

Samabhav International Film Festival



International Film Festival on the theme 'Gender, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion' was organised in collaboration with Men against Violence and Abuse. The objective of the film festival was to sensitize the participants on the areas of gender equity, diversity and inclusion using films as the medium of instruction.

The first day of the film festival was centered around how gender is interlinked to broader question of how do we make our social and physical spaces inclusive for all genders especially women. The films which were screened on first day threw light on disadvantaged position of women due to patriarchal nature of the society. This also extended to the debates on how men can also be victimized in the patriarchal system because men must be masculine both physically and sexually. It also brought to surface that woman is someone else 'property which gets reaffirmed in our everyday lives due to the socialization of all the genders. There was an elaborate discussion through a session on observations, query and comment sharing with the filmmakers who were present at the venue.

They shared the conceptualization of the films, their struggles on film making process and what informed their understanding of gender while growing up. The debates on acknowledging and addressing various privileges which come with gender in the society and its intersections with culture were addressed.

On the second day of the film festival those films were screened which called attention to how people of alternate sexualities are struggling with acceptance and equal rights. Finding acceptance within their own families is equally challenging for trans genders. The films shown did initiate a debate on coming out of the gender schema and to be acceptive towards those from alternate sexuality and not treat it as an abnormal or pathological condition. Although the long held conventional views of heterosexuality are being contested, they are devoid of privileges which are bestowed upon “normal” people in the society. There is a mental strife in the lives of the people with alternate sexualities where they try to put up in the society to live a respectful life. The films also showed the variations within and across the alternate sexualities on their similarities and dissimilarities which cut across the length and breadth of their socio-economic placement. The fragile mental health status due to trauma they undergo as a process of their alternate sexuality reaffirmed the role of public health in looking at health from the perspective of caste, class and gender. The audience shared their experiences of knowing people from alternate sexualities and their stories of struggle.

The festival concluding with remarks on how people perceive gender becomes so internalized that it is viewed as something normal and natural. The discriminatory practices and sexist attitudes limit the progression of people of all genders in personal and public spaces. The construction of gender which is embedded in the “institutional arrangements” of the society needs to be challenged in order to shift gender norms in a more equitable direction.

Following discussants and filmmakers participated in the programme

Discussants:

- Mr. Harish Sadani (Co-founder, MAVA)
- Ms. Rashmi Lamba (Board Member, Advisor and Curator for Samabhav and India Council Chair for the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media)
- Dr. Lakshmi Lingam (Chairperson, DYPU School of Public Health)
- Ms. Monika Sakhrani (Advocate, Senior Advisor for Fair Trials)
- Mr. Altamash Khan (Project Coordinator, MAVA)
- Mr. Pravin Thote (Project Coordinator, MAVA)

Filmmakers

- Mr. Ritesh Sharma
- Mr. Digvijay Andhorikar (Student of Direction and Screenplay writing, Satyajit Ray Film Television Institute, Kolkata)
- Mr. Vismay Kamate (Filmmaker, Photographer, and Translator)
- Mr. Brahmanand Siingh (CEO and Founder of Mobius Films & Mobius Biopics Pvt Ltd)
- Ms. Vasundhara Jadhav (Student of Direction and Screenplay writing, Satyajit Ray Film Television Institute, Kolkata)