

## Workshop Report

### Understanding Gender and Unlearning Social Bias

(A Gender Sensitization Workshop for the Judges of the Family Court, Gautam Buddha Nagar Cluster)

*Date: 12–13 July 2025*

**Venue: Judicial Training and Research Institute, Lucknow**

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**Introduction:** The Family Courts Committee of the Hon'ble Allahabad High Court, in collaboration with the Gender Sensitization Committee (GenSen), University of Lucknow, successfully conducted the fifth workshop in a series of six, dedicated to fostering gender awareness and sensitivity among family court judges. The workshop titled “Understanding Gender and Unlearning Social Bias” sought to engage participants in a critical dialogue around the social constructions of gender, institutional biases, and the judiciary’s pivotal role in dismantling stereotypes.

**Objectives of the Workshop:** The workshop was designed with a threefold purpose:

1. To clarify the concept of gender - its construction, operation, and implications.
2. To identify conscious and unconscious biases rooted in societal and institutional structures.
3. To cultivate sensitivity among judicial officers toward gender-related issues, especially in the context of family court proceedings.

The workshop’s deeper intent was to foster critical reflection without being didactic or judgmental - offering a space where knowledge met introspection, and learning was both intellectual and affective.

**Rationale and Context:** Gender, as a social construct, permeates every sphere of life - personal, political, legal, economic, and cultural. It operates through deeply internalized ideas of what is “natural,” “appropriate,” or “expected.” These ideas are not only personal beliefs but manifest within institutions - including the judiciary - often invisibly. Recognizing this hidden terrain of gendered assumptions is essential for the delivery of gender-just jurisprudence.

Judges are uniquely positioned to either reinforce or rupture the cycle of gender bias. Their pronouncements shape not just the litigants’ lives but send ripples into broader societal discourse. Hence, the capacity to discern gender stereotypes, social prejudice, and cultural assumptions is not merely desirable - it is essential to their constitutional mandate.

**Structure and Pedagogy:** The workshop unfolded through a rich variety of formats:

- Conceptual introductions to gender theory and the dynamics of bias
- Interactive activities (e.g., Gender Box, Stereotype Role-Plays, Social Contract)
- Screening of curated videos to trigger conversation
- Facilitated group discussions anchored in real-world scenarios
- Legal contextualization by domain experts in constitutional and family law

Importantly, all the three facilitators encouraged participants to share lived experiences and professional dilemmas, making the sessions deeply participatory and reflective.

**About the Workshop Team:** The workshop was facilitated by senior members of GenSen, University of Lucknow:

- Dr. Roli Misra, Convenor and Professor of Economics, a noted scholar in gender and migration studies.
- Dr. Prashant Shukla, Associate Professor of Philosophy, known for integrating philosophical perspectives into gender discourse.
- Dr. Sonali Roy Choudhury, Assistant Professor in Law, with expertise in constitutional jurisprudence and human rights.

Their multidisciplinary approach enriched the sessions and offered a holistic understanding of gender justice - from theory to legal practice.

**Participant Engagement and Outcomes:** The participation and enthusiasm of the attendees - family court judges from the Gautam Buddha Nagar cluster - were deeply encouraging. Throughout the two days, the participants displayed:

- A willingness to introspect on their internalized biases.
- An active engagement with unfamiliar or uncomfortable questions.
- A genuine curiosity to understand contemporary gender challenges beyond statutory text.

Discussions around implicit bias, patriarchal norms, heteronormativity, and intersectionality were met with keen interest and thoughtful questions.

**Feedback Session – Insights and Reflections:** The feedback session was as illuminating as it was affirming.

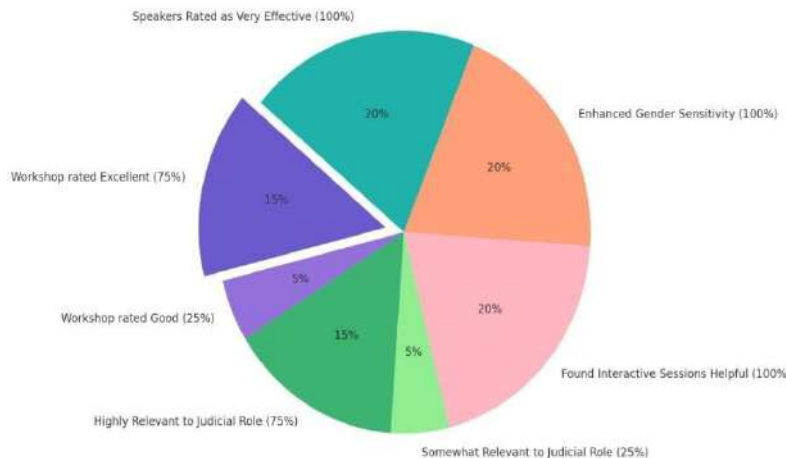
- 75% of participants rated the workshop as “Excellent”, while the remaining 25% rated it as “Good.”
- An overwhelming 80% found the workshop highly relevant to their role as family court judges.

- Every participant strongly agreed that the interactive methodology significantly helped them understand gender roles and stereotypes.
- All attendees affirmed that the workshop had enhanced their sensitivity toward gender concerns within judicial proceedings.

The facilitators were appreciated for being:

- Well-informed and pedagogically effective
- Empathetic listeners and rigorous thinkers
- Encouraging, responsive, and professional in approach

Workshop Feedback Summary – Gender Sensitization (July 2025)



Notably, the participants found the blending of legal discourse with social reflection particularly effective in deepening their understanding.

There was one repeated request: “Let This Not Be a One-Time Event”. Across written and verbal feedback, this request emerged unanimously and repeatedly:

**“Such workshops must be held regularly - not only for judges but also for advocates, clerical staff, and law enforcement officials.”**

This resounding appeal underscores the urgent and ongoing need for

gender sensitization across the justice delivery system. Sensitization is not a one-time training, but a continuous process of unlearning and relearning.

**Conclusion:** This workshop stands as a testament to what is possible when academic rigor, legal insight, and compassionate pedagogy come together. It reaffirmed our belief that judicial engagement with gender issues must go beyond legal compliance to ethical consciousness.

We conclude with great optimism that such meaningful conversations will continue to grow, echo, and institutionalize within the Indian legal system. The overwhelming response from participants has only strengthened the resolve of GenSen and the Family Courts Committee to deepen and expand these efforts in future trainings.

**With commitment, reflection, and sustained dialogue, the dream of gender justice will inch closer to reality - one sensitized mind at a time.**

## Glimpses of the Workshop







## High Court of Judicature at Allahabad



### **Two Days Gender Sensitization Workshop for Family Court Judges of Gautam Buddh Nagar Cluster On 12th & 13th July, 2025**

LEFT TO RIGHT Sitting Row :	S/Sri Dr. Prashant Shukla, Prof. Roli Misra, Honble Mr. Justice Siddharth, Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Sangeeta Chandra, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Om Prakash Shukla, Dr. Sonali Roy Choudhary.
Standing 1st Row :	S/Sri Sapna Shukla, Swati, Meera Gothalwall, Neetu Yadav, Manorama, Padmakar Mani Tripathi, Peeush Pandey, Veer Kanedi Lal, Khaliqzama, Madhulika Choudhary, Neetu Pathak.
Standing 2nd Row :	S/Sri Chir Kumaritva, Arvind Kumar II, Sudhir Kumar IV, Budhi Sagar Mishra, Vishwambhar Prasad, Devendra Singh II, Niranjan Chandra Pandey, Dinesh Pratap Singh, Anil Kumar VI, Parvendra Kumar Sharma, Sanjay Kumar Singh II, Rakesh Kumar V,