

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

IN

DELHI UNIVERSITY

A REPORT

GENDER STUDY GROUP

DELHI UNIVERSITY

DELHI

1996

GENDER STUDY GROUP (GSG) was formed by a group of students in Delhi University in 1991 in order to address gender-related issues. GSG is a small group comprising ten students we generate funds on our own for our activities. Our membership is open to all those who are interested in engaging with the issue of gender politics in academic concerns and the struggle to bring about gender parity we first decided to turn a critical eye on ourselves, the studies we engage in and the forms of sexist discrimination women face in the university, instead of concerning ourselves with the upliftment of all women. We believe it is necessary to question the patriarchal scholarship which is often imparted to us in the classrooms. We also believe that theory and practice are intimately connected. Our education must result in our questioning the sexism in our own lives and actively participating in struggles against patriarchy. In this we have also felt the need to support other democratic struggles.

We have over the years tried to generate discussions on gender related issues by organising seminars, workshops and screening documentaries. In the last 2 years, we have focussed on the issue of sexual harassment in Delhi University and in particular on sexual harassment of women students on campus roads. We have taken up this issue with the university authorities on a number of occasions and have organised protest marches against the issue on campus. We have attempted to address the problem of sexual harassment at different levels. At one level, we have felt a need to create a dialogue among the students themselves on the issue of sexual harassment to break the overarching view of it as a 'personal' or 'individual' problem. At another level, we have felt a need to work as a pressure group to ensure that the university takes responsibility for incidents of sexual harassment and violence against women. GSG provides to many of us the hope that such an environment in the university will be created where women will not be afraid of staying back in the library after dark, where women will be able to walk on the campus roads without being commented upon, propositioned, abused or chased, where sexism and gender discrimination will be a distant memory.

Questionnaires were designed distributed and tabulated by :

Abhishek, Amit, Bina, Charu, Debashish, Ishita, Janaki, Jinee, Jyotsna, Kobita, Lestar, Lithual, Mahuya, Milind, Neelanjana, Niharka, Nilanjan, Pratiksha, Ranu, Ravi. M. Ravi T. Ritambhare, Ruchi, Simanti, Shefali, Srirupa, Suman, Suranjan Swati, Vasudeva, Viplav, Yasmeen and friends from Miranda House, Daulat Ram and Social Work hostels.

This report was written by:

Janaki Abraham, Jinee Lokanatha, Jyotsna Sivarammayya, Neelanjana Mukherjee, Niharika Banerjee, Pratiksha Baxi, Ritambhara Hebbar, Simanti Dasgupta, Suman Bisht and Suranjan Sinha.

Contact Address: Gender Study Group, c/o Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University, Delhi-7.

INTRODUCTION

Instances of gender discrimination and sexual harassment are rampant in Delhi University. Sexual harassment takes place everywhere in the university, be it in classrooms and cafeterias, on U-specials or on the roads. Today women feel threatened in this university, they are no longer able to pursue their academic life without having to deal with sexual harassment from teachers, colleagues, classmates and even outsiders who come to the university only to harass women. In short, the university space is not conducive to the development of healthy minds and healthy interactions within the campus.

There have been innumerable cases of sexual harassment in the past. Some of these cases have led to public debate on the issue of sexual harassment in Delhi University. In some cases there has been collective protests and action. Many other cases of harassment, however, probably remain unexposed. What is significant about the debate and protest concerning sexual harassment on the campus is that it has tended to be confined to particular cases and in this has not received sustained attention. Furthermore, everyday forms of sexual harassment such as street harassment, often referred to as 'eve-teasing', has not received the attention it deserves.

This report is another step in our attempt to address the issue of sexual harassment on the campus. In addition to documenting women's experiences of street harassment it also attempts to make it 'visible'. Street harassment has not yet caught the serious attention of the university authorities. We, therefore, hope that by documenting both the experiences of sexual harassment of women students and the impact that this form of harassment has on students, we will be able to communicate the gravity of this violence. In addition especially as protest against harassment on the campus has tended to take place only when a dramatic and tragic event has taken place.

Our report begins with the way in which sexual harassment and 'eve-teasing' have been defined by our respondents. In analysing the same, we have tried to argue the need to define all acts of harassment - from gestures to physical assault - as sexual harassment. By redefining sexual harassment we seek to make redundant the distinction between sexual harassment and eve-teasing. We have examined sexual harassment on campus at different levels. We look at three kinds of harassment: a) teacher student harassment; b) peer harassment; c) street harassment. However, the focus of our report is on street harassment. Here we discuss the extent and sexual harassment on the streets. We also describe the experiences of sexual harassment faced by women on frequency of the campus. We look at sexual harassment faced by women students in such places as canteens, libraries, class rooms and at college festivals. In addition we have attempted to explore the impact that sexual harassment has had on women students of university. The report ends with a section on strategies and solutions that we believe will help curb the problem.

Below, we briefly recall some of the prominent cases of sexual harassment on the campus in the last ten years and the protests that followed them.

* In 1987, Rajini Parashar, a research scholar in the Botany Department, committed suicide. The CBI inquiry claimed that it was academic harassment but it was popularly held that this was a result of sexual harassment by her supervisor. The supervisor was exonerated of the charge of academic harassment. However, the enquiry report was never made public. For the first time the issue of sexual harassment by male professors entered the debate in the university community.

* In the same year, several progressive and democratic teachers, students and karamcharis of the university formed the Goonda Virodhi Abhiyan (GVA). The GVA protested against the sexual harassment of women students during Holi. For the first time squads comprising women and men students were formed to patrol the roads to combat goondaism.

* In 1991, a woman student of Ramjas while being ragged was forced to strip in the men's hostel. Some protests did take place; however, most sections of the university community remained silent. Although, this prompted the university to pass an anti-ragging ordinance, no strong action was taken against the guilty. The report was not made public.

* In 1993, a Kenyan student of Moti Lal Nehru college was molested in a U-special bus near her college. Students of JMC not only helped her fight the harassers but also came out in large numbers in a march organised by Janvadi Mahila Samiti in the North campus. Other students of the south campus and students of the north campus joined the march and walked to the Lt. Governor's office to submit a memorandum.

* In 1994, a resident of University Hostel for Women was killed by a speeding car at Patel Chest. In protest there was a rasta roko (road block) and again a march to the Lt. Governor's office was organised demanding regulation of traffic on campus roads. For the first time it was pointed out that there is a correlation between the lack of traffic regulation and incidents of sexual harassment on campus.

* In 1996, the University Executive Council dismissed Prof. S.C. Bhatia, the head of the Dept. of Adult Education, for sexually harassing his women colleagues. The complaint was made against him in 1987 by the women staff of his Department. The Baviskar Committee was set up to investigate the charges. The Committee exonerated S.C. Bhatia of these charges. In 1992 another complaint by the staff members accused Bhatia of sexual harassment, molestation and exploitation of women. 'Out of the 22 women who joined the Department as staff members from its inception to the present, almost all of them have left. Over 80% of them suffered some or the other type of physical vulgarity and harassment from Bhatia' (Manushi, No. 68), as the head of the department. S.C. Bhatia misused his powers to both sexually and professionally discriminate against women staff members. The University set up an enquiry committee under a retired high court judge, Justice Wad and Alice Jacob. The committee found S.C. Bhatia guilty of the charges of sexual harassment made against him and directed the University to take action against him. After repeated protests, the university reversed its earlier decision to demote S.C. Bhatia. His services have been recently terminated. During this period, a group of teachers and students came together as a group called 'Swabhiman' to organise protests against the university administration on the issue. The case took ten years before the victims could receive any justice.

* In March 1996, five women doctors of Maulana Azad Medical College (MAMC) made charges against Dr. S.N. Reddy, the Head of the Department of Dermatology and Venereal Diseases for sexual harassment. The charges against him were that he subjected them to verbal abuse with the use of sexual innuendoes, double-meaning phrases and obscene remarks. This resentment took a form of a mass agitation when he locked up a junior woman doctor in the OPD room with a naked male patient, supposedly to teach her a lesson. This agitation went on for months demanding that strict action should be taken against Dr. S. N. Reddy for sexually harassing women. However in spite of a strong students movement supporting this demand, the authorities claimed that unless there is overt physical assault on a woman the act will not be considered as sexual harassment.

Sample Profile

This study is based on a survey conducted in the Delhi University (North Campus) from 13th January to 26th February 1996. Four sets of questionnaires were distributed to :

- 1) a. women hostellers in the post-graduate and undergraduate hostels on the university campus.
b. women non-hostellers who live in rented accomodation near the campus in are as such as Vijay Nagar, Outram Lines, Hudson Lines, Malka Ganj and Indra Vihar.
- 2) a. men hostellers in 5 post-graduate hostels on the university campus.
b. men non-hostellers who live near the campus in areas such as Vijay Nagar, Hudson Lines, Outram Lines, Malka Ganj and Indra Vihar.
- 3) women residents on the campus who live in the Staff quarters.
- 4) faculty members and/or their spouses who live on the campus in the Faculty quarters.

TABLE 1 CATEGORY 1 (a) : WOMEN HOSTELLERS

S. NO.	HOSTEL	TOTAL NUMBER
1.	University Hostel for Women (PGW)	34
2	Meghdoot Hostel (MDH)	19
3.	Central Institute for Education Hostel (CIE)	7

1 We recognize the drawback of not having interviewed undergraduate men hostellers.

4.	School of Social Work Women's Hostel (MSW)	8
5	Miranda House Hostel (MH)	22
6.	Daulat Ram Hostel (DRC)	15
7.	Sri Ram College of Commerce Hostel for Women	4
TOTAL NO. OF WOMEN HOSTELLERS		109

S NO.	HOSTEL	TOTAL NUMBER
1.	Gwyer Hall	7
2.	Jubilee Hall	9
3.	Post - Graduate Men's Hostel (PGM)	14
4.	Mansarovar Hostel	1
5.	International Hostel for Men (ISH)	1
TOTAL NO. OF MEN HOSTELLERS		32

Our total sample size was 200, although almost twice the number of questionnaires were handed out.

We also interviewed a few faculty members, university authorities and the additional SHO from the Maurice Nagar Police Station. We would like to put on record the fact that despite innumerable visits to the proctor's office we were able to interview only one of the deputy proctors. We were unable to make an appointment for an interview with proctor Prof Moolchand Sharma. We also interviewed the warden of Miranda House and warden and Provost of Meghdoot Hostel.

It must be evident that we wanted to include in our survey, the experiences and opinions, of most of the people who are integral to the campus life. The best and easiest way for us to get a whole range of diverse responses was the questionnaire method. Therefore we formulated separate questionnaires for our different respondents. To begin with we were ambitious about administering the questionnaires ourselves. However, we soon realized the limitations such a plan. First, we lacked the time required for such an exercise especially given the lack of a consistent group of volunteers who would help us through the whole process of filling questionnaires. Second, the unavailability of the respondents during the time we went around to interview them forced us into leaving the questionnaires with the respondents. Some even preferred to fill the questionnaires on their own as some of the questions which dealt with their experiences of sexual harassment brought back the trauma associated with the incidents. A few of our respondents broke down and a couple talked for the first time about their experiences of child abuse. Third, informal discussions yielded greater results. Often we would ask our respondents to fill out the questionnaires on their own while we had an informal discussion with them on the issue of sexual harassment. In a sense since most of us shared with our women respondents their experiences of everyday violence on campus, we were able to instantly empathise with them.

Interviewing the women respondents has been a tremendous experience for us. Almost all of us underwent a phase of depression for many of the experiences, anxieties and fears of our respondents echoed our own experiences of sexual harassment faced in the university. The magnitude of sexual harassment on the university campus and its effect on all women respondents, on the one hand and the general acceptance of the phenomena as normal on the other hand, was a frustrating and depressing experience for some of us.

Most respondents filled out the questionnaires only on the condition that we would do something about the problem and not merely restrict the survey to an academic exercise. However some of our respondents questioned us, with a deep sense of cynicism, on whether we would ever be able to bring about any change. We took back with us the queries our respondents post to us, which have helped us in our reflections on the nature of the problem and ways of combating it.

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

The university is both a workplace and a residential place. Women face different forms of sexual harassment in the university as students. One of the questions we have asked of ourselves over the years is how to define sexual harassment at the workplace, in the university. As a residential place, the university is also open to other forms of sexual harassment, generally known as 'eve-teasing'. Since in this report we are chiefly

concerned with the problem of sexual harassment women face on campus roads, we have been curious about the perceptions of this phenomena held by the women and men residing on campus. Is there any explicit or implicit difference drawn between 'sexual harassment' and 'eve-teasing' or are these perceived as similar behaviour and experience? Prompted by this curiosity we posed certain questions to our respondents both men and women in order to elicit the popular usage of the terms of sexual harassment and eve-teasing.

As we reflect on the range of responses received, we cannot but remind ourselves that popular perceptions or common usages of such terms and categories may often conceal the conveniences of existing power relations. If some women do feel eve-teasing is mere 'teasing' and thus not quite as harmful as sexual harassment often is (many men would readily agree with this), we may need to dig deeper to expose the fallacy behind this.

In the survey most respondents of either sex pointed at the differences between sexual harassment and eve-teasing. Women students articulated this difference in terms of a threshold of tolerance. In this eve-teasing is viewed as all behaviour which can be overlooked and ignored, whereas sexual harassment comprises all that crosses the limit of tolerance. Although individual women seemed to have very subjective definition of what is tolerable and what is not, yet there was a shared basic understanding across the sexes as to what constitutes sexual harassment and eve-teasing.

Accordingly, most respondents, women and men, described 'verbal harassment' as eve-teasing and contrasted that with 'physical harassment' which was seen as sexual harassment. They also distinguished between the two on the basis of the harm caused by each. They described eve-teasing as relatively harmless behaviour committed usually by strangers while sexual harassment would be grievous behaviour committed by acquaintances or men in positions of institutional power. In addition most men and women described eve-teasing as isolated incidents while sexual harassment would typically be repetitive and sustained over a period of time.

These two expressions also seem to acquire divergent meanings in respective social worlds of women and men. Some men may eve-tease to have fun. As a male respondent said, '[eve-teasing is] behaviour that attacks women either verbally or physically with an intention of making fun'. Eve-teasing is often thus legitimised as 'fun' by qualifying it as male attention which women 'enjoy' and find flattering. In fact a male respondent said 'Sometimes eve-teasing can be acceptable to a girl. It may give her fun'. Many men view eve-teasing to be a harmless affair. In response to the question 'Have you ever eve-teased and/or sexually harassed?' one male respondent stated, 'Yes, I have eve-teased but that was very light in nature and that never reached a level that can annoy a girl. I have never sexually harassed'. Another male student stated the same, 'I have eve-teased but not sexually harassed. I have made subtle comments with sexual undertones like "what a beauty", on seeing a buxom lady "gorgeous" ... At times ogle at gorgeous women'. Yet another noted, 'I have eve-teased. I take this for wolf whistling and yelling over beautiful girls. I have never harassed a girl'. Evidently eve-teasing is seen by men as 'harmless' behaviour that does not amount to harassment.

In contrast, all the women respondents noted that they find eve-teasing to be harassment for, to quote one, 'eve-teasing is a milder form of sexual harassment but a violation all the same'. Eve-teasing, according to another, 'degrades a woman without affecting her physically'. One woman categorically described eve-teasing as 'verbal and mental torture'. What men thought of as 'fun' is thus experienced by women to be degrading, humiliating and traumatising. Those women respondents who defined eve-teasing as behaviour that can be 'ignored', also talk of 'getting used to' it where indifference becomes learnt behaviour. 'Indifference' is a public act, a strategy which women deploy in order to cope with or resist harassment on an everyday basis. This is evident from what a woman respondent stated. '[I experience] mostly anger behind pretended indifference'. This threshold of 'tolerance' is thus a tenuous one depending largely on how long the pretense can be maintained.

2 It is possible that the questionnaire itself forced many respondents to try and draw a line of distinction which they did not otherwise live by. Yet the result is that both male and female respondents described certain forms of sexual harassment as normal, tolerable and funny rather than as harassment and violent. Also interesting were some of the differences in the responses from men as opposed to women.

What we notice here is a significant divide between male and female perceptions of sexual harassment. While only a few men do agree that eve-teasing is equally harmful, most think of it as funny, witty and in fact flattering and enjoyable for women as well. In contrast most women feel eve-teasing is only relatively less harmful, and certainly not enjoyable. It is so common and everyday an experience that it can be got used to and screened off with a cultivated sense of indifference—a raising of the threshold of tolerance. It is thus a strategy, however tenuous, to deal with a recurring unpleasantness which would be otherwise be deeply harmful. Often it is not such a conscious matter of developing such a strategy. Some women have inadvertently internalised male perceptions of what constitutes harmless and fun loving behaviour. For such a set of women tolerable teasing is normal and can come from any man. Whereas harmful harassment can come only from perverts and deviants.

Our survey shows that most men are in reality so shaped by existing traditions of gender relations that they are all capable of subjecting women to harassment. Women often internalise male perceptions in a manner that it helps in keeping alive the gender biases in society. They doubt the validity of their own perceptions whenever these are different from popular male perceptions.

About 20% of respondent men hold the view that sexual harassment comprises rape and molestation. Thus all sexist behaviour, short of rape and molestation, is eve-teasing. In contrast, most respondent women include in sexual harassment all harassment by way of words, gaze or gestures that is sexually threatening or sexually offensive to women. As one such respondent put it, sexual harassment comprises 'sexually overt physical or verbal behaviour like pushing or touching sexually, passing dirty jokes, dirty looks, commenting on women's physical assets in a crowd and physical assault. Sexually explicit comments, gestures and deeds make women feel like objects to be poked fun at leered at. As a woman student stated, 'It is the behaviour of menfolk which makes women feel that they are objects to satisfy the sexual urges of men'.

It is not as if all those interviewed perceived a difference between sexual harassment and eve-teasing, for both are, 'discriminatory on the basis of your sex'. In such responses women often describe eve-teasing as a form of sexual harassment which discriminates on the basis of sex and is thus an expression of unequal power relations between men and women in society.

The popular perception of eve-teasing is that it should be taken as a joke, as any other light-hearted teasing. Women are thus viewed as "eves" and temptresses who seduce or provoke men. This then helps legitimise male aggression by blaming the victim for inviting as well as enjoying such aggressive male attention. This is violently restrictive to women's behaviour. Moreover, this understanding of eve-teasing also imparts a naturalness to ways of men having fun whereby it conceals and refuses to acknowledge the essentially discriminatory power equation involved. What appears to be individualised acts of deviancy in fact is the manifestation of a structural arrangement of power relations between men and women. The usage of the word 'eve-teasing' does not capture this interpersonal dimension of harassment in intimate relationships.

In feminist literature, rape and sexual harassment is understood as a 'political act of oppression' by which men keep women in a state of fear and therefore, subjugation. There is thus an express need to redefine eve-teasing as sexual harassment—as male assertion of power over all women. Women are sexually harassed because they are not considered as equals but treated as sexual objects, involving the annihilation of the woman as a human being.

DEFINING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In defining sexual harassment then, one faces the problem that, the actions that many men might consider amusing or harmless may be offensive and sexually harassing to many women. We feel that this simply means that men need to listen to what women tell them about what constitutes sexually offensive behaviour. While describing sexual harassment we feel that how a woman perceives an action is more significant than the stated intent of the man. In addition, some behaviour may be offensive only to some women and not to all.

As Sakshi (a women's group in Delhi) argues in its draft on sexual harassment in the workplace "it is impossible to compile an exhaustive list of harassing conduct that should be prohibited". Instead they argue that in cases of sexual harassment the impact on women should be privileged over the intentionality of the offender. Sakshi defines sexual harassment as "conduct which is unwanted by the recipient. Sexual attention becomes sexual harassment when it is unwelcome. Within these broad parameters sexual harassment is essentially a subjective concept. It is for each individual to define what does and what does not offend them.

It is important here to emphasise that the difference between voluntary sexual relationships and sexual harassment is that .. harassment contains elements of coercion, threat and/or unwanted attention in a non reciprocal relationship. Sexual harassment usually is unwelcome and repeated behaviour but in some instances it can be an action that occurs only once. In most normal interpersonal relationships an individual can exercise freedom of choice in deciding with whom they wish to establish a close, intimate relationship. These choices are based on mutual attraction, caring and a reciprocal interest in pursuing the relationship. These elements are absent in sexual harassment' (In Case of Sexual Harassment A Guide For Women Students : We Hope It Doesn't Happen to you, But If It Does...1986. Association of American Colleges, Washington.). However, it must be emphasised that women may face sexual harassment both from strangers and from men they know.

In the university sexual harassment of women students by male faculty members undermines women as students or co-workers. Sexual harassment in this case may therefore take the following forms when the man in position to control, influence or affect a woman's job, career or marks uses his authority and power to coerce the woman into sexual relations, or to punish her refusal.

Sexual harassment at the workplace may include :

- # verbal harassment or abuse.
- # subtle pressure for sexual favours.
- # sexist comments about the student's clothing, body or sexual activities.
- # unnecessary patting or pinching.
- # leering or ogling at a woman's body.
- # constant brushing against a woman's body.
- # demanding sexual favours accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning one's job, marks, letters of recommendation etc.
- # physical assault.

Justice Wad and Alice Jacob in their report on the S.C. Bhatia case recognise that sexual harassment at the workplace may be defined in the following two ways :

1. Quid Pro quo : (literally means 'this for that') 'When submission to unwelcome conduct, explicitly or implicitly is made a condition of a person's employment, or the basis for employment decisions' (America's Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VII enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). In the university this may involve a supervisor or someone in power threatening the student that she may not get marks or a job if she does not comply with his sexual advances.
2. Hostile Environment : When a supervisor or co-worker(s) harasses someone solely because of her gender to the point that the conduct makes it more difficult for her to perform her job or the conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment' (America's Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VII enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). A hostile environment is one in which there is unwanted and offensive sexual behaviour such as a display of pinups, explicit jokes, lewd and abusive language, demeaning comments, sexual innuendoes, chick charts, graffiti as well as sexual actions and touching.

However behaviour can be considered sexual harassment even if it does not involve overtly sexual behaviour. This may be categorised as :

3. Harassment Based on Gender : Often women are excluded from as fully participating in the class as the men. Much discriminatory behaviour towards women may not be deliberate. Yet teachers have the power to shape and control the interactions in the classroom for that which is taught also comprises emotions and attitudes. Tacit devaluation of women students can diminish their confidence and enthusiasm to learn and be creative. Examples :

'Explicit use of derogatory terms of stereotypic generalisations.'

- # Use of humorous images or statements that demean or trivialise women.

Continual use of generic masculine terms like 'he' or 'him' to refer to people of both sexes. While such constructions are technically correct, there is evidence to show that they evoke masculine images in students minds and effectively eliminate women as subjects of discourse, even though the elimination may be unintentional.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN DELHI UNIVERSITY (D.U.)

In this report we focus on sexual harassment faced by Delhi University women students by male co-students, teaching and non teaching staff and outsiders (not belonging to D.U). Although harassment of men by women exists, these cases are relatively rare. While sexual harassment of men by men and women by women occur on the university campus, we have unfortunately not been able to address this in our reports. We classify sexual harassment faced by women students under three categories :

1. Teacher student harassment.
2. Peer harassment.
3. Street harassment.

In this report while we do discuss the first two categories, we concentrate on the last form of sexual harassment

TEACHER-STUDENT HARASSMENT

In this section we focus on the sexual harassment of women students by male teachers and supervisors in Delhi University. While women teachers may face serious sexual harassment from their colleagues and sometimes from male students, we have not been able to explore these forms of sexual harassment.

In the context of the university, it is very important to define clearly what constitutes sexual harassment at the workplace given the unequal power relations between principals/head of departments and junior/temporary teachers; teachers and temporary teachers; teaching staff and non-teaching staff; and teachers/non teaching staff and students. These forms of sexual harassment are not rare and often create a great sense of trauma and confusion in the victims mind. In its most extreme and damaging manifestation it may take the form of a professor coercing a women colleague or student into a sexual relationship with him and punishing or threatening to punish her for refusal to comply. 'Sexual favours' can also be made a basis for promotions or evaluation in examinations. Through this professors create an intimidating, hostile environment which is not conducive to a healthy work environment or to the student's academic growth and progress ... However, we do not want to suggest that all sexual relations between students and teachers constitute sexual harassment and recognise that these can be consensual. Rather those relations involving overt or subtle sexual coercion, which abuse the institutional relationship of trust between student and teacher do constitute sexual harassment.

In our survey 48% women students (hostellers and non hostellers) report having faced sexual harassment from the teaching and non teaching staff. This percentage is not really representative of the extent of faculty harassment because in our survey 34% of the women hostellers and most of the non hosteller women respondents study in women's colleges. Further, it is a possibility that quite a few of our respondents did not want to narrate instances of sexual harassment they may have faced from their superiors due to fear of reprisal. Some conversation with women were informal and confidential. In this section we describe a range of sexist behaviour that women students reported having faced from their male teachers or non teaching staff in Delhi University.

According to our respondents, some professors have a habit of touching students in a way that is not perceived by the women students as an 'occasional fatherly pat.' One respondent stated that one of her teachers, "...has the habit of making contact with girls while talking. The first time he did that with me, I made it amply clear that he'd have a hard time ahead. He never tried his stunts again. He is very helpful otherwise and he acts as if he is affectionate towards me which makes me feel uncomfortable. But he justifies it by saying that he also has daughters." In this case, the student was able to resist and express her disapproval. However, not all women may be able to give voice to their disapproval, especially when they fear reprisal.

This is particularly true for research work and those courses where all the power of marking and supervising is concentrated in the hands of one teacher or professor. A post graduate in the science faculty complained about a professor 'putting his arm around (our) shoulders.' The students have not been able to complain about him. A science student in one of the undergraduate colleges stated that this teacher 'made her uncomfortable' by the way he talked. Once he stood against the ante room where the student had to go to collect chemicals with his outstretched arm barring the door. When asked to be excused he asked the student to duck under his arm if she wanted to go while he posed there leering at her. The student could not refuse and had to duck under his arm to get the chemicals. She did not protest because she feared he would mark her badly in the practicals.

3 From our discussions of sexual harassment on the campus, it would appear that cases of male on male harassment is quite rampant, particularly in the men's hostels.

A senior professor in one of the social science departments told us informally that very often there was a scramble between male professors to supervise the student if she was an attractive woman. Often heads of departments accede to such demands with a 'I do not blame them' attitude. Supervision then rests on the sexual attributes of the student and as a result not only may she miss out on an opportunity to be supervised by someone genuinely interested in her intellectual progress as a student but face sexist behaviour from the supervisor chosen.

Many senior residents on campus talked to us about certain male professors coercing women students into sleeping with them. As we have said before, we have no direct evidence of such instances but many of our respondents have said informally that they know of such cases in the university. As one respondent, the wife of a senior professor residing on campus, stated, 'I have heard that a teacher used to say if you want a job you should sleep with the head of the department. The person I am talking about has retired now.'

Comments from male professors to women students which are too 'personal', with sexual undertones or referring to the students' sexual attributes may be experienced as harassing by women students. One woman respondent in the science faculty stated that her professor made comments like 'My wife does not let me touch her. She says I am old but I am not old'. One respondent complained about her professor making 'comments about a movie which may be objectionable to a young girl'. Or often women students feel harassed by professors' subtle sexual innuendoes. One post-graduate student reports her sense of discomfort when a teacher was 'trying to explain beauty'. She stated that he insisted on giving her his phone number. One science teacher in an undergraduate class usually made comments like this one to the women students 'Why is your practical notebook so unaesthetic? Why do you not make it as beautiful as yourself?' Comments like these create a hostile environment which is not conducive to the intellectual progress of the students, interfere in their work and provoke anxiety and fear.

Most women students in our survey report feeling 'uncomfortable' about their teacher's comments or behaviour. Very often women say they feel uncomfortable about a teacher's attention but are not sure whether they are right in calling it sexual harassment. An MSc student saying that the lab assistant made her 'uncomfortable' stated 'maybe he tries to help but I do not like it.' Women students' discomfort or experience of harassment are further heightened by an environment which causes them to question their reactions to these experiences.

In such an atmosphere students are not encouraged to speak up against sexism and experiences of sexual harassment they may have faced. A respondent from one of the science faculties said that a professor, while referring to the S. C. Bhatia case, said that such incidents were not possible 'if girls are not willing.' This response is despite the university's acceptance that S. C. Bhatia sexually harassed his women colleagues. Such comments trivialise, dismiss and blame the victim for sexual harassment and acts of molestation.

It was pointed out to us by our respondents that the Botany lab. is very unsafe as there are no lights or guards appointed at the lab. Women students who work till late are given the keys to lock the girls. As one respondent said, "... I feel scared since if there is someone hiding there and tries to do something I would have no place to go. If I protest about the lack of safety in the lab, my professors say that I should work fast and leave early. This attitude of the Professor's shifts the responsibility from themselves and the university administration to the woman students. It is also a downright infringement of a woman student's right to a safe working environment where she can work without the fear of assault. Furthermore, students who protest are dismissed. As one of the women researchers remarks 'The teachers are very indifferent to the issue of sexual harassment. When they are told that teachers harass they do not react. I am branded as a feminist. I do not understand why I am branded as a feminist only because I protest.'

Besides this indifference towards the problems women students face, they are not encouraged to speak out. It is not surprising that such attitudes persist in the science faculty as these are still male-dominated disciplines. Very little effort has been made to make the work environment safer for and less discriminatory towards women students.

According to Justice Wad and Alice Jacob, Sexual harassment by heads of departments in the university system is a frightening and humiliating experience. It is an invidious form of sex discrimination present in academic institutions. It has a debilitating, emotional and physical effect upon its victims. It generates a

'psychologically harmful' atmosphere. It can have adverse economic consequences such as dismissal from jobs or denial of raise in salaries or promotion opportunities. Many a time women who are victims of sexual harassment experience so much of anxiety and distress that they solve the problem by quitting their jobs which results in the deprivation of economic security and well being.' It is unfortunate that the problem of sexual harassment at the workplace in the university continues to be unaddressed despite the Wad Committee report.

PEER HARASSMENT IN DELHI UNIVERSITY

Attending college is more than an intellectual experience. It has an important social component, especially for students living on campus. However women students often face hostility, anger, derision and even violence from male students. This harassment may consist of so called 'teasing' (commenting, staring etc.), sexual innuendoes, and bullying of a sexist nature, both physical and verbal. Although some of this behaviour at first glance can appear to be individualised, unrelated acts, they are instead part of a pattern representing widespread group behaviour. These incidents profoundly alter the work environment for women students. Ragging of young women is a recognised mode of sexual harassment in the guise of being 'fun' or normal. However there are other more subtle forms by which peer sexual harassment takes place.

Another form of sexual harassment by male students comprises making sexist comments on women co-students, thereby reinforcing gender stereotypes and discriminating against women on the basis of their sex. A woman student from the science faculty stated that, 'There is a tea club in the lab. It is always the girls who make the tea. The guys always join in but never help. They feel it's a woman's job. When asked as to why they do not help, they reply, I thought she did it with pleasure'. Women who protest are often met with laughter and derision. Peer harassment like faculty harassment sends the message that a woman is not equal to a man. She is not taken seriously as a person. This situation can then lead to a situation of harassment.

One of the most important aspects of peer harassment is that women may face persistent sexual harassment from men they know or were friends with. In our survey 7.33% of women hostellers and non-hostellers have faced sexual harassment from fellow students. Unwanted sexual innuendoes by men who are acquaintances or seniors at one's workplace have been cited by our respondents as a common mode of sexual harassment by peers.

One of the most common forms of sexual harassment occurs when women students who are pursued by men for friendship or a relationship decline these men. If the pursuit is by a former boyfriend or a close friend, it makes matters worse for women. In such instances women may experience a tremendous sense of betrayal and anger. This is compounded by the belief that if the victims were to complain it would generally be met with blame or disbelief. The problem lies in the fact women do not seem to have the same prerogative as men do to terminate a relationship. Given this harassment by a former boyfriend is not defined as sexual harassment and in fact the girl is blamed for entering the relationship in the first place. Further, her complaint may be met with disbelief because of the notion that women usually lie to take revenge on men because of their 'personal' difficulties with them or in order to blackmail them.

In our survey we posed the following hypothetical situation to our male respondents and asked them whether they would describe the situation as sexual harassment and/or eve-teasing. "A man has been asking a woman to be friends with him for quite some time and she refuses but he still persists". Around 20% of the male respondents who answered this question, did not consider this behaviour to be either sexual harassment or eve-teasing, while 30% were unsure whether it could be classified as sexual harassment, eve-teasing or both.

According to the dominant ideology of sexuality, women's sexuality is constructed as passive. Women are not expected to overtly say yes to sexual relationships. All male attention is seen then to be pleasurable to women and therefore their no is often read as yes. We need to ask ourselves why a woman's no is never taken seriously?

INCIDENCE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE CANTEENS

According to our survey, around 13.5% women students (hostellers and non-hostellers) report having experienced harassing behaviour from male students in the canteens. We must caution the reader that the percentage alone cannot suggest the intensity of the problem because it is determined by the extent of the use of the canteens. Many women students, especially undergraduate students studying in women's colleges, may not use all the canteens mentioned in the report.

Women report a range of sexist behaviour but the most common form it takes is staring or leching at women, commenting and other forms of verbal harassment. In our survey 5 canteens located in Arts Faculty, Delhi School of economics, Science Faculty, Statistics Department and S.R.C.C. have been cited as places where women have reported experiences of sexual harassment.

A post-graduate woman student stated that she has faced such behaviour, 'a thousand times, in ten different ways ... Mostly cheap comments or making faces and recently, they do not miss a chance to touch you in any way possible which is really too much.' One woman respondent described men staring and commenting at her in the canteen by stating that, 'They stare as if you are naked ... that's when you curse your existence as a woman'. This experience of being stared at 'as if you are naked' is shared by many respondents. For many of our women respondents men staring at them is experienced as 'visual rape'. The constant leching that follows women around reduces women from co-students to mere sexual objects. Even when described as a 'mild form of eve-teasing', as many men respondents do, what this means to men and women in their shared universe can acquire opposing meanings. Some male respondents have stated that they have eve-teased by staring at women which may imply harassment of a mild form. One such post-graduate male respondent stated that, 'If staring is considered eve-teasing I have done it. On my part I have never given a passing remark on girls as I can understand their problems also'. Clearly there is a need to create a consciousness which would indicate the extent of intimidation created by so-called harmless behaviour like men staring or leching at women. 'Staring' or 'leching' as modes of sexual harassment creates feelings of irritation, anger, intimidation or fear in women. The canteen becomes a male dominated space where men can 'stare', 'comment', 'whistle' at or 'sing suggestive songs' to women. The space which is characteristically a mixed space becomes sexualised in a way which is experienced as harassing or even violent by women.

INCIDENCE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN LIBRARIES

A university library should be a safe space but 13.5% of women students (hostellers and non-hostellers) have experienced sexual harassment in the libraries. Again, some of the common forms of sexual harassment are 'staring', 'leching', 'ogling', verbal harassment, stalking and molestation.

An M.Phil. student stated that a particular person had been constantly leching at her for almost a year, whenever she was in the Ratan Tata Library (R.T.L.). A Law faculty student stated that, 'There is always one group of guys who come to watch girls. Following girls for tea, passing comments on their dresses, purposely choosing to sit beside girls and making the intention very obvious, slipping pieces of paper with messages like 'hi, beautiful', 'come for tea' etc.'

In the Central Reference Library (C.R.L.) one respondent stated that, 'the eyes of the students and their attention is focused from top to bottom, ... wholly on girls as they enter' the library. C.R.L. has been cited as particularly unsafe, especially in the evening when there are fewer women. Women hostellers who may want to use the libraries often do not stay till late especially when alone because the libraries become spaces of intimidation and harassment for them. Some respondents have specified that 'non-students' characterised as 'goonda' elements come to the C.R.L. very often 'to watch girls and pass remarks'. It emerges that both 'outsiders' and 'students' consider the library as a place where women can be made 'easy targets'.

Sexual harassment in libraries thus denies women a safe place to study and research. It is also clear that there exists no institutional recognition of the problem, nor an awareness of a way in which it can be institutionally addressed. Women students develop individualised strategies to deal with this and accept it as a normal phenomena of studying in Delhi University.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT DURING COLLEGE FESTIVALS AND HOSTEL NIGHTS

Everyday sexual harassment is dramatised during social occasions organised by students such as college festivals. Nearly 38.1% of the women student respondents (hostellers and non-hostellers) have experienced harassment in the form of leching, commenting, forcible touching and molestation. Many women prefer not to go to college festivals or rock shows. Many women say that male students attempt to touch them, pinch their bottoms or rub against them. One woman student reports that a few men surrounded her and forced her to dance with them in a rock show. Some of our respondents have stated that the men organising the security in rockshows themselves harass women. The fact that many men who intimidate women students are drunk on such occasions, according to our respondents, adds to the problem. At college festivals when various competitions are organised women on stage are hooted at and all kinds of comments passed about them. Our respondents said that women in the audience may also face sexual harassment. One respondent stated that 'guys blow up condoms and throw them in the auditorium during festivals'. This has happened to her in S.R.C.C., Hindu College and St. Stephens.

The campus life after college hours also needs comment. In the university there is a tradition of hostel inmates celebrating their 'hostel nights' and inviting guests from the other men's and women's hostels - a very important event in campus life for the hostellers. However since the last few years we have noticed a very disturbing trend in the way hostel nights are celebrated in men's hostels. Usually after the dinner and the departure of the dignitaries, hostel authorities and the women guests, male hostellers organise what is an 'orchestra party' which comprises women who sing or dance to popular filmi music. Last year, in one of the men's hostel some drunk men threw bottles at the performers, tried to get on the stage to grab the women and the women had to be finally smuggled out of the hostel. This year (1996), in another hostel, a similar event was organised where the woman performer was invited to sing and dance. We are told that it is normal for the woman to strip from the skirt to a skimpy top and shorts during such events as happened this time. Ironically this time the university authorities were present when the program began. It was cut short with an apology to the dignitaries only to be resumed when they left.

What is shocking is that some male hostellers justify their violent behaviour towards these women as part of the fun and their inebriated state - after all are these women not paid to perform? Passing vulgar comments on them would not constitute sexual harassment in the moral universe of these men for these women are 'bad' women, who do not have a 'modesty' which can be outraged. The divide between 'good' women and 'bad' women was never more clear.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON HOLI

The incidents of sexual harassment are at a peak during Holi. The everyday street sexual harassment which women face merely sets the stage for Holi harassment. 60.55% of the women hostellers complain of aggravated harassment on campus before Holi and 28.44% of these respondents either leave the university before Holi or do not go out of the hostel at all. Only 11.1% said that the harassment during Holi was 'normal' and part of the spirit of Holi. They stated that they did not regard it as harassing. The form of sexual harassment on Holi varies from balloon throwing from fast moving vehicles, forcibly applying colour, molesting women on the pretext of applying colour, throwing condoms filled with water to forcibly throwing buckets of water on women.

'I have not seen guys throwing balloons or colours at guys (on the street), why only at girls?' This question is posed by most respondents. Most of the women respondents have reported that they have been pelted with balloons from speeding vehicles. Some women expressed the fear of being hit with balloons thrown at a great speed at sensitive parts such as eyes or ears.

Often men not only mark out women as their specific targets but attack specific parts of their bodies - breasts, hips and thighs with 'gubaras'. A number of women stated that the 'water balloons are aimed at buttocks and breasts'. This targeting is made more easy by the fact that men on vehicles are able to drive up close to a woman and hit water balloons on specific parts of her body.

Such incidents often have adverse emotional consequences for women in that they may experience these as deeply humiliating and shameful. As one of our respondents narrated, 'We were at the Mall road bus stop, one day before Holi - a D.T.C. was hijacked by hooligans at Mall road. We were trying to cross

the road - one girl got left behind. The hooligans got down, felt her all over. This was at about 7 - 7.30 p.m. The girl started crying, "Shit, I want to have a bath, I feel so dirty" - psychologically we feel like that.'

Women also report experiencing a 'fear of being physically assaulted'. This fear is quite pervasive and real. One post-graduate student narrated how she was dragged off the rickshaw she was travelling on and colour was applied to her forcibly. Not only does such harassment pose serious problems for women to move about freely in the campus but they experience such incidents as violent and humiliating.

Balloons are only one kind of objects thrown at women during Holi. One post-graduate student stated that, 'people wait outside the hostel to throw things at girls - not just balloons but even stones'. Visiting nearby markets like Kamla Nagar is also virtually impossible nearly twenty days before Holi. Even the route from the hostel to the market through the campus is equally risky and violent for women students. Many respondents stated that some male hostellers throw balloons at them from the hostel roof. They form groups to throw balloons, coloured or muddy water on women who they happen to chance upon. A respondent stated that, 'K.M.C. (Kirorimal College) is really notorious during Holi. They do not spare anyone'. Another student said that two years back, 'Some of the hostellers threw buckets full of water and condoms on me and my (male) friend. It was really embarrassing'. Hence it is not only outsiders who harass women during Holi but male students too.

The violence on the roads forces women to stay indoors on the day of Holi. Most women dare not risk moving out during Holi for the fear of molestation and assault is very real. In comparison there is no such restriction for the men hostellers. Men hostellers march through the campus roads beating drums in celebration. We have also been told that they stop outside the women's hostels, revelling and sometimes shouting abuses. The distribution of campus space is clearly gendered, and men and women have unequal access to it.

STREET HARASSMENT ON DELHI UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

The main focus of our survey is sexual harassment women face on the streets of Delhi University's North Campus. However, we would like to emphasize that our survey is limited in that it concentrates predominantly on the experience of street harassment of students and other middle and upper middle class women in the university (i.e. teachers and spouses of teachers).

91.7% of the women hostellers in the survey have experienced sexual harassment on campus roads (see Table 4). All of these women have experienced gross instances of sexual harassment more than once. All of these women have faced sexual harassment on campus roads almost everyday, sometimes many times in a single day.

1.	Women hostellers	91.7%
2.	Women non-hostellers	88.2%
3.	Women residents	85.7%

Sexual harassment on Delhi University roads takes various forms. Some forms of sexual harassment include comments, making cat-calls and 'obscene sounds' at women, on campus roads. One of the main perpetrators of street harassment are men in/on vehicles. Often men in cars and on two-wheelers drive to the campus especially to harass women, sometimes at the behest of men living on the campus. One of the most common forms of street harassment is vehicles speeding towards women, often injuring them. This is particularly true during the afternoon when the U-Specials leave. As a woman student stated, '... People try to take advantage of the rush hour. They intentionally come from the front and just wait for the chance to hit you'. It is common in the afternoons to see young men in Maruti cars and on bikes circling the area. Although the roads are not as congested around Patel Chest after college hours the number of vehicles circling the campus increases phenomenally. It emerges from our survey that in the evening men of all age groups drive to the campus especially to 'tease' women.

This harassment however is not restricted only to the evenings, early mornings may be equally unsafe. During a number of discussions with women students we were told that many women prefer not to go jogging or take morning walks, especially when alone because they do not want to begin their morning with an unpleasant incident of sexual harassment. It is really ironical that the university which is a boon to health conscious people all over North Delhi, is inaccessible to its women students.

Men harass women on both, crowded and lonely roads. Sometimes on the pretext of asking for directions, some men stop women and harass them verbally. At times like this the threat of physical violence is always present. As a hostel student narrated, 'On Dusherra I was stopped by a man on a scooter in front of the VC's house. He asked me the directions to Khalsa College and I told him the way. He then asked me to sit on his scooter and go to Khalsa College. I said I do not sit on anybody's scooter and I said if you cannot understand the directions then ask someone else. He said if you have faith in God then have faith in me and showed his I-card. You must share a Campa with me and tell me you love me. I said I could not say that to him because I did not know him and asked him to go away. He then asked me if I loved anyone and I said I did. He said don't you feel like having sex with him? I told him to go away. Then he took out a cassette of a blue film and said come with me and I will show you what love is. Then my friend came and intervened and he sped off... After a few days I saw him again and ran into the hostel. After some time he stopped chasing me and I saw him troubling other girls. At that time I thought the best option was to ignore him'. When caught off guard women may be unable to deal with these instances of harassment when they occur. In such intimidating situations they may feel that reasoning with the aggressor may ward him off, as in the above case. However, many women do not have the requisite language skills or the ability to inflict bodily harm in self defence. As a result women may be completely traumatised by such encounters. Most women have to develop individual strategies of dealing with such violence and are often ill equipped to do so.

Women students do resist but very often they do not get the support they seek from the authorities. One student from the M.H. hostel stated that: 'The other day (Feb., 1996) two of us were walking (me and my girlfriend) in the university lawns. Four young guys crossed us and passed comment like 'aaj kal ladkiyan smart ho gai hai - ladko ke sath nahin ghumi' ('These days girls have become smart, they do not roam about with men'). I turned around and glared at the person and we asked them whether they had any problem. Their answer was to stand there and describe to us in no uncertain terms how they would rip our panties etc. Since they were four of them and we were two, I told them that if they said too much we would tell the police. To this they laughed and we walked off. The time was 6.30 p.m. We immediately informed the policeman about them but he could not do anything much'.

The language used by the men usually in an advantageous position, either in numbers or vehicles, generally carries a threat of physical harm. As this respondent from D.R.C. hostel narrated, 'Three, four guys in a car went ahead, turned back and asked the way to Kamla Nagar. When directed, they went off saying, "What about the fucking lay?". Comments or other verbal harassment which when directed at violating women's bodily integrity carry enormous social significance. The experience of rape, molestation or sexual harassment is often framed as stigmatic for the woman; the woman is usually blamed for acting in 'immodest' or 'provocative' ways and therefore inviting this behaviour upon herself.

The other most common form of sexual harassment on the university campus according to our respondents is exhibitionism. A number of respondents stated that they have encountered men exposing their penises to them. In one instance, a man in the university gardens actually lunged towards the woman student with his penis in his hand. One woman student recounted how she had to face such behaviour from a policeman. Many women stated that at least the first time such an incident happened to them they were extremely disgusted and traumatised. For many women students and the children of the resident professors and non-teaching staff, this is a normal part of life on the D.U. campus.

This behaviour does not stop at verbal violence or non physical violence. Several women students report having been hit on various parts of their bodies or being grabbed by men on campus roads. The other forms of sexual harassment are forcible touching, pinching, hitting, throwing things like icecreams, eggs or beer bottles and stalking women. One hosteller complained of being hit by an air gun on her arm by a group of men in a car. A typical instance of this harassment is illustrated in this response of a college going student, also the daughter of a professor residing on campus: 'One evening around 8 p.m. I was

coming towards my colony from the Mall Road. A man on speeding scooter hit me on my breast. This has happened twice'. Many women hostellers have complained being hit on their breasts, sometimes more than once. Such incidents seem to have left deep impressions on the women. Women have reported that men sometimes throw glass bottles, stones or even eggs at them. One respondent recounted: 'As hostellers we are very vulnerable. One month back (Jan. 1996) two men on a scooter threw a stone at me. Then one man touched me while passing. In both cases I was on a rickshaw - dressed normally and with a girl friend. We face constant harassment on the roads in the guise of looks, comments and even offers for lifts. Each time I make it a point to reply and then go and inform the policeman on duty in the beat box...'. These experiences of women students put to severe test sexist notions like 'only loose, fast or modern women get harassed' or 'women who are provocatively dressed are harassed'. Any woman may be sexually harassed on campus roads.

The other common form of street harassment comprises propositioning women, asking them whether they would like to take a lift or pulling women into cars. One respondent stated: 'When I was walking to Kamla Nagar, a group of guys in a car kept pestering my friend and me to get into the car. They always expect us to hitch'. We would like to reiterate that even if some women do on occasion ask for a lift, this does not mean that women are asking for harassment or rape. Further, men stopping their vehicles for women who are not asking for a lift and insisting they get on to their vehicles, clearly constitutes sexual harassment. For a woman who is not asking for a lift this behaviour is quite threatening especially when women are often afraid of being pulled into cars by force. From our survey, it emerges that women are conscious that taking lifts from a group of men can be dangerous and most women take lifts with their friends. However, given that women are harassed while walking on the roads or travelling on buses or even rickshaws, some women students said that they considered it safer to take lifts.

Furthermore, women may get seriously injured as a consequence of rash driving. One respondent recounted: 'Once a couple of men speeded up, looking at two of us, they were trying to act smart so lost control of the bike. My friend's dupatta got caught and she was dragged along. He had to stop. He was keen to run away. My friend got injured'.

Over the last few years, Gender Study Group has argued that poor regulation of traffic only makes sexual harassment on the campus roads more easy, anonymous and rampant. Thus making resistance almost impossible. This view was confirmed by a number of our women respondents. The answers to the questionnaires reflect the view that the threat of harassment from pedestrians is less than that from men in/ on vehicles. Reckless driving does not only have consequences for sexual harassment but also is a threat to life as a number of deaths and serious accidents on campus due to rash driving has shown. What stands out in the imagination of the hostellers is the death of Shriya Misra, a hosteller, who was fatally hit by a speeding Maruti in March 1994.

It is not only young students but also young women teachers in the university who are sexually harassed. For instance, a teacher complained of harassment by men in the form of 'whistling, passing of comments, singing, bringing vehicles to a close distance'. From our survey it is evident that on campus roads, though young women students are the chief targets all women may be subjected to sexual harassment irrespective of their age. As this 41-year-old respondent, a teacher by profession who resides with her husband on campus, stated: 'I have been followed several times. I was followed by men on motor bikes as well as cars. I was asked to get into the car. They followed me for quite some distance and I had to ask for help from someone who was passing by.' Now she feels she... 'cannot think of going alone on the campus roads particularly in the evenings'. Another 53-year-old woman resident complained of someone following her on the scooter. Older women residents experience sexual harassment also. They too feel a sense of fear, and often prefer not to walk on campus roads alone.

Even school children are harassed as this respondent, the daughter of a professor living on the campus recounted: 'There was a group of boys who would come to my bus stop. When the school bus came, they would follow the bus in their car, driving alongside the window of my seat. They kept on following the bus till Civil Lines. Many other incidents similar to these ones have also happened'. School children thus testify to the fact that even early morning such incidents are not rare - an aspect of growing up on the campus which is totally invisible to the university community and the administration. It is really traumatic for a young girl in particular, to have to deal with such violence on an everyday basis. This violence can have a very adverse psychological impact on school-going children.

Such incidents also take place within the residential colonies on campus. One school girl was hit on her breast by a man on a speeding bike inside a residential colony. Ironically sometimes these encounters may involve men living in the neighbouring colonies. One school-going resident stated, 'Last year in the evenings I would sit in the balcony. A boy from the neighbouring colony would park his car in front of the balcony and keep sitting there. He would also come to my bus stop and stand there.' Parents also express anxiety about their young daughters coming home late. As a result, different sets of rules may govern the daughters and sons of residents. Daughters in turn may feel terribly infantilised or experience resentment at the closeting and blame which may be attributed to them for no fault of theirs.

Through our discussions with women students of various communities and a couple of cases of sexual harassment we have taken up, we have realised that women from specific regions of India as well as foreigners face aggravated sexual harassment. Most foreign women have to face increased violence because of the image of the 'foreigner' as bearing loose moral character and therefore available to all men. In 1992 a Kenyan student of Moti Lal Nehru College was brutally assaulted in a bus by a group of men. In the context of the discrimination experienced by the students from the North East, sexual harassment against women from the north-eastern states may take deplorable forms. In one discussion with women students in I.P. College, a student from Manipur, narrated to us that once a scootewala instead of taking her to the destination she wanted to go to, had taken her to GB road (Red Light area). Other students complain of being called "Chinks" and being harassed on campus roads. Recently two women students, from the North East were followed by two men in a car. They spotted them near SRCC and shouted 'Hey, Chinks, hey sexy Chink!' and nearly pulled one of the students off the rickshaw. There is a very violent intersection of class, gender and ethnicity (or race) here, which imparts a specificity to the experiences of these women students, who may also have to deal with other forms of non sexist discrimination on an everyday basis. Besides this it is extremely important to consider that most women students from many different areas in the country may not have faced such violent forms of street harassment making it very difficult for them to comprehend and deal with this everyday violence.

Thus, for women students especially those living on campus, the campus roads suggest a perennial threat of violence. This threat often leads to the fear of rape and severe molestation in the everyday lives of women students. Women experience fear also because very often they are unable to predict when sexually threatening behaviour will turn to physical violence. One respondent narrated, 'My friend and I were coming back around 10:00 o'clock. Suddenly a man ran towards my friend and grabbed her. I stood rooted, shocked. And after that day I have never been the same again. The naked lust that I saw on his face is stamped on my memory. I realised that if I am ever raped I will lose my mental balance.' The fear of sexual violence is very real in women's lives and such incidents of violence on campus only reinforces this fear. Surely it is not too difficult to understand that not all women need to be severely sexually harassed for them to be effectively intimidated. Even the act of witnessing a molestation can have very traumatic psychological consequences for women as should be evident from the preceding narration.

Perhaps the defining characteristic of this violence is that the university space is marked out as a 'permissive' space where women students are seen as both 'easy' and 'desirable' targets? The anonymity of this violence allows for a perception of the campus roads, especially around the women's hostels, as a voyeuristic space, where any woman occupying this space is seen as 'available' irrespective of her dress, conduct, age or attractiveness. This is perhaps linked with the way in which the university exists in popular imaginations as the site where single, young women are 'easy targets'. This imagination makes legitimate all forms of verbal or physical violence meted out to women hostellers on the basis of the fact that they are seen as 'available' simply because they live away from their families. The university then exists in this imagination as a place where women are relatively 'free', where women do not mind entering into relationships with men. This is part of an imagination which also assumes that if a woman is in a relationship or even seen with a man, she is 'loose' or fast and therefore automatically available to all men. The space around the hostels is then constituted as a permissive space where sexualised violence against women is not only permitted but also legitimate.

We have also learnt from some of the senior women lecturers we interviewed, who have also been students in D.U., that this problem is not new to D.U. According to one senior lecturer teaching history in

MEN FEEL SAFER ON CAMPUS: A majority of the male respondents stated that they felt safe to walk on the campus at any time of the day whereas all the women respondents felt unsafe on campus, especially after dark.

68% MEN STATED THAT THEY FELT SAFE ON CAMPUS AT ANY TIME OF THE DAY.

22% MEN STATED THAT THEY FELT UNSAFE ON CAMPUS AFTER DARK, WHEN WITH WOMEN FRIENDS OR WHEN OUTSIDERS COME INTO THE CAMPUS.

10% NO RESPONSE.

Some responses :

'I feel safe even at 1 o'clock in the morning'.

'Being a male I can afford to venture out even at midnight, but I feel bad about the limitations imposed on the free movement of the females'.

'Males generally do not feel unsafe but I think after 7.30 p.m. or so it becomes far more dangerous for girls'.

Women's fear about their safety on the campus streets is overwhelmingly higher than men's fear.

WHICH CAMPUS ROADS ARE THE MOST UNSAFE?

The majority of the women hostelers from P.G.W., M.H., Meghdoot and C.I.E. have graded Chhatra Marg (especially the stretch from the Vice Chancellor's residence to Jai Javan and from Ramjas Chowk to Kamla Nagar), Cavalry Lane, Shriya Mishra Marg the most dangerous.

Daulat Ram students have marked the road via Ramjas and Kirorimal College to Kamla Nagar - the Shriya Mishra Marg to Vijay Nagar and the road which runs in front of Khalsa College to Maurice Nagar as the most unsafe.

The MSW and CIE women hostelers have cited the University Road as the most dangerous.

A majority of women hostelers have also said that they think of the university gardens and ridge as the most unsafe.

Almost all women stated that no road is absolutely safe for women students. Most women hostelers have marked out those roads which they use the most, especially those in and around their hostels as the most unsafe.

WHO HARASS WOMEN ON CAMPUS ROADS?

WOMEN HOSTELLERS RESIDING ON CAMPUS REPORT FACING MAXIMUM SEXUAL HARASSMENT FROM MEN IN CARS AND ON TWO WHEELERS.

MEN IN CARS 84%

MEN ON TWO WHEELERS 78%

CYCLISTS 53%

PEDESTRIANS 46%

RICKSHAWALLAHS 25%

IT IS QUITE EVIDENT THAT MEN DRIVE TO THE CAMPUS ESPECIALLY TO HARASS WOMEN.

WHY DO MEN SEXUALLY HARASS WOMEN?

The most common explanation as to why men harass women is that women 'provoke' men to harass them or only 'bad' women are harassed. Usually women are blamed for provoking men by their dress, behaviour, walk or other body language. These male perceptions are very often internalised by women which causes women to deflect blame on themselves and feel enormous guilt for 'allowing' the assault. Out of 50 male respondents 24 said that a particular category of women were harassed, 22 said that all women were potential victims and 8 men did not answer the question.

Of these 24 male respondents, a majority stated that 'young', 'beautiful', 'sexy' or 'newly married' women were targeted. Other male respondents stated that women provoke men by wearing 'modern dresses' or 'behaving provocatively'. A male respondent said, 'M.T.V. cultured, vulgarly dressed, ultramods of MH' are targeted on campus. Another male respondent pointed out that those women who 'try to project a modern image but wear uncivil dress' are more prone to sexual harassment. However wearing any kind of dress be it conventional or so called modern, does not diminish the threat of sexual harassment. Further,

the range of behaviour perceived as provocative can sometimes be anything from making eye contact, and walking with one's head held high to laughing and talking loudly on the roads. All these may be read as ways of trying to attract male attention. On the other hand, such behaviour in public spaces is considered normal for men. Any form of behaviour can be perceived as 'provocative' providing men a justification for harassing women. This justification comes from the popular conception that women can be divided into two broad categories - those who are conventional and therefore 'good' and others 'unconventional', 'modern' and therefore 'bad'.

In this scheme of things a 'good' woman is one whose sexuality is passive. She is modest, shy and initiated into sexuality by one man, preferably by her husband. In contrast, a 'bad' woman has no inherent modesty to lose, she is 'takeable' and therefore has englightened rights. One male respondent pointed out that 'outgoing' women were more likely to be harassed, while another said that those 'giving undue lift to men' were potential targets.

The 'good' woman is the one who by dress or behaviour is able to convey that she is undeserving of the violence which usually comes the way of 'indecent' women. It is a myth that 'good' women are not made victims of male violence for very often the very men who take on the role of protectors are the ones who perpetrate violence. This myth is kept in place not only to justify violence on 'bad' women but also to silence the violence on women in the conventional, patriarchal structures. Any woman who questions 'convention' and tries to alter this convention in her life, by way of work, sexual relationships with men, dress or behaviour is perceived as threatening and deserving of the violence that comes her way. In short, all behaviour and modes of dress or speech which suggests female agency becomes threatening. It is a no win situation. Only bad women are harassed, if you are harassed you must be a bad woman.

No woman provokes a man to assault her. The contrary is a very powerful ideology which punishes women for trying to assert their agency and at the same time blames them for 'inviting' violence, thus absolving the offenders of any moral responsibility.

The view that men harass women because they are 'sexually frustrated' and it is the normal way in which these men derive 'pleasure' and 'satisfaction' was held by most of our respondents - men and women. Most respondents said that sexual harassment is the result of uncontrollable male 'bestial urges'. However, from our survey it should be evident that sexual harassment of women is intentional, often premeditated violence against women rather than the result of an uncontrollable male sexuality. These respondents felt that male sexuality is naturally aggressive and uncontrollable, overpowering men into this kind of behaviour. Some male respondents felt that young males who are 'sexually underprivileged' or sexually deprived are driven to 'tease' or harass women. Underlying this is a theory of male sexuality that it is normal and natural for men to express their sexuality violently. From this standpoint rape is 'sex' and eve-teasing is 'fun'. Pleasure is so intricately tied up with violence that it becomes difficult to fathom how women do not enjoy or desire what comes to qualify as normal male attention.

According to some respondents - both women and men - those men who sexually harass women are 'perverts', 'mentally imbalanced' and from 'broken homes'. This is contrasted to men who eve-tease who are characterised as mischievous and 'normal' without intending harm. However as we have argued earlier, if eve-teasing is redefined from a woman-centred perspective, then all of eve-teasing may be seen as sexual harassment which women may find violent and degrading. Thus that which is called normal and abnormal behaviour comes to be questioned. Our survey clearly establishes that sexual harassment is hardly a rare, isolated act which is committed by a few deranged men. The extent of sexual harassment is difficult to explain as the outcome of a perverse, deviant male sexuality. Violence then is built into notions of normal male sexuality such that a wide range of violence against women is completely silenced by calling some of this violence 'eve-teasing' - committed by 'normal' men as harmless acts of mischief in contrast to 'sexual harassment' - committed by perverts or deranged men, acts which are rare and pathological.

Some men and women respondents also said that men harass or 'tease' women because some men enjoy exerting power over women. They harass because they 'do not respect women', 'treat women as a commodity' or 'think of this (sexual harassment) as their birthright'. We believe that sexual harassment is about power. It is not only a question of general lawlessness, as most senior residents believe. It is a question which confronts all women for the sexual harassment they face is by virtue of their status as women

IMPACT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON WOMEN

To understand the impact of sexual harassment on women one must listen to the accounts of its victims as no one conveys the meaning and truth of sexual harassment better than the women who have endured it. In response to our question 'What kind of emotional response does eve-teasing and/or sexual harassment evoke in you?' not a single woman ticked the category of 'indifferent'. As we have discussed before, each woman defines for herself a threshold of tolerance dividing harassing behaviour into that which can be ignored and that which transgresses this threshold. However, women are not indifferent to all that harassment which they may have learnt to ignore. One respondent said, 'I feel disgusted, but now I've become immune to it. Believe me, it's a daily ritual without which the day is incomplete. So much so that I do not even come to know about it. It just happens so I ignore it. But it makes one bitter'. Another respondent said, 'Small sly comments slip out of mind but certain vulgar remarks are quite bugging. The fact that nothing can be done is all the more depressing.' It is important to realise that women have to deal with a constant level of sexual harassment in some form or the other every day. The cumulative effect of the pressure to deal with a hostile environment may lead to mental health problems for women, which may manifest sharply when they face single but aggravated incidents of sexual harassment - a fact that is rarely kept in mind when women complain.

Our survey shows that most of women felt disgusted, insulted and scared by this kind of behaviour. As one respondent stated, 'It makes me scared because I know I am not physically strong enough to handle any complication if the offender calls my bluff.' Another respondent stated, 'It makes a girl feel that she is weak and helpless. It makes women feel degraded. We are made to accept the fact that we live in a male dominated society where females are just the object that satisfy the male urge'. To be discriminated against as a woman, to feel like a sexual object is a very degrading and humiliating experience for women.

Women also often internalise male perceptions of sexual harassment and blame themselves for having brought on the harassment. They not only doubt the validity of their own experiences but begin to believe that they themselves must be 'abnormal', 'cheap', 'indecent' or deserving the violence which comes their way. As one respondent, like many others remarked, 'I feel insulted and at times I even suspect that I am looking cheap and vulgar'. So deeply ingrained are these perceptions that women sometimes do not question why any woman, especially the so-called 'cheap' or 'indecent' woman deserves such sexist violence?

Many women also experience a deep sense of shame after incidents of molestation. Many women in our survey described feeling 'dirty' after such incidents. One respondent observed, 'I... feel ashamed of being a girl'. Very often women's sense of self is devalued and completely identified with the experience of violation. Women feel shame because of their sex. Thus sometimes even making all experiences of consensual adult sexuality extremely traumatic for them.

Women often experience the world through male perceptions, doubting their own assessment and often rating their experiences as less important than male categorisations. Thus women often internalise and silence many of their experiences of sexual and/or physical intimidation and violation. Very often women also internalise anger by blaming themselves, rather than blaming the harasser(s).

Many respondents said that they felt extreme anger, frustration and helplessness at not being able to do anything about sexual harassment. As one woman stated, 'I hate myself for not being violent and first kicking those people...'. The fact that harassers are mostly strangers and the harassment is sudden, immediate and often over before the women can react in any manner adds to the sense of helplessness and hopelessness. Women then may experience a deep sense of self-hatred, thereby internalising the prevalent misogyny - hatred for women - in our society and therefore cannot consider their own perceptions as valid. Others feel traumatised because there is no structural recognition of the problem. A woman respondent stated, 'It upsets me to know that a person who has the cheek to talk nonsense and pass comments about me is not being checked by anyone'. Another respondent said, 'I feel angry and humiliated. Often I get worked up just trying to figure out why the hell are men such imbeciles!...Why the hell do we have to take all this shit? Why can't I do something more?' Not only did some women feel that men who harass women are stupid and unthinking but many said that they felt 'pity' towards them. As one respondent stated, 'At times I even feel pity for the offender for not being able to respect another person.'

Many women having faced this behaviour also said that they find it difficult to trust or have friendships with men. In fact some of the women even expressed hatred towards men in general. As one respondent remarked, 'I feel humiliated and violated. I hate men and wish I could kill them....'. Another respondent state, 'I feel apathy towards men. I feel that these men are all animals, is it a sin that I am a woman that men behave like this with me. What is my fault? I often think of changing the whole outlook of society so that no one else faces the humiliation I have faced'. Women may have to rationalise this anger towards men on an everyday basis.

However, when the men students living on the campus were asked as to what impact eve-teasing and/or sexual harassment would have on women, almost all the men respondents stated that women would feel disgust and embarrassment when faced with sexual harassment. Most of them felt that these are traumatic experiences for women and may even lead to personality disorders. This is also because as pointed out earlier, for many men sexual harassment often means molestation and rape though they regard eve-teasing as harmless. As one male respondent stated, 'Sexual harassment would definitely be traumatic for a woman such that she may develop a personality disorder. Eve-teasing does not evoke such strong reaction. In most cases no heed is paid to eve-teasing - probably out of helplessness they have come to regard it as a normal part of their daily life.' However, sexual harassment may affect women in many ways and the cumulative effect of repeated harassment can be devastating particularly in undermining their academic and personal goals.

In response to our question 'Has sexual harassment/eve-teasing affected your academic/personal development in any way?', 49.3% women (hostellers, non-hostellers and residents), stated that though particular incidents affected them adversely, these did not affect their overall personal or academic development substantially. Most of these women have learnt to ignore the instances of sexual harassment in order to normalise a very hostile behaviour pattern as part of their life. Their silence does not always imply indifference or assent. Till the harassment is 'tolerable' it is ignored. This does not mean that the harassment does not evoke in them the feeling of disgust, anger or fear. They might adopt various strategies to fight it, but it still manages to regulate their life in some ways. It still affects the way the university space is accessible to them.

However a significant percentage (45%) of women respondents stated that sexual harassment on campus roads has affected their personal or academic development in one way or the other. A little more than one-fourth of these respondents said that it had affected their academic life. Some felt that they could not avail of the library facilities as 'they cannot return to the hostel after dark'. While others could not join 'various institutions', 'coaching classes', 'computer classes' etc., because they are 'too scared to go out alone after dark due to these problems'. Intimidation of women in the university not only results in women being deprived of the right to free movement but also implies that women have to learn to deal with lack of self confidence, fear and insecurity without any help or attention directed towards the various kinds of emotional or psychological problems which may thus arise.

Most women students said that sexual harassment has affected their personal development. As one respondent stated, 'I feel very scared and unsure to venture out alone. I feel afraid of men. I have lost my freedom and confidence in Delhi. I faced no such problem in Calcutta or Bombay.' Another respondent stated, 'In a very subtle way it has affected me. It affects my moods. I am never relaxed.'

However, some women pointed out that facing sexual harassment every day has enabled them to develop individualised strategies to deal with such situations. It has forced them to become bolder and more confident in handling any situation. As one of them said 'Handling these situations day after day has made me much bolder. During the first few months I used to be very disturbed and unable to do any useful work but now I have learned to take it in my stride.' One respondent stated, 'Retaliating to eve-teasing has made me more courageous and outspoken. It has made me a realist. I have realised that I have to deal with it'. Another respondent stated, 'It has helped because I am stronger and alert all the time I go out. I won't be a silent victim'.

These are women who have developed strategies and skills to cope with adverse situations in their day to day life. They have realised that they are not responsible for their being harassed but 'the problem lies with those who resort to it'. They might have found a way of handling these situations by changing their personality, but at one level these changes are also forced by the circumstances over which they have no control, and this has left some of them 'bitter'.

We believe that if the authorities concerned are going to continue to blame the women and shield the harassers, the psychological or emotional trauma faced by women is only going to increase.

AUTHORITY STRUCTURES

Introduction

Despite gross instances of sexual harassment in the past the Delhi University administration has not treated sexual harassment as a serious problem which has traumatic consequences for the women. The university administrators do not want to recognise the magnitude of the problem of sexual harassment faced by women in the university every day. The general attitude of the administration has by and large been one that either disbelieves the victim or blames her for 'provoking' harassment. By treating sexual harassment as 'normal' the administration has systematically legitimised the sexist violence women face in the university.

One sign of this systematic normalisation of sexual harassment of women is the fact that even after the S. C. Bhatia case there has been no move by the university to initiate discussions on a policy on sexual harassment of women which would define sexual harassment as discrimination against women and outline transparent procedures of complaint and investigation. In the absence of a clear policy it becomes virtually impossible for women students to get justice in instances of sexual harassment. As is evident from a few of the well publicised cases in the university over the last few years there exists no transparent procedure of inquiry which can inspire confidence in the victims to complain.

Another instance of the way in which the university has systematically denied the recognition of sexual harassment is borne out by our experience as a group. Our continuous attempts to bring the issue of street harassment to the university administration's attention have met with little success. In March 1995, International Women's Day, GSG with other four leftist student's groups submitted a memorandum to the authorities protesting against the increasing sexual harassment on campus. We suggested various measures which could help curb the problem. We experienced the worst form of sexual harassment in the last 3-4 years during Holi in March 1995 for no preventive measures to check Holi hooliganism had been taken that year. In April 1995, a blind employee was killed by a Red Line on Patel Chest, a crossing where three other people of the university had been killed in the same academic year. GSG joined a dharna organised by six other organisations on this issue against the traffic de-regulation on campus. The memorandum submitted to the authorities also pointed out that lack of traffic regulation had not only resulted in the four tragic deaths in one academic year but on an everyday basis also made sexual harassment of women on roads easier. The university administration as a consequence decided to set up a traffic committee headed by Prof. Rana (Dean of Colleges) which was to comprise representatives from the Delhi University Student's Union (DUSU), Delhi University Teacher's Association (DUTA) and Delhi University Researcher's Association (DURA). No representatives from the organisations were invited on the Committee nor their opinion solicited as to whether they would like to recommend senior professors to represent them on the traffic committee. Nor did the Committee meet till winter in the next academic year. In Nov. 1996, GSG and another leftist student's group Progressive Student's Union (PSU) met the administration again over another incident of sexual harassment on Chhatra Marg. We submitted a memorandum again outlining preventive measures which need to be taken to prevent sexual harassment on campus roads. We were promised the following:

1. Street lights would be repaired. Flood lights would be installed on various hostels.
2. The matter of traffic regulation would be seriously looked into.
3. The traffic committee would look into the possibilities of a closed campus.
4. Police barricading would be organised.
5. Billboards would be removed from the corners of the pavements and the pavements will be repaired.
6. The Joint Control Room would be reactivated and information about the J.C.R. would be disseminated among women hostellers.

Of these assurances only the lights were repaired but since there is no central monitoring it was only a matter of time before the roads were dark again. In February 1996, GSG took up the case of a post graduate woman student who was sexually harassed near the Vice Chancellor's residence on Chhatra Marg. Even after a month of the incident the police had not registered the F.I.R.. GSG intervened and pressurised the proctor's office to help the student lodge the F.I.R. and give her police protection. During this process which involved repeated calls to the police and proctorial office to ensure the police protection, we were told informally that the

traffic committee had met but could not come up with a blue print for a closed campus. Not once have we received any formal communication from the administration on how our demands have been processed. The net result : three memoranda, number of promises, no action and sexual harassment increases unabated day by day.

Given this background we undertook the task of conducting this survey so that the university authorities recognise the magnitude of the problem. Not surprisingly unlike other universities, Delhi University has never felt the need to conduct a survey or an inquiry to map out the extent of sexual harassment in the university. This is despite the fact that the university has the resources to commission centres like the Women's Studies and Development Cell (D.U.) to conduct research based surveys which would aid the formulation of a policy.

As for the other recognised bodies in the university like the DUSU and DUTA the issue of sexual harassment has never been seriously debated and taken up with the administration except for periodic protests over specific issues. Nor has the issue of sexism within these bodies been taken up. Ironically these are very groups/bodies which are recognised by the university and invited by the administration to represent a wide cross section of students and teachers. The issue of sexual harassment of women students on campus roads has been raised by some individuals in these bodies but has never come under serious perusal. As a woman lecturer residing on campus stated, 'I have taken up this issue with the DUTA and other official bodies. All (such efforts) have been unsuccessful.'

The disenchantment with the nature of students' or teachers' politics in the university spills over to a mass of students and teachers who are initiated into an environment which is a priori perceived with cynicism and a conviction that despite protest and marches nothing really is going to change. In our experience as a group the most common response of the students has been one of apathy and cynicism towards all collective forms of protest. Without the unbridled support of the hostellers on the issue of sexual harassment on campus roads we have been unable to take the issue to the streets of the campus.

We have also often asked ourselves why is it that this issue has never been taken up by the residents on campus as a problem concerning the university community residing there. In our survey we found that although many of the residents have taken up aspects of the issue with the authorities, most have not thought of this problem as one which requires collective protest.

A great deal of cynicism about the university authorities' will to change has been expressed by our respondents. In this section we present women's experiences with the administration and their opinions of the administration in general.

PROCTORIAL OFFICE

The common complaint of the proctor's office to the GSG over the last four years has been that women students do not complain about instances of sexual harassment on campus roads despite the fact that there exist structures in the university which it is claimed effectively deal with such cases. We have learnt that such cases should be notified in the form of a written complaint addressed to the proctor and submitted to the Joint Control Room (near health Centre, Chhakra Marg). If the offender is a non-student the proctor's office claims to help the student file an FIR with the local police station.

We also have been aware of the fact that most women hostellers do not know of the existence or the functions of the Joint Control Room (J.C.R.). Of the women hostellers 80% did not know of the existence of the J.C.R.. Of the 20% who said they had heard about it, most said that they did not know what its functions were. In fact a few respondents actually thought that the J.C.R. is a 'police unit', its function is 'to station itself on a particular road, (it is) not exactly responsible towards its duties.' Others were cynical about its effectiveness as a respondent said, 'I wonder if it is a formality or it actually works'. Only two students had ever complained to the J.C.R. of which one was extremely cynical about her experience with the proctorial office.

A majority of the senior residents on campus knew about the J.C.R. and its functions. Interestingly, students also believe that the residents (teachers and their families) have greater access to the Proctor's office

and are more likely to have prompt action on their cases. For students who have no information or contacts in the university administration complaining can be a very frustrating and difficult process. The lack of awareness is not surprising as none of the college or hostel handbooks contain information about the J.C.R. or instructions on what to do about instances of sexual harassment in the university.

The J.C.R., according to one Deputy Proctor we interviewed, handles all cases of harassment as problems of 'indiscipline' in the university. According to her, sexual harassment cases are clubbed with all the problems concerning women, such as theft by women, fights between women, etc. Sexual harassment then is undistinguished from other disciplinary problems. It is not recognised that sexual harassment may be a very traumatic experience for women. Women may often feel a sense of shame or blame themselves, thus making the act of complaining an extremely difficult process. Further, the very act of complaining often involves having to deal with a very real fear of reprisal which is not taken into account by the authorities.

Moreover, the J.C.R. which is situated next to the D.U.S.U. office, comprises within it an intelligence cell where sometimes one observes students from the union or police officials sitting and chatting. In 1994 GSG had taken up the case of a woman hosteller who had been sexually harassed in one of the on campus libraries. Ironically as we went in to complain the very student who had harassed this woman-student was lounging in the next room. It has been evident to us that the administrators obviously have no idea about the emotional demands made on a student by the decision to resist sexual harassment by complaining to the authorities. The fear of reprisal and the corollary need for anonymity has been completely unrecognised by the authorities.

What adds insult to injury is that very often women's need for anonymity is read as a proof of women students trying to implicate men by giving in false complaints. According to the deputy proctor we interviewed, the proctorial office received four 'cases of false complaints' in one year. She cited the example of letters of complaint which are anonymous in nature as false complaints. For example, she said one woman student wrote an anonymous letter but the course in which the accused was enrolled did not exist and therefore the complaint was false. The idea that perhaps the woman student did not know that the course existed or was further trying to protect herself did not figure as an explanation. In another case the deputy proctor told us that on inquiry the man accused turned out to be a friend of the woman who had complained and the complaint was false. Most of the times the underlying belief is that women falsely implicate men who may be their friends or lovers for their 'personal gain'. Sexual harassment in such instances is reduced to a 'personal' problem between the two individuals. In our understanding 'false' cases may be an aberration but they are not the norm. However, given such an attitude a sexist administration would treat most such cases as potentially false.

Is it surprising that when faced with sexual harassment, very few women students have either approached the proctor's office or J.C.R.?

THE POLICE

In the absence of any other solution to curb sexual harassment on campus roads the role of the police has been highlighted by the university authorities. The entire burden of making the campus safe for women has been shifted to the police. However the problems women face while lodging a complaint with the police and the sexism within the police force has never really been brought into serious discussion by the university authorities with the local police personnel. Women students then are doubly traumatised if they complain, first by the incident and then by the legal process. The proof that the university administration has systematically denied the magnitude of the problem lies in the fact that the university administration has not taken into cognisance the sexism women may face from the police and the legal process. It has never occurred to the administration that by evolving a structure which could effectively deal with such cases, perhaps the university could have provided a more gender just system to the women in the university.

The ease with which the administration takes recourse to the police without problematising the sexism within the police force is brought to fore in the administration's eagerness to deploy huge number of police, the CrPC or Riot Police to quell students demonstrations in the university. In April 1996 in response to a deadlock between the students on dharna in Law Faculty and the administration, huge battalions of riot police were called

to lift the dharna and allow the scheduled examination to take place. The riot police charged indiscriminately on all students - the protesters as well as those waiting to take their examination. Students were chased down the road and range of violence on students was reported. Many women students reported being molested by the policemen. One woman student we talked to narrated that when she and her other women friends were standing near the Arts Faculty, down the road from the Law Faculty, a policeman came charging at them. He manhandled her and in the process simply ripped off her shirt. There has been no inquiry into these incidents nor have these been condemned as gross instances of sexual harassment committed by the police.

On an everyday basis women students on campus can file a complaint in the Maurice Nagar police station under Section 354, IPC which describes the offences as 'outraging the woman's modesty'. The legal process begins with initiating a complaint against the harasser which in the instance of sexual harassment on campus roads is beset with manifold difficulties. To book the harasser(s) in a vehicle women need to note down the number of the vehicle without which an F.I.R. is difficult to file. In the absence of street lights it is virtually impossible to note down the number of the vehicle. Often the number plates are removed or the rear light on the plate is switched off to avoid identification. Sometimes the vehicle is speeding or the incident happens too fast to be able to read the number. Given the fact that there is absolutely no traffic regulation on campus such incidents are fairly commonplace and easy to execute.

The beat police is often ill equipped to deal with the problem. Considering the virtual absence of traffic regulation on campus, it is almost impossible for the police to nab the offenders without vehicles. The traffic police, but for their guest performance on Police Day, conscientiously remain absent from the university, despite repeated petitions. The university authorities have not been able to persuade the police department that traffic police needs to be deployed on campus. In a cynical vein, a vendor on campus accounted for the lack of interest the traffic police have on campus by saying that this area was a 'dry' area for the police because the majority of people on the campus are students implying that they cannot pay any money.

Even when the woman may note down the number and file F.I.R., as happened with two non-hosteller women students recently (March, 1996), the victims are required to identify the harasser. Most of the times women cannot see the man's face or remember it to the last detail. This means the complaint cannot proceed. Worse still in some cases the police have brought the culprits to the hostel for identification. This threatens the woman complainant's anonymity and consequently jeopardises her safety.

Women complain that the police often hesitate to convert a complaint into an F.I.R.. The GSG has dealt with two cases in the last academic year in which the police were reluctant to file an F.I.R.. It was only after the intervention of the proctorial office and perusal by the GSG that the F.I.R. was filed. From our interview with a police official it is clear that the police often try to arrange a 'reconciliation' between the complainant and the offender rather than registering an F.I.R.. The additional SHO, (Maurice Nagar Police Station) said, 'Agar ladka muaphy mang le aur kah de ki meri behen jaisi hai, ham case rafadafa kardete hai' (If the boy asks for forgiveness and says that the girl is like my sister then we drop the case). This is despite the fact that these women have the courage to come forward and lodge a complaint for as the additional SHO herself said the F.I.R. itself destroys the woman's anonymity as the procedure requires the submission of the complainant's name and address. This often deters women from filing an F.I.R.

Many women students said that they have complained to the police or even lodged a complaint, but they do not know what happened to the case. One respondent recounted 'I was walking on the road going to Cavalry Lane when a man on a scooter suddenly stopped, ran towards me and grabbed me from the front. I was caught unawares and was shocked. My first reaction was of anger and so I hit him hard on his face. He reacted by trying to hit back. By then I spotted some guys I knew from the guy's hostel. All of us together overpowered him and bashed him up. The guys confiscated his licence, diary etc. We reported to the police. Since I did not follow the case up, I do not know what happened to him.' The police did not even bother to inform the student about the follow-up on the case. Imagine the vulnerability of a woman who does not know if she should or not fear reprisal.

Besides, going to the Maurice Nagar Police Station which is situated in an enclave in the ridge can itself be a very intimidating experience. But the predominant fear is of facing sexism from the police. As one respondent stated, 'At times we want to complain about an incident but the fear of going to the police station prevents us.'

Lodging an F.I.R. may involve giving a graphic account of the incident to the police officer-in-charge which itself may be traumatic for the complainant.

The fear of the police is also compounded by the sexual harassment women may have faced by policemen. In our survey many women respondents have said that even if they themselves have not faced sexual harassment from police, their friends have. Many of our respondents have pointed out that accounts of police atrocities in the media also contribute to the fear of the police.

In our survey 20.2% women hostellers said that they have faced sexual harassment from policemen. This includes staring, winking and lewd comments. One respondent stated, 'I've never gone to complain to them till now but otherwise when you see that they lech at you, you feel disgusted. There is no surety about anyone.' Another undergraduate student recounted 'We were lost, so we asked them which road to take. All we got out of them was questions like 'Are you from _____?' They named a place which has a number of prostitutes.'

The general attitude amongst the police is that women are to be blamed for the harassment they face. Each time GSG has complained to the police, they have responded by saying that it is the women's fault for staying out after dark. In fact after one such agitation on the issue, the policemen on duty actually told the women hostellers that it was a 'new rule' as a consequence of the agitation, requiring women hostellers to go inside the hostel by 7 p.m. The police then act as legislators setting their own rules intimidating women students instead of nabbing the culprits. Women students then have to resist both the harassers and the police.

These self-appointed legislators of morality also exert surveillance over young men and women. According to the women hostellers, the police often harass them by asking them 'unnecessary questions' when they are with their male friends on campus. One respondent narrating her friend's experience stated, 'She was asked for I.D. in the university garden when she was with her male friend'. Another respondent stated, 'One of my male friends was sitting with a woman friend near the university lawns at night. He was asked to go away by a constable. When he asked why, he was threatened that he will be put behind the walls'.

Furthermore, a great deal of cynicism exists regarding police action. Women said that even when they have gone ahead to complain to the police nothing has been done about it. One of our respondents recounted: 'Once when we saw girls being teased by guys on two-wheelers we started shouting at them and then managed to catch them and hit them. We then took them to the policemen standing near Jia Jawan. The policemen said they would take care of them. They took some money from them and let them off'. One resident on campus said, 'The policeman noted the vehicle's description and number but no extra effort from his side was visible.' Not only do the police fail to take action but they often support the harasser(s): As one respondent said, 'I had complained but nothing happened. On Holi I convinced the police to catch hold of two guys who were throwing balloons at me but the police, the crowd and the boys looked amused'. Another respondent stated that, 'Sometimes policemen seem to be supporting the eve-teasers because they do not react instantly though everything happens in their presence.' In fact over the last 3 years, the number of cases registered in the Maurice Nagar Police Station is extremely low (see Table 5).

YEAR	CASES	FINED	PENDING
1993	11	20	1
1994	7	6	1
1995	18	17	1

Most women hostellers also think that without the intervention of higher police officials or the university authorities, it is virtually impossible for any police action to be taken. Another student remarked, 'Only if you go to the ACP, DCP ... is any action taken by the Maurice Nagar police station'. She however stressed the need for the hostel and university authorities and the police to work together in tackling the problem of sexual harassment. Citing an incident she demonstrates the efficacy of such a joint effort, 'Two days before Holi we were walking towards Vijay Nagar when some boys in a Maruti threw lots of water balloons on us. We noted down the number

and went back to the hostel. The hostel authorities called the ACP who promptly came to the hostel. The police traced the car and the students'.

It is evident from our survey that by and large action has been taken by the police in cases where there has been intervention from the proctorial office. The rest of the complaints have been to no avail. Of the 5 younger women residents on campus who had complained to the authorities, in 3 cases action was taken. It is significant that these were the cases in which the proctor's office had intervened. In the other two cases the respondents, who had complained directly to the police, reported police inaction. As one woman respondent stated, '(I complained) to the police as well as the university authorities. The scootist was held and given a sound warning'.

Ironically even older women residents on campus have met with no success with the police. One resident who was the President of Delhi University Women's association (DUWA) recounted : 'While in charge of the DUWA hostel, I had complained to the police nothing much was done to provide any relief'.

The difficulties faced by school-going girls has never been taken up for serious discussion by the authorities. A respondent, the daughter of a professor residing on campus, stated, 'Once my father complained to the proctor about a boy who had been following me in his car. A PCR van was standing nearby, 2-3 days, after we reported the incidents'. Hence even when some immediate action is taken, it is often only a temporary measure and not a serious attempt to deal with the problem of sexual harassment in general.

The findings of this survey confirms our experience as a group, that the presence of police on campus rather than solving the problem of sexual harassment has merely compounded it. The university authorities in not recognising the manifold difficulties women students have to face while lodging a complaint with the police have systematically denied recognition to the problem.

HOSTEL AUTHORITIES

In a campus where women hostellers face sexual harassment every day, one would have expected the hostel authorities to play an important role in curbing it. Yet our survey has revealed that the hostel authorities (Provost, Warden or Resident Tutor) have not addressed this issue seriously enough.

Of the 102 respondents who answered the question, 'Have you ever complained about sexual harassment and/or eve-teasing to your provost or warden?', only 6.4% respondents (belonging to 3 hostels) stated that they had complained (see table 6).

Have you ever complained about sexual harassment and/or eve-teasing to your provost or warden?						
S.No	Name of Hostel	No. of Respondents	Yes	No	No Response	
1	Meghdoot	17	3	13	1	
2	PGW	34	3	30	1	
3	MH	22	1	19	2	
4	DRC	15	0	14	1	
5	SRCC	4	0	4	-	
6	MSW	9	0	8	1	
7	CIE	7	0	5	2	
TOTAL		109	7	93	8	

Most women respondents stated that they believed that the hostel authorities did not perceive sexual harassment as a problem which demands their intervention. Some responses were cynical, as one respondent stated, '(the hostels authorities) ... are indifferent'. Another respondent stated, 'They are least concerned'. One respondent remarked, 'I doubt if they will bend their rules to assist a girl with potential danger of such nature'. Other respondents felt that even if the hostel authorities perceived sexual harassment as a problem faced by women hostellers they blame it on the women. One respondent from an undergraduate hostel stated, 'The problem is conceived as a special problem though it is blamed on women'. Another respondent from a post graduate hostel remarked, 'I think they do ... because that is why it has manifested in jail like rules of the hostel'. Other women felt that, 'even if they do, they'd best avoid it rather than deal with it. It is a problem for them at

the administrative level only. If the girls don't take the initiative the authorities won't bother'. Thus clearly establishing that the hostel authorities have not been able to inspire any confidence in the women hostellers to come forward and complain about street harassment.

Most women respondents stated that the hostel authorities had not taken up the issue with the University authorities. Of the total of 67 respondents who responded to the question, 'Has the provost or warden ever taken up the issue with the university authorities?', only 6 respondents (belonging to two hostels) could categorically state that the hostel authorities had taken up the issue of sexual harassment with the University administration (see table 7).

Has the provost or warden ever taken up the issue with the university authorities?						
S.No. Hostel	Total Responses	Yes	No	Don't know	No Response	
1. PGW	34	0	8	16	10	
2. Meghdoot	19	4	1	8	6	
3. MH	22	2	7	4	8	
4. DRC	15	0	10	1	4	
5. SRCC	4	0	2	1	1	
6. MSW	8	0	6	2	0	
7. CIE	7	0	0	4	3	
TOTAL	109	6	34	36	32	

It is interesting that the authorities of some of the women's hostels we interviewed did not claim that they consider women responsible for sexual harassment and agree with the hostellers that 'locking' them up is not the solution. However while most of the hostel authorities saw sexual harassment on campus roads as a problem, one warden of one of the undergraduate hostels actually denied the very existence of the problem. Though the issue has been taken up by individual provosts in the past, unfortunately this has not been part of an organised campaign undertaken by the provosts of all women hostels on campus.

Of the few women who have ever complained to the hostel authorities, only a few have been successful interventions. A respondent from one of the post graduate hostels stated that 'action has been taken in some cases and the problem solved to some extent'. As one respondent recounted: 'Two sardars used to come here (P.G. Women's hostel) and harass the students. The deputy proctor was informed and watchmen made to stand in the mornings. After that the two men never came back'. Another respondent from the neighbouring P.G. hostel said, 'authorities have once or twice brought the culprit to task'. From these instances, it is clear that if the hostel authorities provide support structures to the women hostellers, women students can resist sexual harassment more effectively. However these instances are few and restricted to specific cases. At a more generalised level, there has been no effort to mobilise collective protest on the issue.

Instead of trying to initiate ways of dealing with the issue, there has been a tendency to enforce rigid rules restricting women's mobility in the University. While we do not want to trivialise the responsibility that a lot of parents put on the hostel authorities, however we would like to focus on the protective nature of the rules imposed by the university on women hostellers. During Holi, for instance, women hostellers are not allowed to go out of the hostels*. The rules in the hostel regarding the time by which women should return to the hostel is often rationalised by stating that not only do these help in the day to day functioning of the hostel but have been instituted for the safety of women students. This rationalisation merely succeeds in restricting the mobility of women hostellers and deprives them of the rights to decide what is safe or unsafe for themselves. A majority of our respondents felt that the hostel's protective rules are not the way in which women's safety can be ensured. As one of the respondents stated, 'The warden feels that girls should not be out after dark'. Women question this argument and say that '(we) would have

* C.I.E. is an exception.

thought well of the rules if they were actually for our safety. If anything happens to us outside the hostel gate, they (the hostel authorities and chowkidars) won't come to help us'. The authorities feel that such rules are necessary due to security reasons. However, most women feel that this attitude is negative.

Some women hostellers conceded that the authorities had perhaps no choice, particularly given the kind of hooliganism during Holi or harassment on campus roads but they objected to the imposition of the rule. Locking the women up could be a 'practical precautionary step' acceptable only as a temporary solution. But they also felt that in the process it renders women as passive subjects completely dependent on the views of the hostel authorities regarding their safety. They stated that instead they should be treated as mature adults having the choice to make their own decisions regarding such rules. Only a few of the respondents thought that the authorities were right in imposing restrictions on women as a solution to the problem because they themselves impose restrictions on their movement because of the lack of safety.

The hostel authorities then act like the 'protective family' which decides what would be safe for the women. The women are considered safe within the confines of the hostel, thereby the rules must be strictly followed. Women however feel that this smacks of a tendency to infantilize them as if they are incapable of making decisions for themselves. As one respondent put it 'We are aware of the problem. If we're ready to take it on, why should anybody decide for us?'

The notion underlying these rules is that women's bodies are 'vulnerable' and need protection. Hence the effort is not to create a safe space for women but to confine their movement in the university. Instead of trying to build a confidence within women to be able to face sexual harassment, the authorities encourage a feeling of vulnerability in them vis-a-vis their ability to move around freely outside the hostel premises. The punitive rules in the hostels and the tendency to exert excessive surveillance on the women residents has to a large extent led to a passive acceptance of the existence of sexual harassment among the hostel residents.

Clearly, the solution to the problem of sexual harassment does not lie in merely restricting the movement of women hostellers. For the problem of sexual harassment lies outside the hostel premises and that is exactly where the hostel authorities seem to give up their responsibility. The safety of the hostel should be extended to mean safety within the campus. Our case is not against the rules of the hostel per se but of this as the means of dealing with the problem. Thus, we argue that the focus in dealing with the problem of sexual harassment should shift from stringent hostel rules to providing a safer campus.

STRATEGIES AND SUGGESTIONS

As is clear from the above, a climate that tolerates sexual harassment is one which inhibits academic learning, social growth and the psychological well-being of women. In this section, we would like to address ourselves to the ways of changing this climate on the campus. Clearly, there is no one solution to this problem. Therefore, we suggest here a wide range of strategies -both long and short term. We draw from three sources -one, suggestions made by those who filled out the questionnaires, and were interviewed; two, the experience of GSG over the last four years; and three, from reports that have been brought out by other universities.

THE NEED FOR A POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Most importantly, we need to hold the university accountable. The problem of sexual harassment is a public problem which needs public solutions. The university needs to address the different forms of sexual harassment, which have already been discussed in the report.

Unfortunately in India there is still no law regarding sexual harassment in the workplace. Various women's groups however are working on a draft Bill. In their report on the S.C. Bhatia case, Justice Wad and Alice Jacob have also made some suggestions. The university must initiate discussions to formulate a policy on sexual harassment in the university. The Ad hoc Committee set up after the Wad Committee report findings should be re-instituted and directed towards bringing out a policy on sexual harassment. Sexual harassment must be re-defined by the university statutes from a mere breach of discipline to discrimination against women.

We believe that the suggestions made by the Wad Committee are very valuable and therefore we quote from the report at length.

'Till the time such a legislation is passed by the parliament, the university should frame appropriate statutes for dealing with cases of sexual harassment in the university.'

*Such a statute should provide for establishment of cells in the university departments and affiliated colleges for recording cases of sexual harassment and for counselling.

*The university should appoint a committee of three women teachers to inquire into serious charges of sexual harassment and to record prima facie findings on the charges. They should be free to follow the procedure of their choice but it should be flexible enough to inspire confidence in the victims of sexual harassment.

*If the committee of three senior women teachers records prima facie findings of guilt, the persons responsible for sexual harassment should be suspended forthwith in anticipation of Disciplinary proceedings.

*The Disciplinary Enquiry should be headed by a retired Judge of the Supreme Court or High Court and should be assisted by one woman member, not connected with the university.

*The detailed procedure in keeping with the principles of natural justice, should be laid down for the conduct of the disciplinary proceedings.

*The Disciplinary Authority should not ordinarily interfere with the findings of the Disciplinary Committee unless there is substantial evidence of miscarriage of justice.

*In order to discourage frivolous and motivated complaints, the Disciplinary Committee should record a special finding whether the complaint is frivolous and motivated. The statute should provide for imposition of peculiar costs on the complainant so that the complainant compensates the alleged perpetrator of sexual harassment. The costs should be qualified by the Disciplinary Committee and should be recovered by the university and paid to the alleged perpetrator of sexual harassment.

*The complaints of sexual harassment should be expeditiously dealt with and should not be allowed to develop into a big scandal spreading over years, as it happened in the present case.

*Sufficient publicity should be given to the statute on sexual harassment in the University Departments and affiliated colleges.'

Until now the university and proctorial office has adopted a legalistic model on the problem. We believe that the university needs to think of evolving other non-adversarial mechanisms to tackle sexual harassment, which ensure the confidentiality of the victim.

One of the long term means to prevent sexual harassment is through spreading awareness about sexism and sexual harassment. This will mean that a great responsibility be placed on the teachers and staff of the university to integrate discussions on sexual harassment and sexism into their classes.

The University has to ensure that the common spaces like libraries, canteens and class rooms are made safe for women. Science laboratories must be made safe for women by providing adequate lighting and chowkidars. The library staff should be briefed about sexual harassment that takes place in the libraries and a well defined procedure of redressal be instituted that could be followed in such instances.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS TO PREVENT STREET HARASSMENT

Closed Campus

The question of a closed campus has been raised at various times in the history of D.U.. A comparison with a campus like JNU has made people feel that this would make a considerable difference

- a) in the general atmosphere of D.U. North campus.
- b) reduce the instances of harassment by resulting in fewer vehicles passing through the campus and
- c) help in dealing with incidents of harassment, i.e. with fewer entrances and exits it will be easier to catch harasser in/on vehicles.

This is no doubt not an easy solution and will require a great deal of planning. However, we feel that this should be a priority for the administration. A closed campus would ensure that mobility of women on campus is not restricted. We would like to emphasise that we do not think that the solution lies in 'locking up' women but in creating safer spaces, where women would feel free to move about without the fear of violence. In this spirit, we would also like to recommend that more spaces where men and women can sit together should be created. The plan to create a garden opposite the cooperative stores should be implemented.

However, in the interim the university should request the traffic police to set up barricades on some of the university roads so that traffic slows down and it is easier to catch harassers in vehicles.

Traffic needs to be effectively regulated, U-turns should not be allowed at all places, speed limit boards should be put up and spot checking of driving licenses should be enforced. Further, number plates should be checked to ensure they are clean and written clearly.

The University should ensure that the streets are adequately lit and the lights are working at all times. Further, flood lights should be installed at certain places, especially outside the hostels. To facilitate pedestrians, pavements should be maintained. This would mean that the pavements be repaired, trees be trimmed from time to time, overflowing drains be repaired and that billboards are not put up in a manner that obstructs the pavements, particularly at corners. Mechanisms to ensure the above two should be streamlined. These measures must be taken for it becomes difficult for women to walk on university roads, let alone enable them to resist sexual harassment effectively. Also, the number of payphones should be increased, so that a student facing harassment may find it easier to alert the police or ask for help immediately.

First of all, we feel the university administration needs to take serious preventive measures. The administration also needs to realise how sexual harassment on the streets affects women students and recognise the fact that it is not always easy for them to resist or lodge a complaint. The administration therefore needs to mediate between the police and the victims to facilitate the process of complaint and redressal. Based on the responses of our respondents we would like to make the following recommendations and urge all the progressive sections in the university to take these up with the administration.

*The university should make the Joint Control Room, which is the place where students can go to lodge complaints, more accessible to students.

*As has been discussed earlier in this report, a majority of respondents did not know about the JCR. The Proctorial office should let students know about the functioning of the JCR. This should be done not only by including this in the bulletin that is given to students on getting admission (as is done now) but also through poster campaigns in the university at regular intervals throughout the academic year.

*A bright and clearly visible board should be placed outside the JCR stating the functions of the office. Likewise the proctor's office should be easily identifiable.

*The timings of the JCR should be extended and in particular the JCR should remain open on Saturdays and Sundays.

*Once a complaint is given to the proctor's office they should follow it up with the police. They should help the student deal with the police and the procedures that need to be followed.

*College brochures should give procedures that could be followed in case of sexual harassment. Contact numbers of people who could be contacted should be given.

Police Patrolling: While a majority (72.5%) of women hostellers stated that they would prefer more police patrolling on campus roads, they specified that this was on the condition that the police be trained adequately to deal with the problem of sexual harassment. A majority of women respondents stated that they would prefer policewomen to policemen. Many women respondents stated that policemen themselves harass women. Many women respondents argued that policewomen may be 'more sensitive' and it may be easier for women to complain to them. Others said that policemen would be better at combating the problem as 'hoodlums and ruffians aren't scared of policewomen'. The rest said that both policewomen and policemen should be present. The police should conduct special training for police men and women to sensitize them to the issue of sexual harassment. We have noticed that more police in itself does not necessarily imply that incidents of sexual harassment will be dealt with. Often policemen do not know why they are there and if they do, are moralistic and harass women hostellers with their male friends rather than those who are harassing. Therefore, we recommend that there should be effective police patrolling by a team of policemen and policewomen who are especially trained to deal with the problem and have the necessary resources to deal with it. We also feel that the crime against women's cell should periodically send squads to catch men who harass women on campus.

Housing: It is the university's responsibility to provide housing for the large number of women students of Delhi University. A very large number of our women respondents (57.8%) believe that one of the solutions to the problem of sexual harassment is to have more hostels for women. This shortage of housing for

women has meant that women are forced to look for off-campus housing. According to most women non-hostellers staying in rented rooms not only invite unnecessary trouble from landlords but also from male outsiders. One respondent complained that 'landlords in adjoining areas of campus sexually harass the tenants'. Another woman stated, for example, that more hostels for women would 'help women get out of the clutches of greedy landlords and their pervert sons'. Part of the reason for this is that women who live out of the hostel are perceived as 'available' or 'fast'. The university has to increase the number of hostels for women given the kind of violence women may be subjected to in accomodation outside the campus.

WHAT CAN WOMEN STUDENTS DO?

Women need to strategize about their safety and not simply 'avoid going out in the late evening alone'. Our questionnaire asked some questions that required the respondents to write down what two women should do in a situation of sexual harassment. On the basis of this we present some of the strategies that women use (or think they should use) in case of street harassment.

*ignore as a strategy;

*scream for help;

*note down the number and say it out aloud - this will scare them, note down other features of the vehicle - the colour, model etc.;

*lash out;

*push the person away and hit them with slippers/bags;

*use self defence mechanisms, for example, kick them off balance;

*grab his hand and shout (although often in fact this is not possible because they speed away in vehicles);

*with the help of others (a scooterist, for example) on the road, try to catch them.

We would like to note here that despite knowing all these tactics often it is difficult to react spontaneously. For instance, before one is able to hit out, the harasser(s) may have sped away. Besides it may be possible that there are no lights on the streets or the number plate is dirty making it difficult to read. Nevertheless if one is able to note down the vehicle number they should go to the nearest PCR van or the police station (Maurice Nagar for North campus) and file an F.I.R. or alternatively give a written complaint to the J.C.R.

Self-defence classes should be started in different departments and in the women's hostels. A majority of women were in favour of this and believed that this would enable women to protect themselves and moreover would instill a sense of self confidence in them. Ideally students should work towards starting a student run women's cell where students can come with complaints.

Equally those witnessing instances of sexual harassment on the streets, in buses, in canteens etc. should attempt to go to the defence of the woman/women being harassed. On the street for example if it is possible to note down the vehicle number, chase the vehicle etc. then you should do that. Even simply expressing support to or comforting the woman goes a long way in reassuring the woman that she is not alone and it is a collective problem.

In the case of sexist comments/sexual harassment from your class mates, peer group or even a professor, express your discomfort and anger clearly to them. Explain that you find the behaviour offensive. If need be, take it up with the authorities.

Women need to anticipate counters to their complaints and allegations such as 'Can't you take a joke?', 'Don't overreact' or 'Don't be so touchy'. Such counters most often come from one's peer circle and are attempts at delegitimizing a women's experience of harassment. If such a counter comes from a policeman or policewoman then bring this to the notice of the J.C.R., a senior police official etc. Don't let these counters discourage you from protesting or filing your complaint.

It is heartening to hear that almost all women respondents' hostellers and non-hostellers stated that they discussed incidents of sexual harassment with their friends. In this manner, women find support groups enabling them to deal with the everyday violence they face.

CONCLUSION

We hope that this documentation of the experiences of women will illustrate the fact that all women face sexual harassment on campus roads. It is a form of collective violence directed at women as women.

Moreover, the regularity of the event does not make it 'acceptable'. The university authorities should realise that these acts of violence have 'serious' psychological, emotional and educational consequences for women and take effective action against those guilty of sexual harassment.

Many women hostellers in the course of the survey also said that they did not see the issue as a 'women's lib.' or 'feminist issue' and hoped we were not going to treat it as so. In our past attempts at mobilisation we have often faced such perceptions about women's issues or feminism. We have also been told that many men often think that feminists express anger about sexual harassment because they themselves are not attractive enough to attract male attention and their protests are an expression of a jealousy of other women! Many men and women believe that all feminism is anti-men or is just another fad.

Our view is that until women and men realise that women face sexual harassment because they are women, that it is a manifestation of a system which discriminates against all women extremely violently and that this is often masked in a sexist common sense which not only blames the victims but also attempts to dismiss those who resist the system, till then there can be no effective resistance against such violence. It cannot be emphasised enough that women too are complicit in patriarchy, that women too are sexist; as they too internalise dominant male perceptions, for being a woman does not necessarily make one non-sexist or a feminist.

It also cannot be emphasised enough that not all feminisms are anti-men. Most feminist positions are against patriarchy as a structure which implicates both men and women. Dismissing feminism as 'anti men' or just another 'fad' is an attempt to trivialise any act of resistance or politics women may commit themselves to. After talking to some of our respondents, we have also realised that any act of resistance by women is labelled as feminist in a bid to evoke the myths associated with feminism, and trivialise any such resistance. In order to counter such a backlash we also need to squarely challenge the myths about feminism and feminists. First we must begin by questioning our own perceptions, before we can bring about any change.

This report does provide a dismal picture of the university and its social environment. This was not our objective, however, it is a matter of concern that 91.7% of the women hosteller respondents reported having faced sexual harassment on the campus on an everyday basis. In enumerating the forms and extent of sexual harassment on campus, we wanted the university community as a whole to acknowledge the gravity of the situation. It is time for the university authorities, the teacher's association and various students bodies to take responsibility and through open discussions take a political stand which would ensure action to make the campus safer for its women students.

THE LAWS AVAILABLE TO US

Ordinance XV-B 3(e) In the Delhi University sexual harassment of women students by co-students has been defined under Ordinance XV-B which describes the 'maintenance of discipline among the students of the university'. Section 3(e) of the Ordinance holds that "any practise - whether verbal or otherwise - derogatory of women" shall amount to "gross indiscipline". A student found guilty under this section is liable to be expelled from the university.

Section 354, IPC Assault or ciminal force to a woman with intent to outrage her modesty.

HOW TO FILE A FIRST INFORMATION REPORT (F.I.R.)

Go to the nearest police station.

Write a complaint describing the incident.

Include whatever information you have that will help identify the culprit.

Hand it in to be signed and stamped. Get a copy of this letter that has been received.

THIS IS THE F.I.R.

An F.I.R. can also be lodged on the phone. If the policeman is reluctant to do this on the phone, insist or proceed to complain about the police personnel.

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

JOINT CONTROL ROOM (North Campus, D.U.) Off. 7257221
PROCTOR # Off. 7257291

DEPUTY PROCTOR

Dr. A.K. Kapoor (J.C.R.) Off. 7257221
Dr. Neelima Ray Chaudhari (J.C.R.) Off. 7257221
Res. 7271384

POLICE

100

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Off. 2515503

SHO Maurice Nagar Off. 7257478

Additional SHO, Maurice Nagar Off. 7257178

For Legal Assistance please contact:

Dr. Ved Kumari Res. 7233035

(Law Faculty, Lecturer)

Counselling facilities are available in Gandhi Bhawan, Delhi University - please ask for Shalini.

Counselling facilities are available in the city at :

SAKSHI Off. 4643946

JAGORI Off. 4619510

TARSHI (Confidential and free counselling, information and referrals on reproductive and sexual health issues. Mon. - Fri 9 am to 4 pm) 6481528

REFERENCES

Chakravarti, Uma and Neeraj Malik. 1996 (June 26). Sexual Abuse, Taken Lightly, in The Pioneer, New Delhi.

Dziech Billie Wright and Linda Weiner, 1984. The Lecherous Professor. Sexual Harassment on Campus. Boston : Beacon Press.

Kapur Ratna and Shamona Khanna 1996. Memorandum on reform of laws relating to Sexual Offenses. New Delhi: Centre For Feminist Legal Research.

MacKinnon, Catharine. A. 1979. Sexual Harassment of Working Women. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Sexual Harassment at Work, 1994, New York: The Labour Institute.

Szymanski, Sharon. 1985. Violence against Women; A Curriculum for Empowerment. New York: The Women's Education Institute.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many, many people have helped us on this project. We would like to start by thanking all our respondents - women and men - who cooperated with us in filling the lengthy questionnaires. Without their patience and support, this report would not have been possible. A number of students - friends, acquaintances, fellow students, both hostellers and non-hostellers willingly helped in administering the questionnaires and tabulating the responses. While it is impossible to name each individual who helped us, we would like to recognize the invaluable contribution that each of them made to the report. We hope that the report has lived up to their expectations. We are also grateful to all the faculty members and administrators who willingly took time out for our interviews. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Head of the department and the faculty members of the Department of Sociology for providing us a space without which it would have been virtually impossible for us to carry out our various activities, especially this survey. We also thank Uma Chakravarti, Neeraj Malik and Carmen Kagal for their editorial help.

We thank the Two Star Xerox shop in D.S.E. for xeroxing the required material for us at short notice and at a subsidized rate. We would also like to thank C.K. and Indu and Prof. Veena Das for financing part of the Report. Finally, we are indebted to Sanjay Bisht manufacturer of Grafix Jeans for helping us publish the report.

MYTH # 1 Women Enjoy Eve-Teasing/Sexual Harassment.

FACT # 1 Women do not Enjoy Eve-Teasing/Sexual Harassment Instead it is experienced by women as humiliating and degrading. Further, it may have a long lasting psychological impact on women, increasing their feelings of anger, helplessness humiliation and fear.

MYTH # 2 Eve-Teasing/Sexual Harassment is harmless. Women who object have no sense of humour.

FACT # 2 Eve-Teasing and sexual harassment are harmful to women. The word "Eve-Teasing" Suggests that behaviour which women may experience as humiliating and degrading should be treated as if it were a joke or light hearted teasing. It also suggests that women are "EVES" or temptresses and invite this behaviour. However violent it may be "Eve Teasing" Needs to be re-defined as sexual harassment to emphasize that it harms women and discriminates against women as women. All forms of Eve-Teasing are sexual harassment ranging from staring, Comments to molestation.

MYTH # 3 Only women who are provocatively dressed are sexually harassed.

FACT # 3 Any women irrespective of how she is dressed may be sexually harassed. By blaming women for "Inviting sexual" harassment men shift the responsibility of their actions to the victims. Women do not provoke men to humiliate, degrade and assault them.

MYTH # 4 Men sexually harass because they cannot control their natural sexual urges.

FACT # 4 This definition of male sexuality legitimises male aggression towards women. Further, sexual harassment is often an assertion of power rather than an expression of sexuality

MYTH # 5 If the women had said "NO" To the harasser he would have stopped immediately.

FACT # 5 Many harassers are told "NO" Repeatedly and often it makes no difference. "NO" is too often heard as "YES"

MYTH # 6 Sexual harassment is rare on campus.

FACT # 6 Sexual harassment is common everyday experience on campus Almost all women have experienced some form of sexual harassment or the other.