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Opportunities available for youth to get involved in advancing gender equality

Although gender equality is such a burning issue, not many youth in India get an opportunity to get involved in advancing gender equality. I was very fortunate to be given a chance to become involved in advancing gender equality while in university. My experiences in school have helped to build the skills I use every day to help other young men gain the same opportunities I had.

It was my academic advisor at my univ

MASVAW

In 2005, MASVAW led a successful campaign at Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidhyapith University in Varanasi around one case of sexual harassment which ultimately led to the formation of an anti-sexual harassment committee on campus. When a female student reported that she was sexually harassed by one of her teachers, a group of male students supported her by helping to file a police report against the teacher. The accused teacher was ultimately punished and dismissed. After this incident, female students felt empowered to come forward about their personal experiences with sexual harassment at school.

A campaign led by Lucknow University student in Uttar Pradesh for safe public transportation for girls and women is another example of effective youth organizing. The youth forum at Lucknow University spear-headed and independently organized this campaign for which MASVAW provided logistical support and guidance.

Conclusion

My personal fight for gender equality began at school, and I know from experience, both personal and professional with MASVAW, that great potential for organizing and norm changes lies in the educational arena. If young people's potential and courage are recognized, progress will be made toward establishing gender equality in educational institutions through compulsory gender education starting from the primary level.

I also feel that youth must be provided appropriate venues and platforms for facilitating gender equality campaigns. Comprehensive steps to strengthen these platforms, which might include youth and sports clubs as well as student and youth organizations and unions, should be taken in order to discuss action plans for the creation of a more gender-equal society.