender equality is seen as a development work rather as a structural change work. Structural change means you're going to challenge the power relation ... Even sometimes we critique the UN also because they want to take the very non-confrontational path.

We asked how participants responded to such requests and whether they thought it was possible to do gender training without using words like feminism and patriarchy. Some talked about working around these restrictions by, for example, talking about the Constitution and human rights. Others stated that you could not do gender training without using these words:

I don't think you can but because we are in Hindi we don't talk of feminism, we talk about *narivadi nazariya*.

How can you talk of gender without patriarchy? Gender is not a problem. Gender is an outcome of a problem which is patriarchy. If we didn't have patriarchy, gendering will not be like this and there will be no gender hierarchies ... I cannot imagine doing a gender workshop without talking of patriarchy ... But I don't begin with patriarchy ... I don't give them a definition of gender. I work through examples and then I say okay you have now learnt what is gender. Talk about gender in your childhood, gender today, what was it like? And then I say ... so this is what is called patriarchy. So they give the data and you just name it.

- 1: Even we are told not to use the word but still do the trainings. The challenge is to still discuss the same issues but not overtly use certain terms.
- 2: I think the question is also who tells you not to use these terms? How you negotiate with these demands is what ultimately matters. This is a very individual or organizational decision and it's very strategic.
- 3: How do you negotiate with donors and funders? It is an individual organizational discussion. We are strategically trying to push boundaries. You still bring in what you have to say without using the words. Use more local words without putting people in difficult situations.

Some mentioned that similar negotiations were necessary when doing training on sexuality:

So many people say when we conduct training, "I want to do training on violence against women and gender but not sexuality" because many people still think sexuality is not our issue; it's a particular group. But I definitely include sexuality, make connections. Maybe I will not say it's a sexuality thing or not define but give them angle to see from body point of view, from pleasure point of view, from desire point of view, is also very important. So in Jharkhand, in Bihar whenever we do trainings in community, we never say that we are doing training on gender and sexuality; we are talking about gender and violence but we always include sessions around sexuality, sexual rights and sexual health.

A number of participants made it clear that they saw gender training as political.

My favourite word is 'politics' ... One must understand what is the politics of power and patriarchy so we get a deeper understanding of the current scenario. To put it simply we have to understand the politics. Training and workshops help create awareness of our every day and help one understand the politics behind these.

We feel very strongly about linking these issues to the larger global politics. We need to ask questions like, "Who are making these policies? What is the role of markets and the Sustainable Development Goals?" It is important that groups and organizations are well versed with institutions and the historicity.

One participant said that she felt political conviction was essential for a good trainer:

One has to learn to handle resistance. A trainer has to have this skill and this cannot be done if one does not have the political conviction ... Within any field, for any given work if the political conviction is lacking, you cannot be a good teacher or a professional or a trainer.

However, a common theme throughout interviews was the professionalization and depoliticization of gender training. Several interconnected dimensions of this have been discussed above: connections between gender training and feminism, activism and the women's movement; the pressure to make trainings shorter and standardized; and the emergence of young trainers with professional qualifications for whom gender training is more of a job than a vocation. In this section, we address the more general issues associated with the institutionalization of gender training as an income-generating activity within NGOs:

I think there will be a difference between the way that you know, professional gender trainers do it and women from the autonomous women's groups are doing it ... More and more people are coming to work with NGOs. We have the NGOisation ... This is where the money is. Women's programme is where the money is.

Gender training has now also become a business. The government has also started investing in such projects and we get asked many times by different groups and people to conduct these trainings on freelance basis. It's almost like gender trainings are required on tenders. This really infuriates us. Such people have no clue about the aims and objectives of these trainings. They're not even part of the process. For them it is just a contract.

A number of participants talked about the fact that some form of gender training had become compulsory for many government organizations and that this had resulted in a tick-box approach to gender training:

I am sitting on so many sexual harassment committees ... Nothing happens, you know. They put up a board and if they call a meeting, they postpone it five times ... They are not doing it willingly, if you understand what I mean. This is part of the government's effort to gender sensitize.

There is a [government department] that has a sexual harassment committee. According to the guidelines, there must be a sexual harassment committee in every department. I am a part of the committee and suggested training for the staff, but the chairperson and almost

everyone on the board refused ... They treat these protocols as a mere task that needs to be completed.

Training is seen by the government as a tool to claim they have already addressed these issues on gender and also as the least threatening tool or strategy because they see it as it doesn't have the capacity to transform; they see it as very individual. This is a challenge.

Some participants talked about the tendency for organizations and individuals to specialise in particular kinds of gender training (to do with health or law, for example), and said that while this was perhaps necessary, it also fragmented the feminist project. One participant talked about the mainstreaming of gender in development work as a problem "because I don't agree with the mainstream ... the mainstream is what we need to change". She noted that a number of people working in development say "I do gender" and asked what this means. She said: "I think gender became a tool; it became very manualized. They know the words, they know the analysis and all that, but it became a little bit bereft of the attitude part, the practice part. So largely gender became one of the things that you have to put in a program. When you're developing a project, you put it in. When you're developing a policy, you have to ensure that gender concerns are there, but it was a little bit mechanical or organizational mandate". Another participant said that as money had started flowing into NGOs in the 1980s, gender related events that had previously only be held in simple venues such as *dharamshalas* started to be occasionally held in four and five star hotels, and gaps between the salaries of the highest and lowest paid employees began to widen. She said that she felt that globalization and neoliberalization were generally depoliticizing. Some participants talked about the tendency for good gender trainers to move out of gender training and into management, as well as away from grassroots organizations and into multinational agencies like the UN and World Bank.

Engaging men

In the history of engaging men to promote gender equality in India, two events/organizations are central. The first was the establishment of Men's Action to Stop Violence Against Women (MASVAW) in Uttar Pradesh in 2001. MASVAW is an alliance of men and organizations working on gender issues, committed to reacting to and reducing incidents of violence against women. The second key event was the 2nd MenEngage Global Symposium which was held in Delhi in 2014 and attracted 1100 participants from 94 countries. One participant who had been involved in the establishment of MASVAW explained the motivation behind the organization:

Violence against women was only related to the women. That needed to be challenged and then came the idea that the men are a part of the problem so they have to be part of the solution. So men have to take clear position to break silence, to stand against violence against women.

He also talked about the need to work with men to help them understand the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 (PWDVA), as many thought it was anti-family and anti-men and that all men were going to end up in jail.

These events/organizations were mentioned by a few participants, but most had a more general sense that the focus on engaging men and boys had increased in recent years:

You now have at least a few organizations that work very prominently on issues of masculinity. I think they began mainly in response to that it shouldn't only be a women's issues. It began with a response to that but I think now it has grown into really understanding masculinities and what does it mean.

A few participants pointed out that men had always been involved and said that it was the specific focus on men and masculinities that was very new. Those who had been involved in the more Gender and Development style trainings for development policy makers and practitioners (as opposed to those involved in empowerment for grassroots women) said that men had been involved since the beginning, although, as noted in the literature review, development workers and organizations often assumed that gender training was for women.

A couple of participants who had been involved in the early days of gender training said that initially they were perhaps angry with men and that this had been a barrier to training men. One said that when she and her colleagues had first come to feminism, their own life experienced had made them 'angry feminists' and that may have made people feel that they were anti-men. She said that this anger had to be resolved "because this is not about every man. It's about the system so don't feel that every man is like that or all men have to". Another said:

You know, we didn't work with men for many years. One of the reasons could have been, although it was never conscious, that we were too angry to work with men You have to be friendly. You have to be respectful. You have to trust the person that they can change, they will change. So if men are my enemies, I can't work with them. So the first thing is that it is not men and women, it is the system called patriarchy.

Participants gave a number of explanations for the growing focus on men and masculinities in gender training. One participant said that the impetus to engage men had come both from the '95 Beijing conference and from the young girls they were working with who were more oppressed by their brothers than their fathers and said "you are making us aware of our rights but what about our brothers". Another thought that influence from abroad and HIV/AIDS were factors:

These large networks of MenEngage, etc., they came ... not from the West only, but from Brazil and other places and Africa where people started working on this. I think another thing was HIV. That also pushed people to look at men and to look at masculinity, to look at male sexuality.

Another participant said she felt the impetus to engage men came from a combination of the realisation that just working with women may not be enough, and the increasing funding available for work with men and boys:

There's a lot of work that had already happened with women ... There was progress in terms of women's rights but it still seemed there was so much of work to be done. I think people began looking at, you know, is it enough to only be doing this work? One came from there. The other push has definitely come from a donor agenda.

A common theme was that programmes with men and boys are necessary because they can feel threatened by programmes with women and girls as well as by women's broader empowerment:

If a woman is changing and demanding change in the household which leads to conflict, if men doesn't understand why this woman is kind of asking for equality then he would never cooperate.

So when girls started playing football in the field, boys suddenly felt very threatened that why these girls are getting so much attention. They are receiving jackets, jerseys, they are getting all the like privilege ... They were then reacting in a very aggressive way ... So then we started slowly engaging with them. So once in a while we are also organizing sessions with them, interactions with them. So if there are four to five sessions with girls, we conduct one session with parents and brothers also.

So you need to kind of empower women to resist violence and assert their rights but you also need to work with men in a strong way. So we have been working with men from early days itself where we see men not just as perpetrators to violence but also as critical support factors in preventing violence ... Otherwise what would happen is if you only work with women, without engaging men, then the violence will be much higher because there'll be lot more backlash from the men who are not able to take on the new assertiveness of the womenfolk.

The idea that patriarchy also has negative effects for men was a common one. Some framed this in terms of a critique of an instrumental approach to engaging men:

Patriarchy damages men also. Actually, patriarchy brutalizes men. Patriarchy gives some privilege to men, but there's a cost of privilege men have to pay ... The objective was sensitize men so they can support women ... Men have to become sensitive to understand the gender discrimination and support the women's rights. But now we changed that. The aim and objective is that men have to understand their own power and privilege and understand the whole equality, understand the Constitution, understand the human rights and reflect on them whether they are contributing towards equality and saving the human rights or not ... It was a very instrumental approach.

You need to work alongside men not as an instrument. There are many people who have been using women as an instrument for development. Here I don't want to use men as instruments. Have a dialogue with them. How do they see things? ... The media, the society etc. push men to be violent, push them towards aggressive masculinities. So they have very few forums for sharing their views. They *also* hate competition. They *also* want security, friendship and equality.

I say okay what are the masculine qualities, what are the women's qualities? So man has to be this? Poor fellow he is not allowed to cry, he cannot wash a baby ... I keep asking those questions: How many of you have nursed somebody? How many of you have cleaned the bottom of a little girl infant? ... They have to understand it from the core of their being. In some of our training men have cried and that means it has touched you somewhere and sometimes suddenly you'll see something ... They will be ridiculed by their peer group: "You are your wife's servant. Don't you have a wife or a sister that you are cleaning?" So some young men say, we clean the house inside but outside we don't go out. So these conflicts are really common.

Participants also talked about the resistance they face from male trainees:

At one level men get threatened: "Oh you Delhi feminists ... you come and break home and the usual crap". But then, how do you work on it? That's one of the things that I have seen and learnt and changed in the training. How do you approach men? That's a challenge which every trainer has to face.

Men, when they come to a gender training, men who are coming to it for the first time, they are very defensive, they are very aggressive. Some of them don't come of their own accord, they have been brought there.

Some participants emphasised that broadening our understanding of gender beyond women should not just involve engaging men, but also moving beyond gender binaries and including all who are marginalized on the basis of their gender:

There are lots of organizations that work on gender equality, and they work on gender based violence, they work on gender and education, but their gender is only women ... So, when we say gender equality, it is important to include men as well. It is important to include people marginalized on the basis of their gender identity ... That is what we try and, as trainers, put down on the table: that there are these varied genders and when we say gender based violence and gender and education, it is important to include men along with other people who are marginalized on the basis of their gender, and sexuality is also quite important ... for us talking about the masculinity in transmen is also very important.

I'm a part of the feminist movement and I want to expand the scope of this movement for which I need greater mobilisation. So for this my first priority will be women, then I realise that just talking to women is not enough so I include men too, then after that I think what about trans people? They also need to be included. So as the movement progresses the target group changes or rather broadens.

One participant was critical of the lack of grassroots volunteerism in efforts to engage men:

For the last 7-8 years there has been more focus on engaging men. I got to know that there's a tension between the feminist movement and these men. See, the feminist movement has a longer history and lots of volunteerism which I don't find the men's movement in India, especially in and around Delhi, has this. It has not generated and evolved from a movement that has volunteerism and politics. It comes from a place of funded projects.

Another participant felt that gender training had alienated young men:

My question today is this, number one, whether a lot of gender training has alienated young men. That has been my experience ... In one of the trainings that had happened in Jharkhand at the end of just three days of training, ... they said, "This is not the first gender training that we have had. This is the third gender training that we are going through but it is the first time that the five of us are getting, five young men, without feeling guilty." ... I felt tears in my eyes. I felt sad. Is this what we are doing in our gender trainings? Alienated, they are getting more alienated. These are sensitive young men.

Some participants explained why they as individuals or their organizations were not working specifically with men and boys. Reasons include feeling more comfortable with women than with men and having more in common with them; concern that male employees would find it easier to attend training than female employees due to work hierarchies and domestic responsibilities and that gender training would end up reinforcing inequalities if it was also available to men; and the need to keep men and women separate when discussing sexuality to allow for more personal conversations.

For me my primary focus is still on women because I feel more comfortable with women. There's some commonness. I don't come from their class. And I don't come from most of their caste. What brings us together is my womanhood.

We come from a basic belief that we have very limited resources and we need to decide where we want to utilize them ... If there is an invitation for a workshop, then for whom does it become easier to attend? ... We feel that in any way there are not enough spaces for women to talk about their experiences and share, honestly about sexuality particularly. So if there will be men in these groups, the kind of discussion we have right now, at such a deep and personal level, we will not be able to do.

Consciously many groups postpone working with men because there was this understanding then that, given the power and hierarchies and structures and power that exist, the whole process of training may create and reinforce those hierarchies more if you started working with men.

Evaluation and the limits of gender training

We asked participants what evidence they use to determine whether someone has been trained or sensitized. A number of participants talked about changes in behaviour that trainees made in their personal lives. This was connected to the focus on the personal in gender training – participants felt that by encouraging women to share their own experiences in training, they were building their capacity to make changes in their own lives. One participant gave the example of a woman who attended a gender training and then went home and convinced her husband to help her get a salwar kurta after having worn a sari for throughout her 14-year marriage; and a woman who after training convinced her husband to ask the men who used the local hand pump to cover themselves better while bathing. She said that these examples, “give me intense satisfaction, pleasure and I just feel that maybe out of ten, three people have taken this action and the fourth person will someday act on it, I am sure”. Another participant gave the example of a young trainee who had managed to stop the early marriage of her sister, another talked about a woman who decided to stop keeping fast for her husband, and another gave the example of speaking up when colleagues make sexist comments or jokes. Other examples given by participants as evidence of being trained included, language and body language change, having conversations with others, and working with women. Several participants mentioned that it is when trainees who have said yes to everything start to challenge the trainer that they know that they have been trained:

They start speaking a different language. They start identifying different aspects of oppression ... Then some women saying I want to work with women so that's a third indicator. "I will have a dialogue will my father about my educational desires and dreams".

... Many women say “okay, I think the first thing I have to do is talk to my daughter and listen to her, so better dialogues”.

If I see the women who were quiet and dormant being animated at the end of it and they are ready to challenge few things in life or take initiatives... And especially their body language. If they are comfortable sitting next to me and sharing food or sharing something very personal.

Those who challenge my ways, I think that person is listening ... He is arguing with me. I think ‘At least what I said reached that person. That person understood and that person is feeling uncomfortable so he or she is arguing’ ... Sometimes people only clap and say ‘very good, very nice’. I don't believe the person. Sometimes people also learn to be politically correct”

Along with behaviour change, participants mentioned looking for attitude or perspective change as a sign of the success of their training.

For instance, during the discussion of transgenders for a training this girl said I will now go say sorry to a transgender who I mocked earlier. They may not work for the cause but at least the attitudes are changing.

In terms of methods of evaluation, pre- and post- training surveys were common as well as oral discussions. One participant said her organization asks trainees to identify two new things they have learnt that they think they will be able to use in their own lives.

We always do an evaluation, so they can do a written evaluation, anonymous and then we also do what we call the oral collective evaluation and that gives us an idea what they understood, what they're still struggling with, what they have decided to change in their lives.

The impact will be visible also when one looks at how many people are joining in the movements with regard to these issues, how many people are coming up and joining us and what understandings are they building from these. We have tried creative ways of understanding like making the participants write a memorandum, and writing letters to the government as to what kind of changes are you looking for.

Some participants talked about how difficult it is to evaluate the effectiveness of gender training:

See at the end of every training, everybody will say that they loved it and then when you ask them you know, how would you change, they may come up with some suggestions but how do you know if they internalize it? How do you know how they use it in their own lives?

Several raised the concern that pre- and post- training questionnaires were often seen as very formal and as an obligation by trainees, with the result that trainees often complete the questionnaires in a very mechanical way and copy answers from each other.

Some participants emphasised that it wasn't possible to see much change without a longer timeframe:

If you are in a long term sustained partnership with a group where you're going again and again ... especially if you have a rapport with them, you may have people telling you what they like, what they don't like, what is unanswered, what is uncomfortable and you yourself have not encountered these contexts so you have to think about how you want to address them.

You are not trained in the three days, five days we have gone, but in follow up in training, on the phone, on the Whatsapp you share what you have trained and the proof, the evidence is what you face, the challenges.

One participant explained that sometimes immediate change can actually have negative consequences – one trainee had challenged the finance system at her workplace after attending a gender training and had lost her job.

Some talked about the challenges of satisfying funder/donor requirements for evaluation. The main areas of contention were the focus on numbers and the expectation of immediate change:

One thing which we have to also highlight is the pressure from funders. That is one of the reasons we have to do so many trainings, and so many women. So many women we have reached out, but that doesn't mean that all those 7000 women have been empowered. My first question on these things has been this: How are we going to reach out to 7000 women? ... Everything is being looked at in numbers. The quantitative things have become very important ... There's so many things from the funders. Output, outcome, impact. In our times the funders did not have this sort of pressure and so much energy goes into these things.

They are always interested in the number of people. We are interested to give the evidence of the process.

There is a format with regard to case work while writing to the funder. It says "minimum 600 women have been empowered and gained strength". I feel whoever connects with us is in itself is a marker of strength ... For funders, empowering means they will change the course of their life. That is not possible overnight. Some may take a month and some may take years. It is very complex and needs time and cannot be measured.

But others were more satisfied with the expectations of their funders in terms of evaluation: "We are lucky to have liberal funders and not expecting numbers and it's mostly qualitative".

As might be expected from the critiques of depoliticized 'capsule' gender trainings discussed above, when asked about the limits of gender training, many participants talked about the potential for training to be just an isolated one-off event that does not impact beyond the individual trainees and does not transform social relations in any meaningful way:

We don't change institutions much so the larger patriarchal structure remains relatively unchanged. So the next generation of women, they are also needing opportunities for sharing ... See mostly gender trainings are an event. So it ends there. It may have generated so many things that require follow-up support, but that doesn't happen most of the time. It

is part of an already defined project. So it very rarely gets implemented either in the lives of the women or in the institution. It remains as an isolated event.

In terms of training, it is a small part of a larger process of transforming societies. Training can be very individual. Unless there is support and other things happening around, it is difficult to take it further. In talking about a range of issues, challenging existing structures, different identities like class, gender, sexuality etc., unless it happens in a very concrete manner it becomes very difficult to bring about any kind of change through just training ... Beyond a certain point, there is only so much you can do unless these deep rooted larger structures change. Training is one strategy but there is a larger objective.

In talking about the limits of gender training, participants reiterated the need for follow-up and long-term interventions. A number of participants also talked about the need for gender training to happen alongside other interventions:

It has limitation in a sense that just doing gender training is not enough. I think there is a need to do many other things, the things which are reinforcing your gender stereotypes. So you need to challenge many things in the media, TV.

Unless it is supported by other 360-degree interventions, on its own, there is only so much you can do. It will certainly create awareness. It will certainly promote a lot of women to resist and negotiate in their day to day kind of experiences and break gender barriers and norms and stereotypes and all of that. But it will also create backlash in the absence of support systems ... It cannot be a stand-alone intervention. It is a good starting point.

In lieu of an analysis

Through the process of this short research project, certain methodological and conceptual questions around feminist practice have emerged and in this section, we are only making an indication towards them, without much elaboration. Firstly, how do we want to engage with words like understanding, sensitizing, consciousness-raising or changing attitudes as objectives of gender trainings? It is necessary to reflect on whether the method as well as content of gender trainings creates an enabling environment towards the feminist praxis of consciousness-raising. It is necessary to make a distinction between as well as acknowledge the convergences between the political processes of transformation and the training objective of altering 'mindsets'. Secondly, it seems a futile exercise to trace the precise chronology of the the relationship between the movement and training – did issues raised in the movement require closer inter-personal follow-up in/through trainings; while these sessions created newer and complex issues for the movement to be taken up in negotiations with the state? Although this manner of tracing history is futile, there is one matter of significance that surfaced – trainings aim to be intimate and inter-personal, while the movement(s) are more disconnected from the sphere of the personal. Of course, the point here is not really to suggest that the training and the movement spaces are different spaces; rather one way of looking at it is to see the movement as multiple and plural, and training as one constituent of this diversity. As a pedagogical practice, the trainings focus on self as well as experience(s) in a way that the demands emanating from the movement(s) cannot.

Thirdly, there seemed to be two kinds of disjunctures emanating through the project: a) between training and trainers that have emerged from politics-based movements, and depoliticized funder driven trainings; and b) between academic spaces of women's and gender studies and practices of gender training. A lot has been written on the NGOisation of the women's movement and the institutionalization of women's/gender studies within universities, and we do not want to bring that debate here. Instead it is necessary to map the convergences between these spaces and the people inhabiting these spaces, since that is how these spaces have developed – overlapping and not compartmentalized, through their people, practices and politics. Fourthly, a crucial question around transformation was encountered through this project. Is training the end of the transformative process or beginning of that praxis? If dialogue lies at the heart of training, then it is also the soul of transformative politics. The ability to identify and articulate hierarchies in one's everyday life is itself an exercise in transformation as much as 'doing' the transformation. This project left us with the thought that transformation is not a moment nor an event, but a process in continuation. The more the concept of transformation is unpacked, the more boundaries and binaries of the trainer and the trainee get challenged.

As the women's movement has become more multiple and fractured, there is a need to look at and construct histories of what has been happening within the movement, at its margins and corners or as its alternative. This project of 'The History of Gender Training in Delhi' is an initial attempt towards marking that political space and acknowledging that there can be a history of this as well. Any process of recording numerous voices is difficult; we heard similar narratives from many and also very specific narratives depending upon the particular nature of the organization. It is impossible to know whether the voices of each participant represent the approach of their organization or of just that one individual. We hope we have done justice to the diversity of views that were shared with us.

Through the workshop, interviews and literature review we have developed a clearer understanding of the history of gender training in India than we anticipated from such a small pilot project. There are a few trainers we would still like to speak to, but our sense is that the main area in need of investigation is contemporary gender training practice. We intend to explore the possibility of a follow-up research project that will involve attending a variety of trainings offered by different organizations and reviewing training manuals and materials. We would be very grateful for feedback from trainers as to whether such a project is worthwhile, what questions are most in need of addressing, and which organizations are willing to be involved.

Workshop programme

Day 1 Friday 18 November

2-3	Introductions and objectives of project How did you become a gender trainer?
3-4	Objectives of gender training Why was gender training conceived as necessary at a particular historical moment? (Each participant to give a 5 min answer) Have the objectives of gender training changed over time?
4-4.15	Tea
4.15-6	Objectives of gender training continued

Day 2 Saturday 19 November

9.30-11	Content of gender training What are the key concepts covered in most gender trainings? How are these concepts conveyed? (Each participant to give an example of how they convey a particular concept e.g. sex and gender or domestic violence or sexual harassment) Have these concepts and the methods used to convey them changed over time? How and why?
11-11.15	Tea
11.15-12.45	Recipients of gender training Who do you train (demographics and location)? How does the content differ depending on participants? How do different participants respond to gender training?
12.45-1.15	Lunch
1.15-2.45	Engaging men When did training men become a priority? Is the content of training provided to men different? What are the challenges of engaging men?
2.45-3	Tea
3-5.30	Evaluating gender training How do you know when somebody has been trained? What are your personal measures for evaluating the success of training? How do you evaluate a gender training program for funders? What are the limitations of gender training?

Interview questions

1. Could you please tell me a little bit about your background and how you became a gender trainer?
2. Was there any formal process of training that you received?
3. What is the process for becoming a trainer in your organization today?
4. What do you think are the characteristics of a good trainer?
5. Why was gender training conceived as necessary at a certain moment in the history of women's activism in Delhi?
6. Since when has your organization been imparting gender training?
7. What do you think the objectives of gender training are?
8. Have the perceived objectives of gender training changed over time? If so, what has prompted these changes?
9. Do you think gender training is a form of education?
10. What are the key terms and activities included in most gender trainings? Have they changed from when you started training? Why have they changed?
11. Can you give an example a topic or concept that you cover in your gender trainings (e.g. sex and gender or sexual harassment) and explain how you would convey this topic/concept in a training session?
12. Who are the people trained by you/your organization? How are the trainees identified?
13. What kind of feedback do participants usually give on the training they receive?
14. Do you/your organization impart gender training to men? When was that started? Why was it thought necessary to train men? Are men trained together with women or separately from them? Does gender training that includes men need to be designed differently from trainings for an all-female audience?
15. Is there any mechanism to measure whether the participant has been 'trained'?
16. What are the limitations of gender training?
17. Who usually funds gender training? Has this changed over time?
18. How is gender training different from teaching introductory courses on gender as a part of Women's Studies/Gender Studies degrees/research programmes in college and university contexts?
19. What is the relationship between women's groups as pressure groups and NGOs as training providers? Do you see gender training as an important component of furthering the goals of the women's movement?

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