

Institute of Social Studies Trust



TOWARDS COLLECTIVE REFLECTION AND EMPATHY:
**ISST COURSE ON
WOMEN AND WORK
MAKING IT COUNT**

SECOND ITERATION, 2022 (RESIDENTIAL)

A PROCESS DOCUMENT



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THE PROCESS

The first iteration of the 'women and work' curriculum which conceptualised and anchored the course in ISST's trajectory, served as a palimpsest for the team designing the second iteration. Based on the inspiring experiences, learnings and limitations of the first iteration, we imagined and designed the second one, with much hope and audacity. As the pandemic turned around the corner, we took on board the idea of an in-person course, which would be a nine day long immersive experience for the participants, making sure that the learnings were consolidated as we went along. The team went through a rigorous process of brainstorming and discussions to zero down on eight themes for the course. While some of these themes were entirely new, others were rehashed from the themes in the last iteration, as the team felt some of them worked well together.

After much deliberation within the team, external resource persons were contacted for their ideas on the combination of themes. As the team started planning the days as they would unfold one after another and started pondering over the session plans, the themes were developed further. We recurrently encountered the dilemma of balancing coverage of latest information and debates on one hand and keeping the course accessible and meaningful on the other. We believed that due to the residential nature of the iteration, it will come naturally for the cohort to try and extend the learnings from the course to situations and challenges in their work and personal lives. Our entire reflection process, constitutive of four different ways of personal and collective reflection was geared to that end. Even though the expanse of nine days appeared like a lot of time in hand, we wanted the participants to go back with nuanced learnings and shift in perspective rather than ticking all the boxes on the content covered list. While ISST's rich and abundant history of work egged us on to include more, it was the in-depth approach of the organisation and its conviction to not cut corners in any of its work, that prevented us from biting more than we could chew. We took many difficult decisions in this process of finalising the content, packing in the content suitably for the time, approach and aim. This, at times compelled us to exclude what we felt passionately about, for the sake of keeping the course sharp and relatable for the participants we were expecting to get onboard. We finalised the following themes for the nine days:

Day One – Introduction and Session on Identity and Work

Day Two – Feminist Agenda and the Historical Trajectory of Women as Workers

Day Three – Patriarchy and Caste

Day Four – Embodiment of Labour

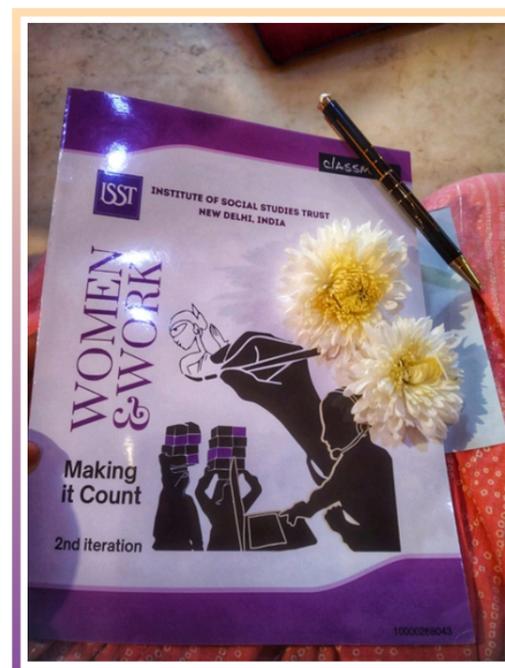
Day Five – Care Work

Day Six – Data Politics and Invisibility of Women

Day Seven – State and Market Nexus

Day Eight – The Feminine Mold: The Socio-Economic Habitus of Women

Day Nine – Reflections and Wrap-Up



The notebook given out in the course kit

THE TEAM



The Curriculum Team at the venue: (From left) Sae, Benu, Deepa, Monika and Ashmeet

While some of the team members were new, some were a part of the project since its inception and the first iteration. Regardless of when one joined and what one knew already, the second iteration was a staggered learning process for all of us in the team. The tireless processes that were involved in designing, brainstorming and finalising the sessions and the overall layout of the nine days were arduous. They made us all go through collective as well as individual processes of unlearning and learning, even at times about what we thought we knew well. We found many a concept catapulting and somersaulting in our minds to reach a new, braver, more informed understanding and find familiarity with related concepts, we didn't know existed. This process only intensified during the iteration in the physical space, where our multi-tasking and preoccupied minds stretched to learn new dimensions of what we had collectively created. The discussions with the cohort, reflections they brought out each day as well as the sessions lined up one after another thematically – was a force that we hadn't imagined the magnitude of, while planning it on paper.

Like in all collaborative modes of working, coming to a consensus was always a challenge but what kept us going was the commitment to see the course through and make it a success. We all strived and brought out in the best of us. Working in the curriculum team was itself a learning experience for many of us. While we talked about the prevalent themes like patriarchy and caste, we were surprised by the variety of ways in which the five of us had experienced their collusion, seen their manifestations and knew of their influence in history and in contemporary times. These brainstorming discussions led us to realise that so much more is going to unfold when these themes will be taken to a diverse group of participants, and we were all looking forward to the dynamic process of sharing and learning which will be enabled by the content. It was with this thought that we decided to keep the second half of all sessions as groupwork or activity based and as we saw later, this really helped consolidate the learnings for the participants, who were all experiencing the sessions' imports anchored in their own personal trajectories.

THINKING RESIDENTIAL

The second iteration was a first in terms of its physical mode of transaction. The team had anticipated immense flow of energy among the cohort as they learn and unlearn through an immersive process, residing together for nine long days. The team went through a great deal of back and forth about how to schedule the evenings. Should we schedule anything at all, or should we keep them free and open for the cohort to mingle, withdraw, converse etc? What should we engage them with, a film, a discussion or an activity? These were the questions that the team pondered over intensely. We arrived at a consensus for keeping some evenings free and showing films on some others and offering the cohort to engage with the activities at the venue, like drums and meditation on some other evenings. Pre-empting the emotional unfolding that anyone would go through while attending an intense and immersive course like this, the team decided to create a space for personal and private reflections for the participants. Deepa designed a beautiful journal with one-word prompts like love, pain, guilt, work, pleasure, anxiety etc., which could be used by the participants for their own personal reflections, stories, thoughts or to record processes that they dealt with internally and were triggered during the course. The introduction to the journal read, in both English and Hindi:

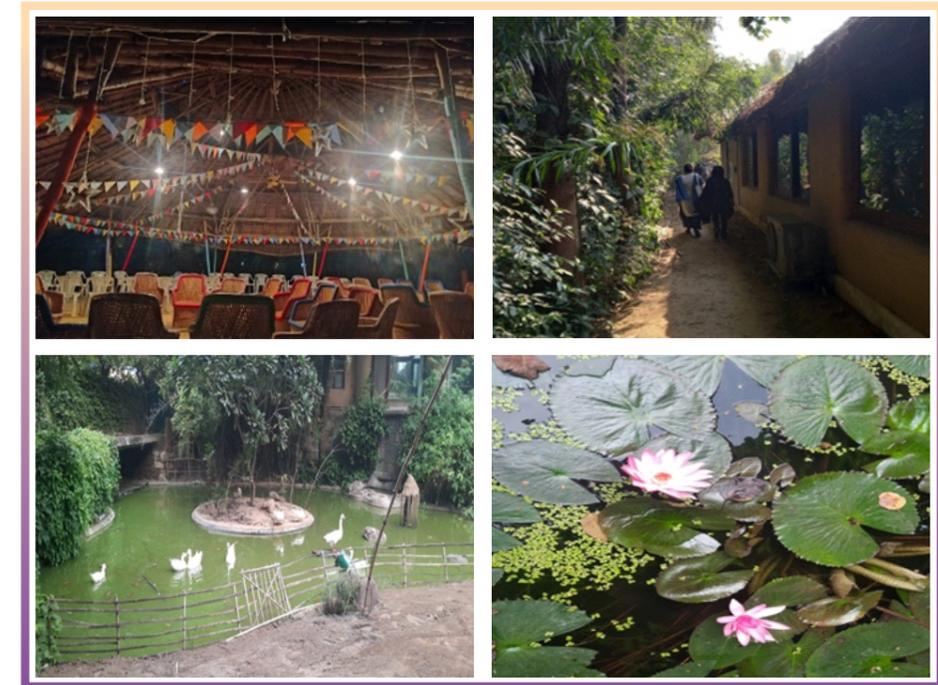
The endeavour of reflecting, learning and unlearning about ourselves, our work and their co-relation with our identity can at once be exhilarating, joyful, exhausting and overwhelming. As we embark on this journey to explore the world of work and its different paradigms, we want to ensure that all our co-travellers have a dedicated space of their own to express their emotions, thoughts and creativity. And therefore, this journal came into being. This is your space - an ode to your journey through this course and beyond.

As we said, this is your space- so take your imagination on a ride! Transform this into an art space, travel journal, anthology of poems or a series of collage- however you wish to express your ideas, thoughts or emotions. Each page of the journal has a prompt which may be a guiding theme for you. What comes to your mind when you read the word? What are the images, words, songs, doodles etc that best express your thoughts? Pick any word which speaks to you in the moment and let your thoughts flow...

Wonderfully, the cohort was not only mutually compatible but also mutually respectful and empathetic and as a result, we did not have to worry about engaging them meaningfully beyond session hours. All evenings they came together to sing, to dance, to chat or simply brew over the day and made meaning of all the sessions in their own personal and beautiful ways. We had clearly overestimated our role as facilitators - a notion we unlearned through more than just this instance.

THE VENUE

The venue for this iteration of the course was Zorba - The Budha, an ecological retreat centre in the South of Delhi. The calm, beauty, remoteness and discipline of the venue where the team, facilitators and the participants stayed for nine days is certainly to be credited when celebrating the success of the course. It was perhaps because the values of the space we were in were conducive of an unlearning and immersive process, that we could hit the ground running with the goals of the course.



Glimpses of the venue captured by the participants



PARTICIPANT SELECTION – THE COHORT

The core aim of this iteration was to reach out to as many grassroots level practitioners as possible through the course. The intent was to curate a dialogue between theory and practice by bringing together conceptual and theoretical writings in the same space with diverse field experiences; and take stock of gaps as we recognise the opportunities from this interaction. Given the length of the course and its residential nature, however, many development practitioners could not make it for the iteration. We got an overwhelming number of applications from PhD scholars, academics and early career researchers. As a result, our cohort was a motley of participants from diverse backgrounds – grassroots practitioners, academics, researchers, fellows working with state governments, designers and urban practitioners. Despite our misgivings about the composition of the cohort, who we selected through a rigorous and time drawn process- keeping in mind their experience, basic understanding of gender issues and usefulness of the course for them, the cohort sat together like a dream! We owe it to the synergy brought in by this wonderfully diverse and compatible cohort that enabled the creation of a safe, progressive and productive space for the nine days of the course.

REFLECTIVE AND PERSPECTIVE BUILDING PROCESSES

The entire process of planning and transacting this course has been a feminist one for the team and ISST, marked with empathy, participation and respect. Be it the processes within the team before the unfolding of the course or the processes in the hall and other spaces where the course took place, there was a conscious effort by the team members to maintain these three markers. It was this staunch feminist orientation in the way the course was structured and transacted that helped participants take away an enriching and perspective shifting experience. As a team we kept one thing at the centre of it all, 'personal is political'. We knew we have been in this together, even before we all met physically and became a team, and this understanding informed our endeavours. Interestingly, one of the commonest reflections of the participants throughout the nine days also was arriving at the conclusion that the personal is political and how they saw it all very clearly during (and after) the course. Like Anjali Rao, a participant from Sewa Bharat said,

I always thought I will come here and learn about the lives of these working-class women that will help me undertake projects about them better, but I came here and realised that this is closer to home than I realised. I am also a part of all of this, all these institutions and concepts also affect my life and that I am more connected with the women that I work with, than I had realised. How do you understand the lives of other women, without reflecting on your own?



Another beautiful reflection about the safe space created during the course as well as its ability to talk about things in a complex way came from Prakash Kumar, a participant from Bihar. On the first day he had asked the facilitator point blank – What is feminism? How does one include the women's perspective in the field? His reflection on the last day of the course, however, was more nuanced and heart-warming.

मैं आया था ये सोच कर कि इस बार तो नारीवाद सीख कर ही जाऊंगा.. इस बार तो एक लक्ष्मण रेखा खींच ही देनी है कि ये नारीवाद है और ये नहीं है .. लेकिन पिछले नौ दिनों में एक बात तो समझ आ गई कि अगर सचमुच नारीवाद को समझना है तो लक्ष्मण रेखा खींचनी नहीं मिटानी होगी।

(I had come here with a resolution that this time I am going to finally learn what feminism is. I will finally draw a line between what is feminist and what is not. However, what I have learnt in the last nine days is that if I must really understand feminism, then I will have to erase the lines, not draw them) – Prakash Kumar, Manager IB&CB, BRLPS.

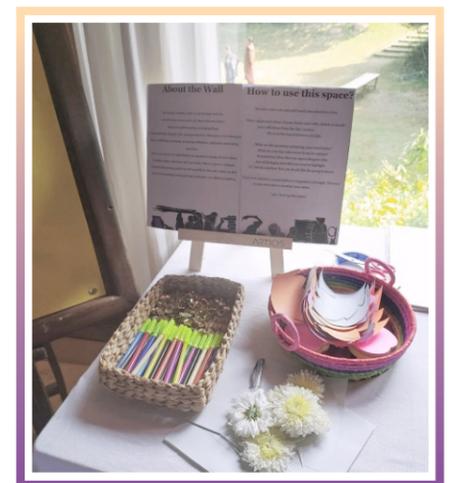


Erasing such lines, indeed, is the recognition of evolution and fluidity of the feminist process in personal life as well as in one's field/work.

REFLECTION AND FEEDBACK PROCESS

Reflection woven with empathy has been at the core of this entire journey, right from when the team was conceiving and working towards mutually agreed goals in planning the sessions' content to each day when that content was transacted. Perhaps the mutual compatibility of the team and a shared respect for varied opinions which this incredible cohort brought with it, became the pillars which could facilitate such reflection. Over the nine intense days that the course unfolded, we learnt and sifted through multiple connotations and dimensions of women and work.

Apart from a mandatory google form which we circulated at the end of each day for the participants to write their reflections on, the team also created a reflection tree in the main hall where all our sessions took place. The idea of putting up this reflection



Props for Reflection Work



The Reflection Wall

space was multipronged. It was to be used for anonymous reflections, immediate and urgent expressions, expressions which may not be directly related to the session but get triggered by it and many other such parallel venting out which might seem necessary. Putting it up in a common area was also inspired by the possibility that the cohort might get to learn tangentially from each other's reflections and to make available a space for distant, anonymous feedback which the team could engage with daily and improvise as we went along the course. Participants decorated this reflection tree in multi-hued manner, with poetry, anecdotes, quotes followed by learnings as well as well worded and pointed reflections on certain sessions. The tree came alive with the participation and engagement of the cohort and helped the team anticipate feelings which the cohort might not have processed fully yet and respond to them timely.

The next day reflections

Participants were divided into groups of two and three at the very beginning of the course for a daily reflection process. Each group was asked to reflect on the day's session in the beginning of the next day. Through these small group reflections, was achieved the dual purpose of reiteration of the previous day's learning and expression of collective creativity of the participants. Over the course of nine days, we saw these reflections presented in multiple genres like role plays, poetry, a mini time use survey, a live make-up session, a personal narrative and analysis and a song and discussion in addition to some power point and chart-board presentations.



Next day reflection after session 1, the participants staged a skit

Deepa's efforts in mingling with the cohort were key to making the reflection and feedback process a success. She made herself available to the participants, despite mind-numbing exhaustion, the participants felt safe to share their thoughts about sessions, resource persons, processes and other things with her. She was the bridge between the cohort and the rest of the team in many ways.

CONTENT – UNFOLDING OF THE DYNAMIC PEDAGOGY

Identity and Work

Consolidating the feedback from the first iteration which nudged us to delve into questions of gender identities, we decided to start the second iteration with a session on identity and work. As an opening session, it shouldered the lofty aspiration to break ice as well as open up questions about intersectionality, power and perceptions of work, which would then be taken up and engaged with in-depth as the course unfolded. Dr. Jahnavi Andharia facilitated the session and opened the course with a socio-gramming to introduce the concept of multiplicity and layers of identity as well as for the participants to know each other a little better. A power walk was conducted among the participants to introduce the concept of intersectionality and how the power quotient increases or decreases with one's many identities.

With the idea of unpacking the surficial understanding of 'identity and work' aimed at the participants, the session delved into an activity based on what comes under 'work' and what comes under 'labour'. As was aimed, the exercise helped to bring out the embedded and deep-seated gendered connotations, questions of dignity and identity around work, its paid and unpaid forms and its economic and social meanings. The session left the participants with more questions than they had come with, demonstrating the impossibility of linear understandings.



Dr Andharia facilitated an enlightening activity asking participants to differentiate between connotations of work and labour

Feminist Agenda and the Trajectory of Women as Workers

The second day was devoted to discussing the historical trajectory of women as workers and the interventions of feminists to engage and transform women workers' lives and rights worldwide, in the last century. It was facilitated by Dr Nilanjana Sengupta. The session was largely lecture based and was successful in building a granular understanding of the various phases of political and economic interactions with gendered position of women, and how the women's movement has been able to push for changes and deliberations therein. There was also a brief panel discussion with Anannya Bhattacharjee about the relevance and implications of ILO article C190 (elimination of violence and harassment, including Gender-Based Violence, in the world of work) in the South Asian and Indian contexts.

It was appended by an interesting activity for the participants through a case study. The characters in the case study remained the same but the contexts kept changing. The participants had to imagine a day in the lives of these characters – a man (husband), a woman (wife), an ailing senior woman (mother-in-law) and a dependent neighbour in an agricultural, rural setting. Dr Sengupta brought out the division of work into reproductive paid, reproductive unpaid, paid and unpaid etc. Through the many imagined conversations and scenes in this household. This was both engaging and informative. The session beautifully took one step further from day one, to come out of the deliberately orchestrated disorientation about work and labour to the many understandings of work at various levels and settings that women undertake on a daily basis.

Patriarchy and Caste

The third day was dedicated to the understanding of the institutions of patriarchy and caste and how they work in tandem to produce disadvantageous circumstances for women as workers. It was facilitated by Dipta Bhog, who was a seminal resource person for the very inception of the course and was also the course director for the first iteration. The session illustrated how patriarchy is an institution that foregrounds many other oppressive social institutions like caste, and that neither patriarchy nor caste can fully function in isolation. After dedicated discussions on patriarchy and caste, the participants were divided into groups and given a task where they had to map accessibility of resources in a given setting. The participants came up with maps of villages, urban settings where they mapped power dynamics among people based on caste status and connotations.



Participants got into two groups and sketched out the spatial expressions of caste among elements in different geographical spaces

Embodied Labour

Dr. Paromita Chakravarti, who was also a part of the first iteration for the session on sex work, took the session on embodied labour in the second iteration. She started off by talking about embodiment and how that is intricately woven with one's identity and therefore becomes central to the question of labour. She proceeded with the example of sex work, primarily the Durbar Mahila Samanvaya Committee, movement of sex workers from Shonagachi in Kolkata, to talk about the various dimensions of embodiment, labour, body autonomy, dignity and gender. A film was shown on surrogacy depicting the

precarious life circumstances of poor young women who are often recruited for becoming surrogates for international couples desirous of children. The film poignantly showcased how the women could be hired and fired without any regard for their physical and mental health or wellbeing in their families. Overall, the session raised a lot of relevant questions about involving one's physical and mental self with one's work, the hierarchy of such embodiment and questions of dignity attached to different kinds of labour and work.

What Counts as Work?



Changing the language of Protest



Pictures from the facilitator's presentation

Care Work

The session on care was facilitated by Dr Monika Banerjee. This session was located in the middle of the nine-day course and the participants were already comfortable with each other. Added to these factors was the approach to the session taken by Monika that made it a breakthrough session of the course. Monika took to sharing her personal story with the participants to make them seamlessly understand two things. First, how the macro and micro are interrelated when it comes to the mainstream understanding of 'worker'. Second,



Dr Monika Banerjee engaged in the session while co-facilitator Ashmeet Kaur edits a live jamboard for the participants

that the personal is political, especially as women, more so when we talk about care work. Care work that is ubiquitously undertaken, totally invisibilised, naturalised on part of women labour, and which has so many dimensions as we start to unbox it. Care work has been one of ISST's longstanding engagements. The curriculum on care had a lot of very technical definitions like 'gendered familialism', 'care deficit', reproductive unpaid work, the care diamond etc. All these terms were approached and unveiled from



Ashmeet Kaur engaging the participants in group work

bottom upward, through the facilitator's and many a teary-eyed participants' personal stories in the room. Ashmeet, the co-facilitator of the care session shouldered the hard task of culling out the organically woven definitions from the discussions in the room and putting them on a jamboard on the screen for everyone to see, as Monika continued rather emotionally – an innovative and perhaps the only way a successful session on care work was possible! In the second half of the day, Ashmeet facilitated group activity and discussion on community care – a dimension of care work less personal but deeply relevant to the care diamond and the desirous way of looking at care in a neoliberal world.

The facilitation of the care session was a step towards acknowledging and resolving the power hierarchy of the facilitator and the participants. It enabled the participants to look at their own lives to see how care

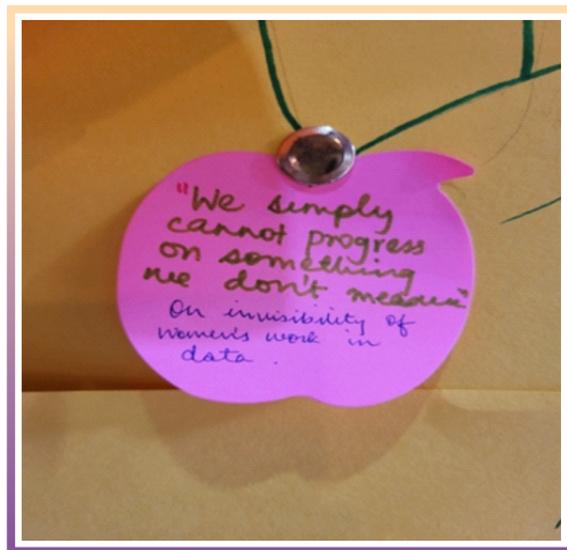
dynamics works as per power dynamics. It was a teary and cathartic reflection either on their own lives or on lives of people close to them, caring in different capacities and from different vantage points like as daughters, sons, community workers, friends, wives, mothers and spouses.

Data Politics and Invisibility of Women



A participant sharing his group work reflections after the session; an engaged audience

Through the first iteration of the course, the absence of data politics came out majorly. It is therefore that for the second iteration, the team decided to include a full day session on data invisibility of women workers. The session was initiated by Dr Sona Mitra, a feminist economist. She spoke about the gendered nature of design, surveys and questions which automatically trim the answers of all possibilities of bringing out the complexity of real, lived experiences of women. Dr Ellina Samantaroy took a brief session on Time Use Survey, going over its inception, current successes and further challenges to be tackled. The second half of the day was facilitated by Gurpreet Kaur, Prateek and Sae Pawar – the team from ISST who have recently researched and disseminated their findings about pastoral women and work. It was an important session as pastoral women and their work is perhaps the most widely misunderstood; and to talk about it in a session on data politics was an eye-opener for many participants as they reflected later that pastoral women are doubly invisibilised. The session added an important dimension to the course, especially when talking about invisibilisation of women's work – how it happens in very many ways and seeps into systemic state approved ways of data collection seamlessly to reproduce the invisibility and undervaluation of women's work.



"We simply cannot progress on something we don't measure" – a reflection on the board.

State and Market Nexus

Well-placed towards the culmination of the course, the session on state and market nexus was facilitated by Dr Anandhi, who was also a part of the first iteration of the course. Starting from early 1900s, Dr Anandhi took us through the journey that women in India have travelled amidst many political and social changes which produced different kinds of partnerships between the state and the market, curating diverse challenges and opportunities for women workers. This session covered the same timeline as the second session on feminist agenda and historical trajectory of women as workers, but



Participants during reflection after group work

experiences. The session on SEZ and women workers was facilitated by Dr Benu Verma, Ashmeet Kaur facilitated the session on Home based workers, Sae Pawar took the session on women in public employment (Asha workers) and Risha Ramacandran facilitated the session on Gig economy – all sessions focussed on the situation of women and work amidst a state and market nexus in the contemporary neoliberal times. Through all these sessions the impetus was on the precarious locations of women workers because of a certain understanding of the state and market policies. It was an extremely useful session and one that tied many loose ends of the course as the last technical session.

with a focus on different dynamics of the same timeline. These sessions were thus placed by design to first introduce the timeline and towards the end thicken the historical knowledge with more dimensions and reflections from the present. The session was deeply engaging. In the second half the participants were divided into four groups and under Dr Anandhi's guidance, four parallel sessions were undertaken by the ISST team and a resource person, at the end of which the participants presented their learning from their sessions in light of what Anandhi shared in the first half and their own



Prof. S. Anandhi during the session

The Feminine Mould – The Socio-Economic Habitus of Women

The eighth day was initially planned in a way that it would bring together the many learnings from the seven sessions gone by and place them in the socio-cultural map of women's growing up and working environments. The team had decided to lay stress on the discursive and day to day living environment in which women as young girls are socialised and raised; and the effect this cultural environment – supported in tandem by many patriarchal institutions like state, family, community, education, media etc., creates expectations of women from themselves and the world around them, shaping the understanding and connotations of work, aspirations and agency. The session was supposed to be fully facilitated by Dr Benu Verma from the ISST team. However, during the unfolding of the course, she observed that the cohort needed, more and more, to talk about themselves, their lives, their experiences and their work in relation to their learnings from the course, in order to participate more wholesomely. Since this was an in-house session with some wiggle room, some flexibility was available. The team agreed on an experimental course of facilitation which we thought would be more participatory and cathartic for the cohort. For three nights preceding the session, Benu, Deepa and a few volunteers from the cohort sat together to unwind and discuss the course of participatory facilitation for the eighth day. The first half of the session was facilitated by Benu, where she discussed the idea of cultural habitus and socialisation of girls and women into a certain gender and expectations that entail this gendered location. The structure of discussion was to first talk about some popular stereotypes, to understand how they delimit and restrict women's options and create an unrealistic image of them. Then, a discussion on real lived experiences of women which thwart these stereotypes but still do not make it to the popular/mainstream idea of women, because of vested interests of patriarchal institutions.



Participants reflecting on what agency has meant in their personal lives

For the second half the participants were divided into groups to undertake groupwork on two important take aways of the sessions – stereotypes and agency. The first groupwork on stereotypes was a group discussion among smaller groups where they brainstormed about some stereotypes that have affected their lives and how it led to form aspirations. In the second groupwork, four volunteer facilitators from among the group led a discussion on agency, its discursivity and grounded this discussion in particular cases – cases from their fieldwork, their personal choices and reasons around donning religious markers (hijaab) and a

personal narrative full of struggles. The session helped the participants to weave together the learnings from the course till that point and put them in a larger framework through the personal. It also started some fierce debates among the cohort and the team members regarding what is feminist and what is not – the fierceness only being contained in the viewpoints without spilling over to the personal – as we together created a safe and respectful space for deep, disturbing and diabolical discussions, without any loss of love which only left us richer personally and in our perspectives on women and work.

Film



The film camera crew at work

This year, the team felt a keen need for documenting the course as it unfolds, in order to capture the process, ISST got onboard the film making team of Drishti Media from Ahmedabad. The film team closely captured (almost) all the activity during the nine days, including interviews with the external resource persons and the participants. As the end product the film team, who had become an integral part of the cohort, would produce five thematic videos and a film about the unfolding of the course.

LIMITATIONS AND LEARNINGS

Our limitation to English language for the transaction of the course remained a formidable challenge both at the stage of inviting development practitioners to apply for the course and somewhat during the transaction of the course as well. As Saeed notes in her reflections about the second iteration, Similarly,

Since the course was going to be in English entirely, many development practitioners did not apply. One of the participants- Munir from Maharashtra who came from DNT community and is now working with women from that community had very interesting and rare experiences to share, but he struggled with language. I offered to help him with translation many times but it was not of much use since the sessions were happening in quite a speedy manner. The language, for me was one of the major shortcomings of this course. Fieldwork that happens in development sector is predominantly done in regional languages and exclusive use of English by academics and many development practitioners creates a hierarchy that strengthens the binary between the researchers and the subject. To tackle this, extensive translation and multilingual approach is needed which can only happen if we plan and structure the course in a significantly different way. Lack of time and experience prevented us from doing so in this iteration. We did try to keep the sessions and discussion bilingual (English-Hindi) but it was not enough.

since most of ISST's work has been on women, we could not talk about gender as a spectrum when it comes to issues of work. However, since we had opened applications for people from all gender orientations in order to enrich the course during transaction and let participants bring in what we could not, our cohort's diversity gave us a stark and in-depth view of how patriarchal oppression and violence is embedded in the social structure. Belonging to an organisation working primarily with women, trying to understand their lives and struggles one sometimes tends to lose sight of the tenacity and viciousness of the patriarchal oppression towards other genders, which was brought home to us through our cohort's active participation. It was a mutually enriching and learning experience, one that lingers on, much after its all over.

Another important point that most participants made was about the diversity of the resource persons. Currently, most of them came from a particular region and were located in urban settings. There was a shared sentiment that when talking about such diverse issues around women and work, there should be an effort to bring onboard resource persons from among field practitioners and people from varied backgrounds and intersectionality, which would enable the participants to see the connections between theory and practice more clearly through the resource persons themselves.

The length of the course being nine days proved as both an advantage and a disadvantage. Advantage because, it was the length of time which allowed for a true immersion in the course for the participants, had it been a shorter period of time, maybe the learnings would not have been as deep and moving. The team was initially in agreement with the length of the course; however, during the course, we were all internally toying with the idea of having shorter courses, importantly, because it would mean more participation from the grassroot level practitioners and less exhaustion for everyone. Additionally, in shorter courses the team would have the freedom to curate them as per particular groups of participants, making them suitable to the groups' needs in terms of language and themes and maybe able to travel with the course to different locations and settings as well. Alternatively, in the interest of perspective building and immersive experience if we go ahead with the same length of eight to nine days, the line-up and content of the sessions can be designed differently, to ensure more and more groupwork and assimilation of learnings rather than making it theory heavy.

CONCLUSION

Understanding the layered canvas of relationship between women and work is perhaps an ambitious feat achievable only through continuous and deep engagement with the issue over years on end. Such has been the nature of ISST's engagement with women and work and the course tried to bring the best of our learnings out to disseminate lessons, concerns and practices we have as an organisation stayed with over years. Learning, however, is a long and personal process, and would be rooted in each participant's own personal trajectories differently. Nevertheless, we as a team believe that we were able to build together some new lenses, a little push in the points of view and building a perspective of inquiry and critique towards that power hierarchy which may have appeared natural or worse, was invisible. We certainly have added, through the two iterations of the course, new layers of textures and colours to the canvas. As these nine days unfolded in knowledge, exchange, love, and creativity, we do not claim to have found all the answers, but we all learned how the questions needed to change, evolve, shift from one vantage point to another and maybe be taken further from there still.

ANNEXURE 1: DAY WISE SESSIONS

Sessions	Facilitators
Day 1 – Identity and Work	<p>Dr. Jahnvi Andharia</p> <p>Activities and Points covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-gramming and ice breaking activity • Multiplicity and intersection of identities • Power Walk for understanding intersectionality • An exercise to explore the overlaps and distinctions between the connotations of labour and work
Day 2 – Feminist Agenda and History of Women as Workers	<p>Dr. Nilanjana Sengupta</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of women as workers in the West and in India • Indian women's movement and its many challenges and wins • Paid, unpaid, social reproductive work • Panel discussion on ILO C190 • Group work to understand the many kinds of work women undertake and how it gets invisibilised
Day 3 – Patriarchy and Caste	<p>Dipta Bhog</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patriarchy and its endurance over the years • Caste as a flexible and enduring institution • Patriarchy and caste working hand in glove to place women in a disadvantageous position and defining and shaping work opportunities and its social connotations • Group work to understand the confluence, continuity and material base of patriarchy and caste
Day 4 – Embodiment of Labour	<p>Dr. Paromita Chakravarty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept of embodiment – work as embodied labour • Sex work as work debate • Film on surrogacy – exploring its effect on surrogates'
Day 5 – Care Work	<p>Dr. Monika Banerjee Ashmeet Kaur</p> <p>First Half – Dr. Monika Banerjee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept of care – the care diamond – family, market, state and community • The 5 Rs of care work – Recognise, Redistribute, Reward, Reduse, Represent

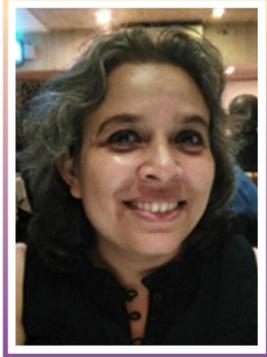
Sessions	Facilitators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Familialism and care deficit <p>Second half – Ashmeet Kaur</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community care work Group work to understand community care work – its distribution and importance
Day 6 – Data Politics and Invisibility of Women	<p>Dr. Sona Mitra</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gendered nature of design, surveys and questions Politics of data collection and measurement which leads to invisibilisation of women <p>Dr. Ellina Samantaroy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time Use Survey – wins and challenges to be overcome <p>Gurpreet Kaur, Sae Pawar and Prateek</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastoral women and work – how pastoral women become doubly invisibilised What becomes data? The preoccupation with numbers The pressure of sedentarization on pastoral communities in order to be counted in the national census Exercise on participatory research methods
Day 7 – State and Market Nexus	<p>Prof. S. Anandhi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the partnership between state and market and how it affects women's lives and work opportunities <p>Parallel sessions in the later half covered the following:</p> <p>Ashmeet Kaur</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women in Home Based Work – lecture and group work <p>Risha Ramachandran</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women in gig economy – lecture and group work <p>Sae Pawar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women in Public employment – Asha workers – lecture and group work <p>Dr. Benu Verma</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women in SEZ factories – interactive session <p>Presentations by all subgroups and discussion about common strands among all of the work situations</p>

Sessions	Facilitators
Day 8 – The Feminine Mould: Socio-Economic Habitus of Women	<p>Dr. Benu Verma</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to the idea of the feminine mould as a societal direction for ideal gendered socialisation of women How socio-political habitus of women pedalling gendered stereotypes dictate their lives and expectations. <p>The rest of the session was led and facilitated by some of the participants. The process of handing them over the facilitation was a response to a felt need that participants needed to talk more during course and express the connections they saw with their own contexts. The following participants were in communication with Benu on some previous nights after other sessions, where they planned the process together. Deepa also helped plan these night sessions and giving shape to the final session on Day 8.</p> <p>The four participant facilitators Mansa, Nevin, Asmita and Prachi, worked with the larger group to ponder over the following two questions, given by Benu:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are some of the stereotypes that have affected your lives? Please use your learnings from this course and Examples from your work/ research/personal lives to highlight that stereotypes shape our aspirations and choices in life. What is agency? Do women's daily negotiations with their delimiting structures count as agency? Pls use your learnings from this course and examples from your work/research/personal lives to bring out the complexity of agency, especially in respect to women.

ANNEXURE 2: FACULTY PROFILES, 2022

S. No	Name of the Faculty	Sessions undertaken
1		<p>Prof. S. Anandhi, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai</p> <p>Anandhi specializes in the area of gender studies with the special focus on caste and social movements colonial and post-colonial Tamil Nadu. She has published several academic articles based on this research in well-known Indian Academic journals like the Economic and Political Weekly. She has several Academic Awards to her credit. She did her Ph.D degree from Jawaharlal Nehru University with the thesis that has focused on socio-political history of Gender Relations in Colonial South India (1920-1947).</p>
2		<p>Deepa, Communication Consultant, ISST</p> <p>Deepa is currently working with ISST as a communication consultant on curriculum on Women & Work (2.0). She is a young feminist practitioner, a podcaster, part-time writer / poet with keen interest in storytelling. She has worked with young people in states of Gujarat, MP and UP towards young feminist leadership building and creating feminist spaces. She indulges in multiple platforms like youth for peace international, shaam-e-aman for organising and performing at events of dialogue for at local and state level. She is a co-founder of Fursat feminism- an initiative to archive feminist lives. In the past, she has engaged as a freelancer with Global Feminist Pitch (Heinrich Boll Foundation), CBGA as a research consultant and UNICEF, Lucknow as a project coordinator consultant.</p>
3		<p>Dr Monika Banerjee, Research Fellow, ISST</p> <p>Monika has been working with the Institute of Social Studies Trust, New Delhi in the capacity of a Research Fellow since the year 2018. Since joining, her research work has specifically focused on bringing the issue of women's unpaid care work in the realm of policy discourses. Monika's interest lies in issues of governance, understanding social policy processes in a comparative framework, visibility of deprived and marginalised groups in existing policies and viability of such policies in</p>

S. No	Name of the Faculty	Sessions undertaken
		<p>bringing change. Prior to joining ISST, Monika worked in the development sector in India as well as in UK. She holds a PhD and a M.Phil degree in Sociology of Education from the Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, JNU.</p>
4		<p>Risha Ramachandran, Researcher, Dvara Research</p> <p>Risha is currently working as a Research Consultant with Dvara Research.</p> <p>Her work primarily focuses on digital economy, financial inclusion and care work from a gender and rights perspective. She has worked on developing a training curriculum on Psycho-social aspects of entrepreneurship under TISS (Mumbai) and Disha project (UNDP) and later worked with ISST on several research projects around the issues of gender and work.</p> <p>She has an MA in Social Work Specialization in Mental Health from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (Mumbai) and has worked in a community based mental health project in Mehsana (Gujarat) under Center for Mental Health Law and Policy.</p>
5		<p>Dr Nilanjana Sengupta, Associate Professor, School of Development, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru</p> <p>Nilanjana is currently Associate Professor, School of Development, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru. She has more than fifteen years of experience in the space of gender and development. Her areas of interest are gender, labour and livelihoods, poverty, financial inclusion, governance and violence. Previously she taught at Tata Institute of Social Sciences and Jadavpur University. She has also worked with national and international agencies such as the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), UN Women and Azad Foundation on research, action and policy. Nilanjana has a PhD in Regional Development from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi.</p>

S. No	Name of the Faculty	Sessions undertaken
6		<p>Dr. Paromita Chakravarti, Professor, Jadavpur University, Calcutta</p> <p>Paromita teaches Renaissance drama, women's writing, sexuality and film studies. Her work in the School of Women's Studies has focused on education and sexuality. She has led national and international projects on gender representation in school textbooks, sexuality education, women's higher education, homeless women, women in the Panchayati Raj. She has been involved on the issue of HIV control and prevention, women's education, empowerment and health with state and central government. Her book on Shakespeare and Indian Cinemas was published by Routledge in 2018. Her latest book on Asian Interventions in Global Shakespeare has been published from Routledge in November 2020. She completed her doctoral studies at the University of Oxford, UK.</p>
7		<p>Dipta Bhog, Head of Research, Innovation and Partnerships, Nirantar</p> <p>Dipta Bhog has worked extensively on gender and education for close to three decades. She has worked as a journalist and women's rights activist. She co-founded Nirantar, a Centre for Gender and Education in Delhi, and has extensive experience of working on women's literacy, adult and girls education and rural journalism at the level of program design, implementation, policy and impact. She also coordinated a five-state study titled Textbook Regimes that analysed school textbooks from a feminist lens and has worked on writing textbooks for both national and state governments. More recently, her research work focused on women leaders from rural areas and small towns who run non-governmental organizations.</p>

S. No	Name of the Faculty	Sessions undertaken
8		<p>Gurpreet Kaur, Researcher, ISST</p> <p>Gurpreet Kaur is a researcher at ISST working in the areas of feminist research and philosophy, gender and development, women empowerment as well as questions of women's work and labour. She works closely with ethnographic and qualitative methodologies to understand women's lives and communities in different spheres and settings. Currently Gurpreet is involved in SuPWR (Sustaining power for Women's rights), research around women's movements in India and South Asia to understand the shifting nature of feminist politics, backlash and gains made by women's movements. Previously she has also played a key role in conceptualizing and working on "Building the Curriculum on Women and Work" at ISST since its inception and was actively involved in the First Iteration of the course conducted online in 2021. She has also recently co-led and completed a research study on 'Understanding Pastoral women's work', which attempted to unpack pastoral women and their work within the pastoral community as well as within the larger discourse on women's work. The research was focussed in parts of Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh and engaged with in-depth qualitative and participatory (as well as collaborative) methods in data collection.</p>
9		<p>Sae Pawar, Research Consultant, ISST</p> <p>Sae is a Sociologist who is working as a Research Consultant at ISST for over a year. Her research focus is on the themes of Gender studies, Sociology of Space, Ecology. At ISST She has been a part of 'Pastoral Women's Work' and is currently working on the study 'Understanding Collectivization Strategies of Women Farmers'. She has previously worked with tribal and pastoral communities in Maharashtra with organizations like Maharashtra Association of Anthropological Sciences, Anthra and Center for Pastoralism, Sahajeevan. Sae is also a translator and is associated with Bilori journal - a bilingual literary journal.</p>

S. No	Name of the Faculty	Sessions undertaken
10		<p>Ashmeet Kaur, Research Associate, ISST</p> <p>Ashmeet is working as Research Associate with Institute of Social Studies Trust under the project- 'Creating Momentum for Gender Transformative Programming and Advancing Gender.' Her work is focused on looking at livelihood challenges faced by women through research. She is interested in understanding and unpacking social and cultural peculiarities of violence against women. She has a Mphil in Women and Gender Studies from Ambedkar University, Delhi.</p>
11		<p>Dr. Benu Verma, Research Consultant, ISST</p> <p>Dr. Benu Verma is a Research Consultant with ISST for the project - Curriculum Development on Women and Work. Benu is passionate about ethnographic and qualitative social research and aspires to bring the nuance of anthropological method to development sector research, especially on gender concerns. She has worked in the development sector as a researcher and has taught Sociology and Gender Studies at UG and PG levels. Benu has published on various aspects of her research trajectory like gender and culture, policy and politics. Her ethnographic work on anthropology of religion, neoliberalism, environment and class in urban Delhi is forthcoming. She holds a PhD in Sociology and Social Anthropology from IIT Delhi, an MPhil in Sociology from Delhi School of Economics and a Masters in Social Work from TISS, Mumbai.</p>
12		<p>Dr. Jahnavi Andharia, Research Fellow and Director, ISST</p> <p>Dr. Benu Verma is a Research Consultant with ISST for the project - Curriculum Development on Women and Work. Benu is passionate about ethnographic and qualitative social research and aspires to bring the nuance of anthropological method to development sector research, especially on gender concerns. She has worked in the development sector as a researcher and has taught Sociology and Gender Studies at UG and PG levels. Benu has published on various aspects of her</p>

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		<p>research trajectory like gender and culture, policy and politics. Her ethnographic work on anthropology of religion, neoliberalism, environment and class in urban Delhi is forthcoming. She holds a PhD in Sociology and Social Anthropology from IIT Delhi, an MPhil in Sociology from Delhi School of Economics and a Masters in Social Work from TISS, Mumbai.</p>
13		<p>Anannya Bhattacharjee</p> <p>Anannya Bhattacharjee is the International Coordinator of Asia Floor Wage Alliance (AFWA), an Asia-led global labour and social alliance. AFWA builds regional unity among Asian garment unions to overcome the limitations of country-based struggles in global supply chains and holds global fashion brands accountable. Anannya is the President of Garment and Allied Workers Union (GAWU) in North India. She has been an activist for thirty years across women's movement, migrant rights and labour movement. Anannya is one of the few women trade unionists in India and has helped build grassroots labour-related collaboration between North America, Europe and Asia. She has written in a variety of publications and has spoken widely on social justice issues and movements.</p>
14		<p>Dr. Ellina Samantroy</p> <p>is working as a faculty at the V.V. Giri National Labour Institute. She is a Sociologist by training and has a M.A, Mphil and Ph D degree in Sociology from Centre for Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She has more than 16 years of professional experience in teaching, training and research. She has also taught at Banaras Hindu University and Jamia Millia Islamia New Delhi. Her research interests are in the area of Unpaid work, Time Use Studies, Gender Statistics, Work and Family Life Balance, Gender and Social Protection, Child Labour, Labour Regulation and International Labour Standards. She has undertaken several research projects/consultancy assignments with both with</p>

S. No	Name of the Faculty	Sessions undertaken
15		<p>Dr. Sona Mitra, Principal Economist, IWWAGE in LEAD@Krea University</p> <p>Sona works as the principal Economist at IWWAGE heading the research and evidence generation portfolio on WEE. Sona has an experience of working in the field of women and development for the last one and a half decades. Her core research interests are in factors that drive the demand and supply of women's labourforce participation, and in the measurement of women's work. She has also worked extensively in the area of women and government policies especially in Gender Responsive Budgeting and Planning. She is currently a member of the broadbased committee on GRB hosted by the MWCD, GOI.</p> <p>Sona completed her masters and PhD in Economics from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Her doctoral thesis looked at the relationship between macro-economic growth and women's employment in India since the 1990s.</p> <p>Prior to joining IWWAGE, Sona has worked with the Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), National Institute for Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), and Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS). She has been an independent consultant with UN agencies working on women's empowerment and has been a technical adviser to studies conducted by the Action-Aid, UN Women (India), and ICRW. She also taught a course on Labour and Development for the Master's in Economics program at Ambedkar University, Delhi till 2020. Sona regularly publishes articles in peer-reviewed journals, chapters in books, and opinion pieces in leading newspapers and magazines.</p> <p>Studies from Ambedkar University, Delhi.</p>

S. No	Name of the Faculty	Sessions undertaken
16		<p>Prateek, Research Consultant, ISST</p> <p>Prateek is working as a Research Consultant with ISST for over two years. Prateek has co led the research Understanding Pastoral Women's work: an exploratory study along with Gurpreet Kaur. The research tried to bring experiences of pastoral women to the fore along with coming up with one of the ways in which work of women who are practising non sedentarized ways of living can be understood. Apart from this research, they have been working on the research titled Sustaining Power: Women's Struggles against backlash in contemporary South Asia. The work involves a constant engagement with the women movements and organizations in India in order to conceptualize South Asian understandings of backlash and gains. Their interests include Action Research Methodologies, questions of development and gender, indigenous food cultures and feminist and queer studies.</p>

ANNEXURE 3: THE CURRICULUM TEAM, 2022



Deepa



Saeer Pawar



Dr. Monika Banerjee



Ashmeet Bilkhu



Dr. Benu Verma





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