

Leher

BUILDING CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

SYNOPSIS REPORT FOR SHOOLINI UNIVERSITY, SOCIAL PROJECT

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2021

CONTENTS

00	NOTE FROM SHOOLINI UNIVERSITY
00	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
00	ABOUT THE PROGRAMME
00	AIM OF THE PROGRAMME
00	INTERVENTION
00	IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMME
00	CONCLUSION



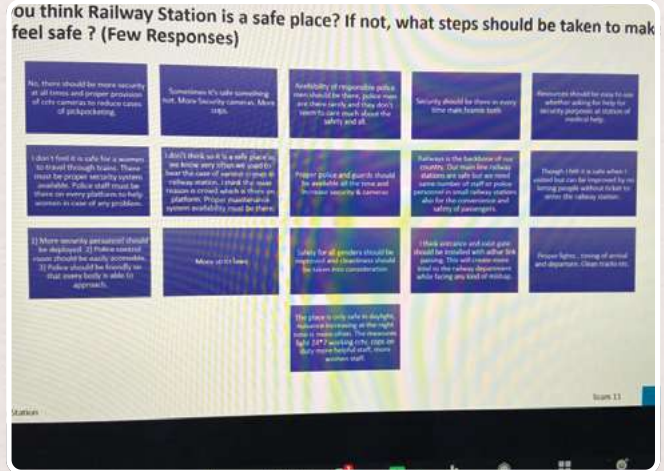
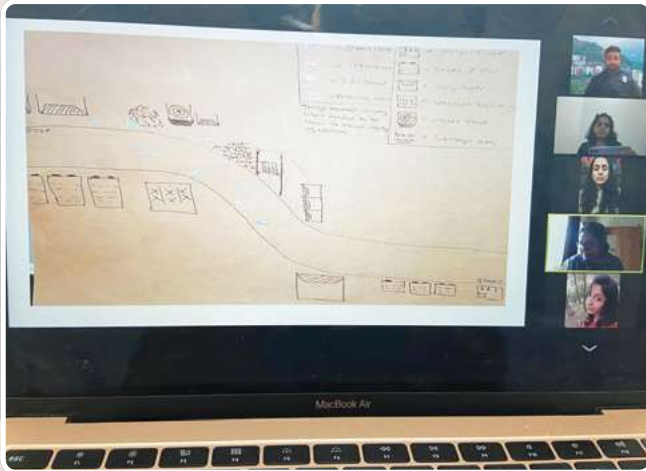
Note from Shoolini University

OUR social project with Mudita Foundation proved to be an eye opener not just for our undergraduate students but also for us, the faculty who were driving it.

Being a part of the “Champions of Change” program the students understood the importance of action, be it individually or collectively. Project work and live examples made this entire experience more mindful of the lurking dangers and how each one of us is capable of responding to it.

Poonam Nanda
Dean - Student Affairs
Shoolini University

Executive Summary



- 200 under-graduate students of Shoolini University participated in the Leher-Building Champions of Change programme, conducted online by Mudita Foundation between September-October 2021
- A 6-session module leading from awareness to reflection to action was designed and conducted to help transform each young person into a champion of change

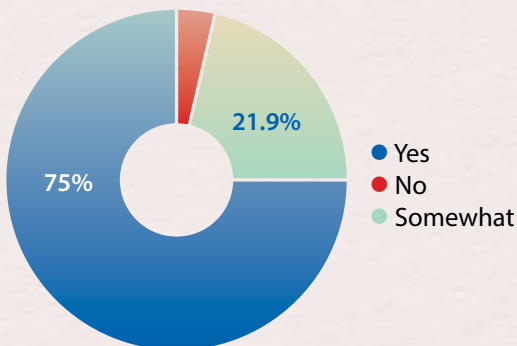
The sessions helped them explore and question gender roles and stereotypes which pave the way for abuse:

- It helped them identify and acknowledge the risk online
- The Bystander Intervention training helped them feel confident and empowered towards intervening as a bystander
- The students initiated group projects on the following topics:

- Online Sexual Abuse-grooming, cyber stalking, cyber bullying
- Sexual violence- street harassment
- Human trafficking- sex trafficking, forced marriage, child labour
- Domestic violence
- Bullying and ragging
- At the end of the Social Project course, students felt more confident to talk about the issues and become a safety champion

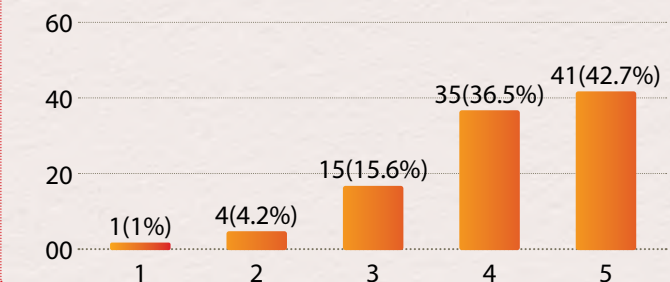
Do you feel more confident to talk about issues of safety, abuse, violence and exploitation?

96 responses



To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'The course helped me strengthen my perspective on safety and I feel inspired to be a champion of safety in my own life'.

96 responses



About the Programme

The Undergraduate students at Shoolini University undertake and participate in a Social Project as part of the compulsory credits in their programme. In 2021, Mudita Foundation partnered with the Department of Student Affairs to conceptualise, design and execute the Social Project within the constraints of the pandemic, in a hybrid manner.

This was done as part of our Leher - Building Champions of Change. The programme is designed in keeping with the OECD global competence framework which emphasises the need to bring knowledge, skills, values and attitudes together to develop the global competencies that enable students to do the following:

- Investigate the world
- Recognize perspectives
- Communicate ideas
- Take action

For us at Mudita, this is the cornerstone which will transform each young person into a champion of change who recognises collective responsibility and works for collective action.

Aim of the Programme

- To build awareness and perspective on the risks faced by women and children (in keeping with SDG 5)- particularly child sexual abuse, human trafficking and online safety
- To create opportunities for students to identify and take action through time-bound projects
- To inspire meaningful action and change

Intervention

6-session module leading from awareness to reflection to action

200 students from primarily 5 courses BCom, BSC HHA, BSC -Yoga, BBA, BJMC participated in the Leher- Building Champions of Change programme. The training equipped them with knowledge; perspective and skills by covered the following aspects:

- Understanding abuse, violence and exploitation- types, forms and prevalence

- Safety as a right and the legal framework that ensures it
- Understanding power and vulnerability in the context of abuse, violence and exploitation
- Pyramid of violence and gender-based violence

- Human trafficking and Modern slavery
- Online Abuse
- Bystander Training



During the sessions, the activities helped students to reflect and express what a safe space means to them:



It helped them explore and question gender roles and stereotypes which pave the way for abuse. Some of the participants were able to share instances of having witnessed or experienced sexual abuse or harassment:

"Yes, once my cousin sister faced sexual harassment in a water park. Some guys was continuously starring her. At that time, I was 13 years old and those people were

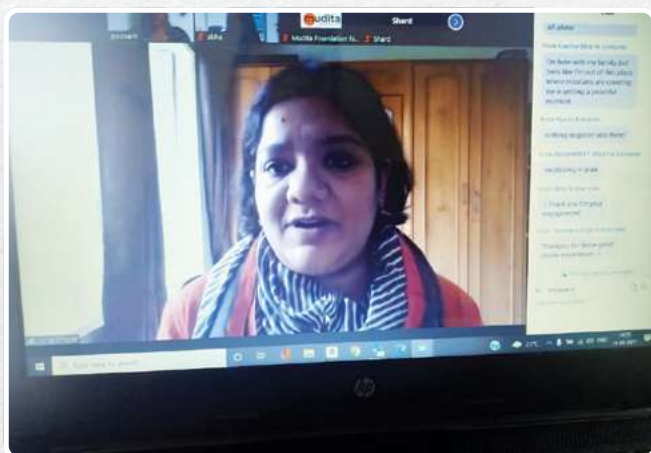
all grown adults. I felt I could've informed someone about it but since I was so young, I was scared if they did something to us."

"Yes, when I was in class 6 some of our seniors are bullying one of my classmates in front of me. But I am afraid to do anything."

"Yes I myself got harassed when I was in standard 5th.it was really difficult for me to come out of this pain I still feel I'm stuck in his

clutches when I close my eyes. It took years to overcome with it. I m happy I have succeeded to let this go this pain of mine and started a new journey.

And never given a chance to get situations like this again till now and I'm blessed no one have done anything wrong after that situation. I feel stronger that yes if anything would come like this in life ever again I'll not sit quietly rather I'll respond."



Gender Stereotypes



Girls

Weaker, cry, red and pink, shopaholic, kitchen mein kaam, dolls, better in reading, not very good math, well-behaved, sajjan, susheel, prefer money in marriages, do not abuse, stay out late, some girls are arrogant, cannot ride bikes, thin and graceful, long hair, fair face, nursing, teacher



Boys

Blue and black, expected to act out, good at math, don't cry, mard ko dard nahi hota, emotionally strong, sports, refrain from creative pursuits, use violence and aggressive, prove manliness, outdoor work, physically strong, muscular, no beard, tall, domonating, pilots and doctors, don't cook

The visualisation conducted helped them to fathom what a trafficked person feels when they are trapped in violence and exploitation and have no way out.

"I got scared and wanted to leave that life when I saw a small whole that everyone is going through with their daily routine. Scared, uncomfortable, nervous. Felt uncertain about the next moment. Wanted to come out at that moment. I did not want that person to control me."

"Scared. I would not want to close my eyes again."

"You might just be stuck there forever. I am very scared of dark so the activity was intense."

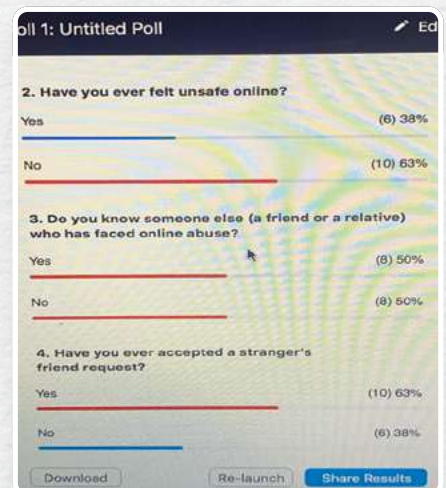
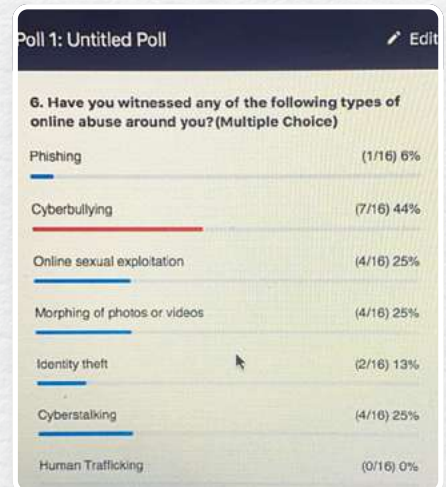
"Helpless, hopeless, suffocated, frustrated, scary, lonely, painful, wishing death rather than being alive, disgusting, fear, give up."

It helped them acknowledge the risks online.

"Back in 2016 when QTA V was released we could easily spot our juniors from grade 6th and 7th talking about a strip club in the game map. And even if you go there just for your curiosity you'll be there gambling, smoking and even indulging in sexual activities- that too extremely realistic- something that should require very strict age restrictions but there are none."

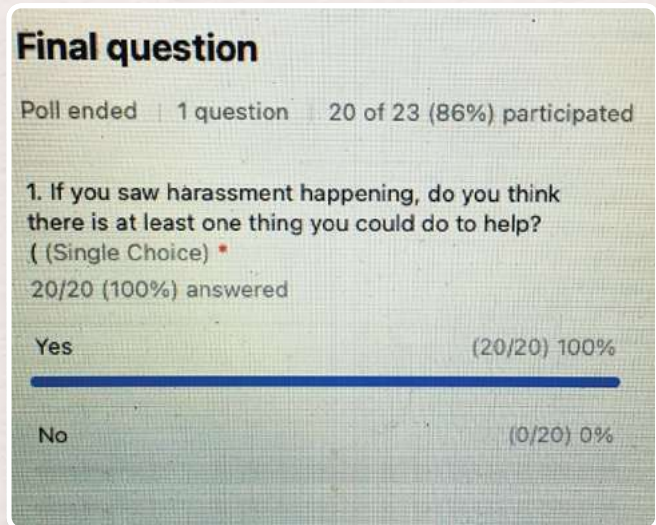
"On apps like Omegle there are people flashing... Its really uncomfortable."

"Cyber-bullying happens daily.. Most of us have experienced it."



The Bystander Intervention conducted by a resource person from Breakthrough India helped them feel empowered and strengthened by giving them the 5Ds to choose from to intervene as a bystander.

At the end of the 5-session training they acknowledged greater self-awareness, increased awareness of the issues and a desire and inspiration for action.



They were then put into groups and encouraged to work on their projects with support from the Department of Students Affairs and the team from Mudita Foundation. The projects were primarily on the following topics:

- Online sexual abuse- grooming, cyber-stalking, cyber bullying
- Sexual violence- street harassment
- Human trafficking- sex trafficking, forced marriage, child labour
- Domestic violence
- Bullying and ragging

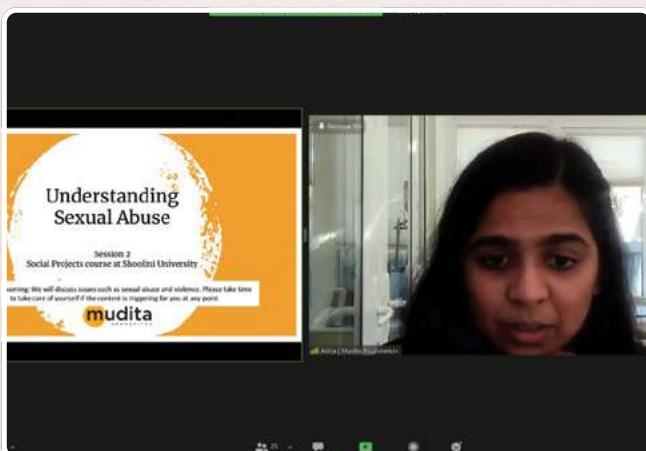
The students could choose to:

- Build awareness within their own community
- Conduct a deeper study of the safety and risk of own community by using a survey or interview tools
- Advocate for safer spaces and interventions in their own community
- Raise money to support organisations working to tackle or prevent abuse, violence and exploitation

While attendance and the online format had its constraints, it was

heartening to see the breaking of taboo. At such a young age, it is not easy to talk to one's peers about issues like sexual violence, sex trafficking, forced marriages or cyber bullying. But the fact that everyone was able to say these words freely, without shame, are a significant step in the positive direction.

Most students were also able to reach out to a fairly large sample of people in their surveys. This shows that the young people are really well-connected and their social connections can be harnessed for constructive purposes.

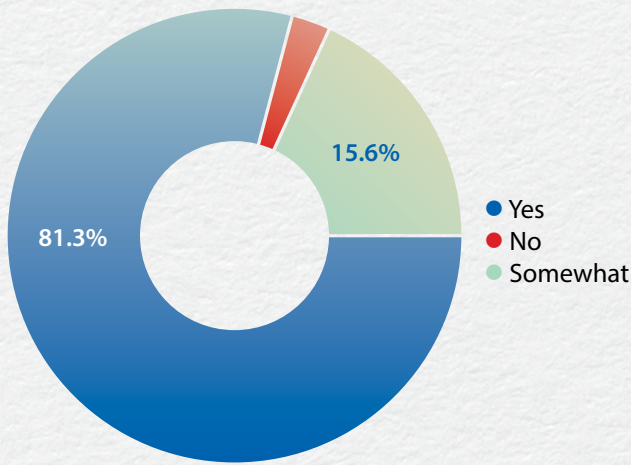


Impact of the Programme

The projects were graded and the learning from the projects documented through a feedback form. Data from the same is shared below:

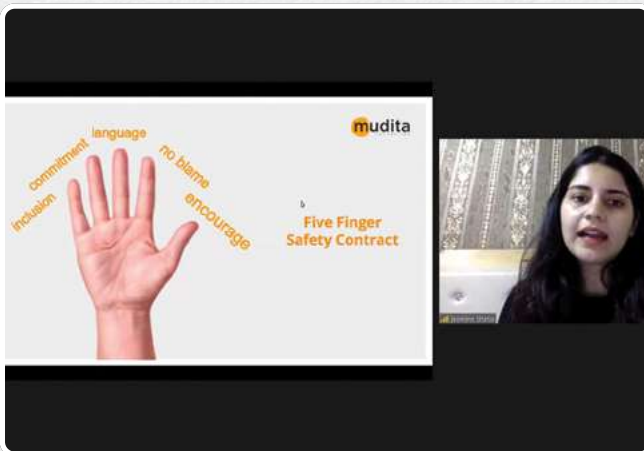
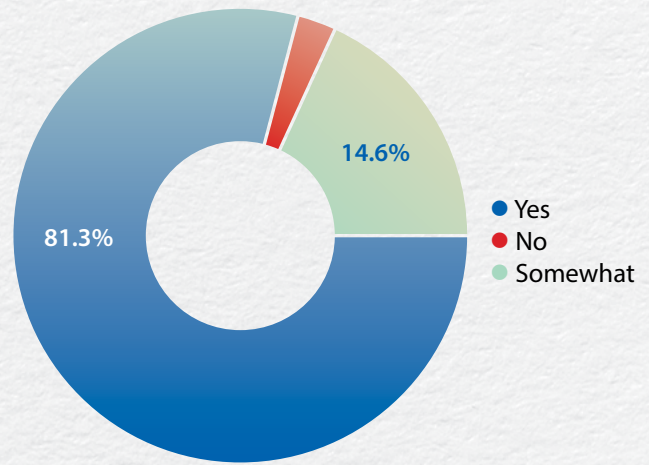
Has the Social Projects courses met your expectations of learning?

96 responses



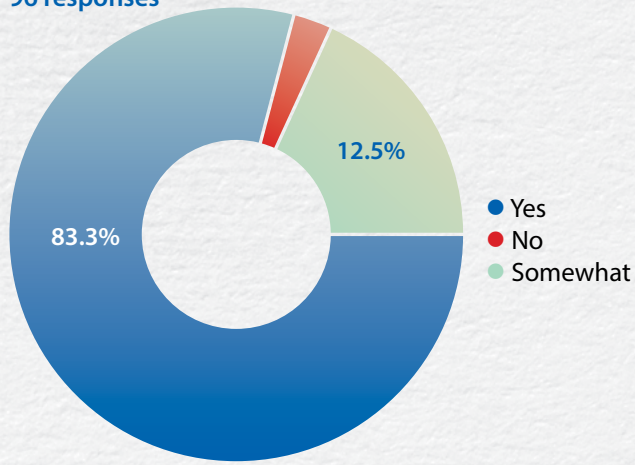
Did you enjoy and learn from the process of designing and implementing the projects?

96 responses



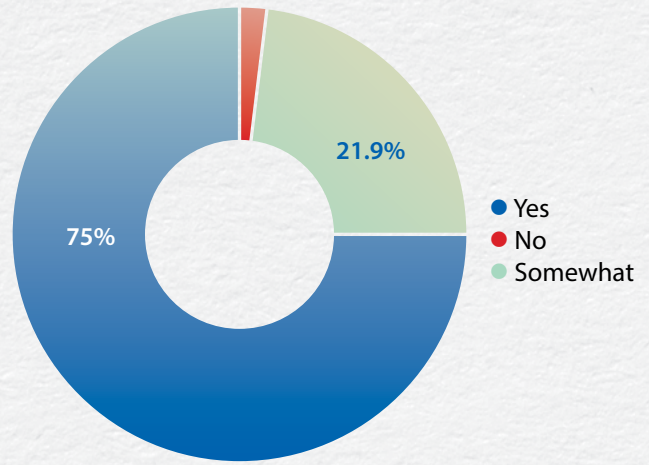
Do you think the conversations on safety and violence during the social projects course were relevant to you as a young person?

96 responses



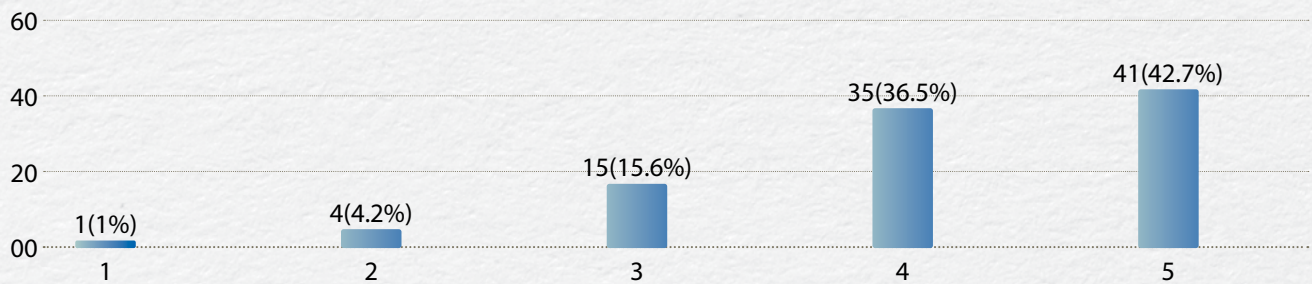
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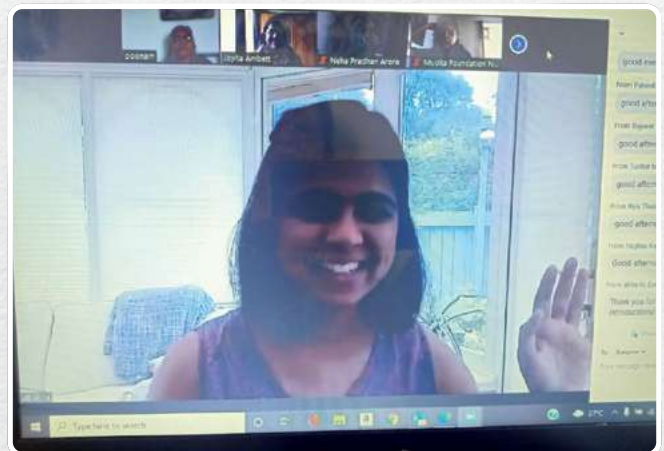
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Conclusion

For us at Mudita Foundation, the programme strengthened our belief that the young people of our nation are seeking a sense of purpose even as they have a deep desire for change. What they need is the tools and to be guided in the right direction. This helps them to bring together their knowledge, skills, values and attitude into competencies to work for social impact and change. This is what transforms them into champions of change, for life.

We dream of a day when there will be champions of change in every school, every college and every university - questioning, initiating change and transforming themselves and their communities, by coming together on local, regional or national forums to find and lead collective solutions for the complex issues of safety from abuse, violence and exploitation, amongst children and the youth.





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