

Meet the Team

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COMMITTEE FOR
MANAGING
GENDER ISSUES

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AHMEDABAD

This month, CMGI spoke to its student representatives. We also had a discussion with SASH Coordinator Sravya Challa, who emphasized the importance of a student-run body in combating sexual harassment alongside the formal CMGI body.



Aravind Bala joins the CMGI as a student representative from the PGP1 cohort at IIMA. On any given day, he can be found playing tennis, juggling case studies, or meeting the sacred academic deadlines imposed by IIMA. Hailing from Vizag, the city of destiny, Aravind spent his childhood and formative years there. After graduating from IIT Kharagpur, he worked in the healthcare sector for two years before joining IIMA.

How do you aim to drive meaningful change through CMGI at IIMA?

“I previously served on a similar internal complaint committee, gaining knowledge on both sides of the equation as I assisted my peers in navigating their complex journeys through sexual harassment cases. I believe I can bring what I have learned to CMGI and contribute to addressing issues, fostering inclusion, and ensuring open communication at IIMA. I may not have all the answers, but I have a knack for asking the questions that make people think—sometimes too much.

Through my academic, professional, and personal experiences, I’ve learned the importance of creating open spaces for dialogue. People often need reassurance that their voices matter. This aligns deeply with CMGI’s mission to create a culture of openness, respect, and proactive engagement. We are here not just to listen, but to facilitate meaningful change. This means addressing unconscious biases, promoting inclusivity, and encouraging conversations that challenge the status quo. Our goal is to ensure that every member of our community knows their voice matters.

Here’s to navigating these issues together, one thoughtful conversation at a time!”



Tanushka Arora is a Fashion Technology graduate from NIFT New Delhi. A passionate writer and a PGP student through a humorous twist of fate, she has a deep love for art, art history, fashion history, and theatre. Her morbid curiosity about people and extroverted nature often lead her into intriguing situations—perfect material for storytelling.

What motivated you to join CMGI, and how do you see your role contributing to its mission?

“In India, we expect nothing out of our institutions because we have no history to bank on. However, IIMA's gender sensitization workshop at the induction piqued my interest. I was initially interested in being a part of CMGI because I wanted to understand the processes and systems in depth. I feel formal frameworks are one of the best ways to advance any cause. Casual sexism on campuses in India is rampant, and this culture of complacency leads to violence that is unacceptable. We cannot talk about diversity at IIMA without making the environment safe for all kinds of people.

The POSH Act is not perfect, but it is an important piece of legislation that empowers institutions to take action. Rape culture has many forms, and not all of it is seen through the black-and-white gaze of public morality. The court of public opinion often puts the onus of morality on the victims, making it harder for them to step forward and get justice. Student representatives can step into the picture here, explain the rules and procedures, and remain accessible to the student body, who may prefer talking to students over professors. Student representatives may also act as a liaison between the committee and the complainants to bring context and background to any case.

As the future leaders and managers of all the marquee firms, I want the student body to create and take with them a culture of respect for all genders. And for that, I hope to help make the campus a safe environment for everyone, and it is heartening to see the entire CMGI coming together to work towards it.”



Nimisha Sut brings over 15 years of expertise in global sourcing, having worked with renowned brands like Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger. She is skilled in process optimization, leading global teams, and driving cost-saving initiatives to foster continuous improvement. Hailing from Assam, Nimisha draws inspiration from its culture of gender equality, which shapes her focus on inclusivity and empowerment.

What are your thoughts on gender equality, and how do you see the role of CMGI evolving in the future?

“I believe that true inclusivity sometimes requires prioritizing equity over equality—addressing systemic barriers with targeted interventions, even if it means unequal distribution of resources in the short term.

Patriarchy is pervasive, from our homes to our professional lives. For example, the assumption that caregiving and household responsibilities are inherently a woman’s role. This stereotype not only undermines women’s professional aspirations but also limits men from fully engaging in nurturing roles, perpetuating a cycle of inequality.

CMGI has the potential to grow into a platform that not only fosters discussions on inclusivity but also drives actionable solutions.

By encouraging students to collaborate on projects that address pressing issues like inclusivity and sexual violence, CMGI can create opportunities for hands-on learning and practical solutions. These experiences allow students to apply their academic knowledge to real-world problems, fostering a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in creating an equitable environment.

By offering such initiatives, CMGI can help bridge gaps in understanding and provide students with practical tools to advocate for inclusivity in their future careers.”



Introductions are tricky for **Benjamin Harry Clarence** as they require him to confront identifiers he's not always comfortable with. Born in Agra to Christian parents, he attended a Catholic school and a Protestant college, spending much of his life in spaces that highlighted his minority identity while allowing space for reflection. As someone who doesn't easily fit into categories, he remains hyper-aware of his surroundings for safety, yet also conscious of his privileges. Now pursuing a PhD, his research explores these themes as he unpacks his journey through diverse spaces.

How does CMGI ensure that it maintains a gender-neutral approach while being sensitive to the social realities of gender, caste, class, and other factors?

“As you would see on the website, CMGI is set up in accordance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act and Rules, 2013, and takes a gender neutral approach. However, this does not mean that we become blind to the social realities surrounding gender, caste, class, etc., rather what it would mean is that we would not discriminate or preform conclusions basis the complaint without following proper due diligence into the case.

CMGI, however, can only act when someone lodges a formal complaint. And while I understand that many of us do not want to admit to sexual harassment or assault, and also that it takes immense amounts of courage to step forward, we assure to maintain complete confidentiality and keep in mind the mental health of those involved.

What becomes equally important for me in creating a safe space is to spread as much awareness as possible to stop sexual harassment and assault on campus. I do not think it is okay to joke about these things as then such behaviours might become normalized and I think it is very important to not encourage such things at all. I understand in a set up where a lot of people think it is okay to make such “dank” jokes which makes them feel “cool”/ “accepted”/ “different”, it becomes important to point out the misogyny inherent in such statements. Therefore, for such things, it is also our responsibility to spread awareness about how such gender issues go unnoticed within our space – which I believe can be addressed through spreading awareness. Further, I'd like to reiterate if you ever feel like you have faced harassment or assault of sexual nature on campus, please do reach out to CMGI.”



Sravya Challa, an electronics engineer from VNIT Nagpur turned procurement manager, brings a unique blend of technical expertise and operational efficiency to her work. As a SASH coordinator, she is dedicated to fostering collaboration, ensuring smooth transitions, and supporting not just her team but everyone across the campus with understanding and empathy. Known for being affable and approachable, Sravya takes pride in building strong connections. Outside of work, she finds joy in swimming, poetry, cooking, and sketching, which inspire creativity and a fresh perspective in all that she does.

1. Why is a separate body like SASH important on campus? Specifically, what makes a student-run body to combat sexual harassment necessary, even when a formal body like CMGI, which also includes student members, already exists?

“On campuses, formal bodies such as the Committee for Managing Gender Issues (CMGI) are essential for addressing significant matters like sexual harassment. Yet, the importance of a SASH cannot be overstated. SASH is crucial because it offers something different that is very important—accessibility and a peer perspective that is incredibly valuable in sensitive situations.

SASH encompasses representatives from various cohorts and programs, which enhances its reach and effectiveness. This diversity ensures there's always someone from SASH who understands the specific contexts and challenges of different student groups. This is crucial in sensitive situations where nuanced understanding is key. The process of students electing these representatives also boosts confidence in SASH's commitment to genuinely serving and responding to their needs.

Most importantly SASH serves as an awareness body, regularly informing students about the available support systems and explaining how CMGI works. This education is key in making the formal processes less daunting and more accessible. By ensuring that students are well-informed, SASH empowers them to take proactive steps towards their safety without feeling isolated.

While CMGI handles the formal aspects of managing gender issues, SASH plays a complementary role by ensuring that students are educated about these processes and feel supported throughout. We are there to constantly remind people that help is always there for those who need it.”



2. How does the self-defense workshop from last month relate to the initiatives SASH undertakes to combat sexual assault?

Last month, Students Against Sexual Harassment (SASH) organized a self-defense workshop with the objective to train students on techniques, skills, and confidence to safeguard them in unsafe situations. The workshop was conducted by Mr. Bhavik Patel, certified Taekwondo coach with a long experience. He is an NIS Coach in Taekwondo. He is also the first certified Taekwondo coach in Gujarat (2013) and works in association with the Sports Authority of India. He also inaugurated Taekwondo in Gujarat through the Khel Mahakumbh 2011, which is Gujarat's biggest sporting event.

The Workshop Over 30 participants, including women, men, and children, witnessed real-life self-defense training at the hands of Mr. Patel during the workshop. Participants left the workshop with valuable skills and practical takeaways on remaining calm under pressure and how to effectively respond to physical threats. Many expressed their gratitude for the actionable, easy-to-learn techniques shared during the session. As organizers, our hope is that next year's representatives will take this initiative forward. From the outset, our goal was simple: even if one person found the training useful, we would have succeeded. This sentiment has been overwhelmingly confirmed, and we look forward to seeing how future representatives within SASH continue to champion these vital efforts.

The monthly newsletter from the [Committee for Managing Gender Issues \(CMGI\)](#) is an attempt to initiate conversations on discrimination, gender bias, sexual harassment, and related issues. We would love to have the community participate. Please reach out to Geetika Sharma at geetikas@iima.ac.in for queries, submissions, and/or feedback.

If you feel you have been subjected to sexual harassment or if you would like to make any suggestions regarding curbing sexual harassment or gender bias on campus, please reach out to us at: Email: chr-cmgi@iima.ac.in Phone: 97129 15533 Please note that any communication with the CMGI is strictly confidential.