



Virtual End of Term Conference

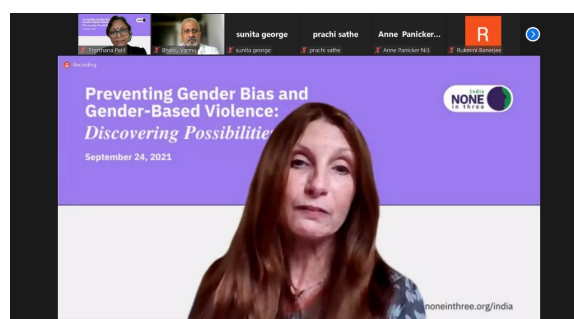
Preventing Gender Bias and Gender-based Violence : Discovering Possibilities

None in Three Research Centre (Ni3), India held our End of Project Virtual conference titled *Preventing Gender Bias and Gender-based Violence : Discovering Possibilities* on 24th September 2021. The goal was to bring together partners who believed in the collective mission of preventing gender-based violence (GBV) and discuss the way forward.

The schedule was developed resembling the structure of a research paper, given our background in research. We began with a keynote address in the form of an introduction to Ni3's vision and mission by our global centre's acting director, a review of our research findings by our India research fellow, a panel discussion on impact of our work with collaborators, a discussion on policy and research implications with stakeholders, design outputs of our work, and a concluding note by our primary investigator and former centre director. Our intention was to ensure that as a project culmination, all those who were a part of the team's journey were called to share their insights and experiences.

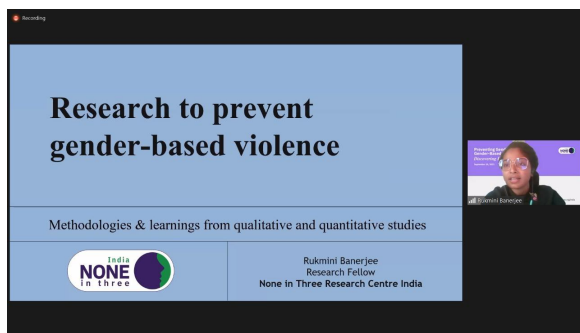
Ms. Prarthana Patil - Country Co- Director, Ni3 India began the conference by reminiscing the four year journey of the country team towards conducting research to prevent GBV. She noted that understanding forms of violence against women as symptoms helped the team arrive at **gender bias fueled by intergenerational influences of patriarchal thought as the leading cause to**

gender-based violence in India/the Indian home. She talked about the role of each team member and support from partners and government officials that helped the team get necessary documents in place for conducting the research as well as its dissemination.



Dr. Nadia Wager - Acting Director, Global Ni3 Research Centre impressed upon the global presence of GBV and its different manifestations across time and place. She noted that perpetrators conform to the norms and values of the society and hence its not an individual phenomenon but a social one, demanding change to be made at a societal level. Drawing from this understanding, the **centre's intervention looks at changing attitudes of younger members of society through prosocial education video games.** She spoke about the current status of the project, giving the audience an overview of the larger picture of the transnational centre. The team overcame challenges of the pandemic over its final year to conclude game trials in Uganda, commence in the UK, and apply for a fresh grant to hold the trials in India and Jamaica. Prarthana expressed how the research focus of the other countries helped

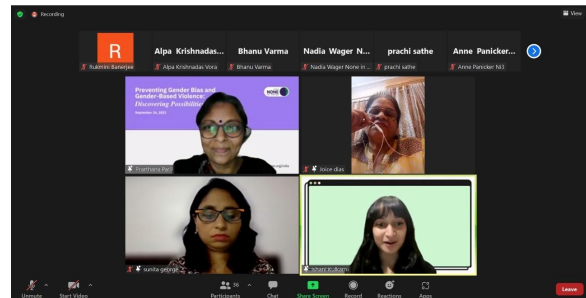
us have a more nuanced understanding of the issue of GBV.



Ms. Rukmini Banerjee - Research Fellow, Ni3 India gave a short glimpse of the findings of the mix-methods research studies conducted in the past four years along with a set of recommendations to address systemic and structural violence. She emphasized that **women in India, irrespective of social locations, have to constantly negotiate GBV.** Using the global definition of GBV envisaged by the UN, the team conducted a metasynthesis of literature and then delved into themes coming out from the qualitative data collection which involved 42 in-depth interviews with women survivors of GBV and 7 focus-group discussions with 47 men. We further conducted quantitative research which brought out data of prevalence of maltreatment and cognitive and affective empathy among 8000+ students through a psychosocial survey. Rukmini ended the presentation by ideating future possibilities using the research data including providing research participants with support beyond the project, and partnerships with institutions to end systemic gender bias.

Next we had the first panel discussion of the evening, with collaborators who helped the Ni3 India team during the course of the project. They brought forward the impact the research had in their own professional spaces and how it helped them take their work forward with the lens of addressing gender

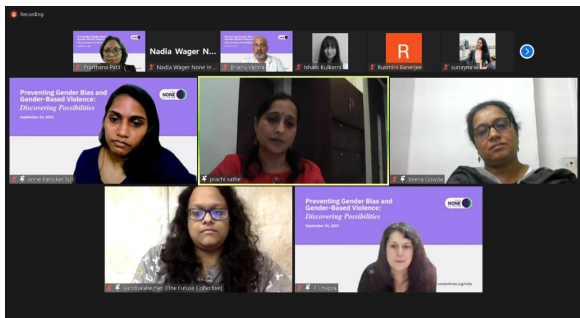
bias. The panelists were **Mrs. Joice Dias - Former Principal and Headmistress, St. Thomas Marthoma School; Mrs. Sunita George - Principal, Bombay Scottish, Mahim; Ishani Kulkarni - Jr. Research Assistant, Ni3 India** and it was moderated by Prarthana Patil.



Mrs. Dias began by noting the monumental impact that our psychosocial survey had on the students at St. Thomas Marthoma School. **The anonymous nature of the survey gave the students an opportunity to open up and address their concerns freely for the first time.** She also mentioned that the researchers ensured the students were able to understand the questions and this was particularly helpful. Mrs. George, then talked about how research helps educators deal with difficult issues like child abuse and neglect, and our partnership helped her and her colleagues **address the evident gender bias in curricula and address it with nuance, giving help to the students in a sustainable manner whenever necessary.** Together, the panel gave valuable and diverse perspectives on education-based interventions since they represented two very different profiles of schools.

Ms. Kulkarni brought in a young person's perspectives of carrying out the surveys and noted that **understanding gender is critical to understanding many other social issues as well.** The discussion brought forward first hand experiences of the panelists with stakeholders and how they navigated those to receive relevant support towards addressing

gender bias. The discussion ended by briefly noting each of the panelists' ideas for the way forward, from their varied standpoints.

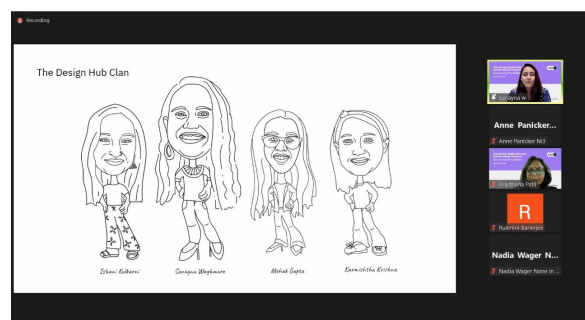


Post the break another panel discussion moderated by Ms. Anne Panicker - Research Assistant, Ni3 India and Dr. Priti Chopra - Senior Lecturer, University of Greenwich, was conducted with a focus on curriculum development and policy framework with experts from the government, and service providers.

Dr. Priti Chopra gave a brief overview of the Ni3 India curriculum that focuses on the prevention of gender bias and the aim of integration of the same in secondary schools along with the video game intervention. She noted that the Curriculum framework is on par with the National Education Policy, 2020 in terms of its values. The panelists were Adv. Veena Gowda - Lawyer, Bombay High Court; Mrs. Prachi Sathe - Academic Counsellor; Vandita Morarka - Founder and CEO, One Future Collective. The discussion on the factors leading to GBV brought out the aspect that it is individuals from society that are perpetrators and victims of GBV and the change has to start from within. Further subtle violence and biases also need to be called out to address the root. Ms. Morarka took this forward with examples from everyday life which normalise these behaviours that encourage gender bias and in turn GBV. Society needs to move on from the idea of binary and accept the idea of “different but

equal” as human beings. The importance of policy was discussed where Dr. Chopra opined that there can be no perfect policy, because it may not be implementable. Mrs. Sathe emphasised on the importance of intervention strategies with parents. Ms. Morarka brought forward the point that laws are by and large made by men and highlighted the need for women to be adequately represented in political positions and a further need for them to take perspectives of survivors. She spoke about the importance of solving for the cause rather than solving for the consequence, further highlighting Ni3 India’s focus on gender bias. Adv. Gowda took forward the discussion by talking about how the law is protectionist because it is made by the same people in society who come with their own set of biases. She reiterated the need for women to be given positive rights in cases of domestic violence and not focus only on the extreme end of violence by carrying out further violence (eg. death penalty). She opined that “consistency of justice is more important than severity of justice”.

Post the discussions, the audience was shown a short clip of the video game.



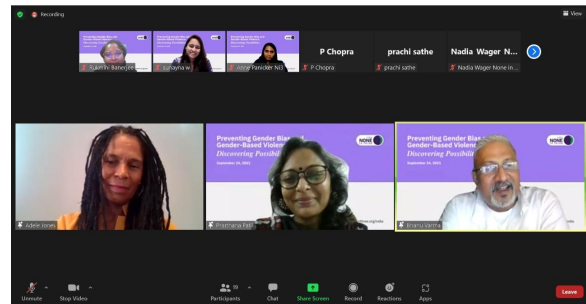
Next, Ms. Sunayna Waghmare - Creative Head, Ni3 Design Hub, was called on to talk about the data visualization processes that were undertaken towards making the research of the centre more accessible. She took the audience through the Design Hub’s work across various domains: Branding & Visual

Language, Video-making & Filming, Spoken word & Writing, as well as Graphic and Information Design. The presentation was a showcase of how the Ni3 India team had successfully operated at the intersection of research and design to create engagement and further the conversation around GBV with a multidisciplinary approach. Carrying on the narrative, the Team's efforts were showcased in a short film that captured the journey over the last four years. The global Ni3 members were particularly nostalgic about the showcase.



Dr. Adele Jones, Former Director Ni3, delivered a memorable speech marking the end of the project, which was both emotional and motivating. She began with a poem titled 'Learned Helplessness' that helped the team reflect on how it was important for all of us when working towards preventing GBV to *unlearn learned helplessness*. **Dr. Jones' faith in the India Team's abilities, her constant support and love, her commitment to furthering research and development with young people were only some of the reasons why this project was coming to fruition.**

The Conference was closed by **Mr. Bhanu Varma - Country Co-Director, Ni3 India** who thanked the team members for the efforts and dedication to the work over the past four years to achieve the goals and bring to fruition the vision of Ni3.



The Conference was attended by almost 40 individuals from various sectors. The team had enabled the chat feature for the participants to be able to provide live feedback and ask questions to the panelists and team members. Participants pointed out instances of gender bias in folktales and fairy tales which are also taught in schools. The engagement led to significant conversations around how to devise constructive curriculum and intervention strategies for people in need. Most importantly, the **conference and subsequent discussions encouraged our team to continue working towards gender equality and social justice issues. Even though our work was challenging at times, we had found necessary support and commitment from various stakeholders who shared our vision of a world free of violence and discrimination.**

The Virtual Conference was an ode to the four years the Ni3 India Team spent working towards preventing GBV, and advancing the ethics and frameworks of the global None in Three Research Centre. It was an intimate and reflexive moment for the team as it was the ending of something beautiful, but also the beginning of new futures.