



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA UNIVERSITY

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**Completion Report of International Conference on
Beyond Binaries: Interrogating the Multiplicity of Gender and Sexuality in
Contemporary Society**

**A TWO-DAY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
BEYOND BINARIES :
INTERROGATING THE MULTIPLICITY OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY
IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY**

21st & 22nd January, 2026

ORGANISED BY
CENTRE FOR GENDER STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA UNIVERSITY

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
PROF. NILADRI R. CHATTERJEE
PROFESSOR, DEPT. OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF KALYANI

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS BY
PROF. SANJUKTA DASGUPTA
FORMER DEAN, FACULTY OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

SPECIAL ADDRESSES BY
PROF. CHANDRAVA CHAKRAVARTY
PROFESSOR, DEPT. OF ENGLISH
WEST BENGAL STATE UNIVERSITY

DAYA DISSANAYAKE
RENOWNED SRILANKAN
AUTHOR

PLENARY SPEAKERS:
PROF. KAUSTAV BAKSHI
PROFESSOR, DEPT. OF ENGLISH
JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY

DR. TANIA CHAKRAVERTY
PRINCIPAL
SHRI SHIKSHAYATAN COLLEGE

**Organized by: Centre for Gender Studies & Department of Language, Literature and Cultural
Studies, Swami Vivekananda University**

Mode: Online

Conference Date: 21st–22nd January, 2026

Mission

The Centre for Gender Studies at Swami Vivekananda University is committed to fostering rigorous, inclusive, and interdisciplinary scholarship on gender, sexuality, and related social dynamics. The Centre aims to create a space where critical inquiry, community engagement, and academic excellence converge to address contemporary challenges and advance justice, equity, and human dignity.

Vision

The Centre envisions a world where gender and sexuality are understood in their full multiplicity and complexity, free from rigid binaries and hierarchies. It aspires to be a leading hub for transformative research and dialogue that shapes equitable policies, empowers marginalized communities, and enriches cultural and intellectual life at local, national, and international levels.

Concept Note

We are living in a moment when the old anchoring structures of identity seem increasingly porous. Whereas sex and sexuality had been framed as stable, oppositional categories, they now show themselves to be dynamic and shifting terrains shaped by history, desire, technology, and power. The increasing visibility of queer, trans, intersex, and non-binary lives unsettles long-held assumptions, forcing institutions, communities, and scholarship to confront questions that are as political as they are personal. Judith Butler's insight that gender is 'a stylized repetition of acts' continues to resonate, reminding us that identities are not givens but ongoing negotiations.

'Beyond Binaries: Interrogating the Multiplicity of Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Society' extends this expanding intellectual and social vista. The international conference imagined gender not as a closed system but as an unfolding field of practice characterised by plurality, tension, creativity, and struggle. Where binaries continue to govern many laws, cultural mores, and political discourses, lived experiences consistently overflow these frames. New solidarities materialise across movements; digital spaces amplify both liberation and harm; ecological crises disproportionately afflict gendered bodies; and cultural production reimagines possibilities of selfhood.

The conference invited critical, intersectional, interdisciplinary engagements on how people navigate, resist, and reshape these shifting terrains. It brought into conversation scholars, activists, artists, writers, and practitioners whose work investigates the intersections of gender and sexuality with caste, race, class, indigeneity, disability, technology, labour, and environment. By tracing both long histories and present urgencies, the event set out to open conversations that imagine futures where multiplicity is acknowledged without flattening difference.

The aim was to nurture a space within which thought could be rigorous without being exclusionary; where global and local contexts inform one another, and participants could rethink not only what gender means but how its meanings continue to evolve.

Suggestive subthemes included, but were not limited to, the following

- Gender performativity, embodiment, and lived experience

- Queer, trans, and non-binary trajectories and politics
- Intersectionality: caste, race, class, indigeneity, disability
- Contemporary masculinities and their reconfigurations
- Law, citizenship, governance, and the politics of recognition
- Gender in digital cultures, algorithms, gaming, and online communities
- Ecologies, environment, climate justice, and gendered precarity
- Literature, cinema, and visual cultures of gender and sexuality
- Archives, memory, oral histories, and queer temporalities

Speaker Details

Keynote Address



Prof. Niladri R. Chatterjee

Prof. Niladri R. Chatterjee (b. 1967) is a distinguished academic and Professor in the Department of English at the University of Kalyani, West Bengal. His doctoral research focused on the novelist Christopher Isherwood. A recipient of prestigious accolades, he has been awarded the Fulbright Scholarship, during which he studied at the University of Texas at Austin, and the British Council-Charles Wallace Fellowship at the University of

Cambridge. Prof. Chatterjee is the co-editor of *The Muffled Heart: Stories of the Disempowered Male* (2005) and *Naribhav: Androgyny and Female Impersonation in India* (2016). He has also translated the stories of the otherwise lesser known queer Bengali author Krishnagopal Mallick, *Entering the Maze: Queer Fiction of Krishnagopal Mallick* (2023). Actively engaged in scholarship, he has been contributing to international publications since 1995. A passionate educator, he has been teaching a course in gender studies at Kalyani University since 2009 and curates discussions on his Facebook group, New Gender Studies. Since March 2020, he has extended his reach through his YouTube channel, sharing insights and fostering broader engagement with critical issues in literature and gender studies.

Valedictory Address



Prof. Sanjukta Dasgupta

Sanjukta Dasgupta, Professor and Former Head, Department of English and Former Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Calcutta, is a critic, translator, and a poet. She has published in journals in India and abroad. Her awards and grants include the British Council Charles Wallace Scholar grant, Fulbright Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, Associate Fellow at

Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, etc. She participated in the first Writers' and Literary Translators' International Congress (WALTIC) at Stockholm and also served as Chairperson for the Commonwealth Writers Prize (Eurasia region), organized by the Commonwealth Foundation, UK. Professor Dasgupta is the Managing Editor of FAMILIES: A Journal of Representations and Assistant Editor of Journal of Women's Studies, Calcutta University.

Her books include:

- The Novels of Huxley and Hemingway: A Study in Two Planes of Reality (1996); and
- The Indian Family in Transition (co-edited, 2007).

Special Addresses

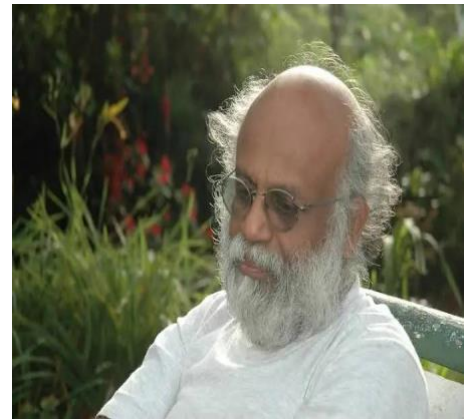


Prof. Chandrava Chakravarty

Chandrava Chakravarty is Professor, Department of English and the Director of Centre for Studies in Gender, Culture & Media at West Bengal State University, Barasat. Her research

interests include eighteenth century literature, colonial Bengal, Gender Studies and popular culture in Bollywood cinema. Dr. Chakravarty received the Charles Wallace India Trust Scholarship for undertaking her doctoral research in the UK. She has authored several books among which are *Gendering the Nation: Identity Politics and the English Stage of the Long Eighteenth Century* (2013), an edited volume, *The New Woman in Tagore: The Making and Unmaking of Female Subjectivity* (2017), and *Centering Women in Bollywood* (Routledge, UK 2025).

Daya Dissanayake



Daya Dissanayake is a Sri Lankan novelist, poet and digital literature pioneer who writes in both English and Sinhala. He is the author of numerous novels, including *Kat Bitha*, *The Saadhu Testament*, *Eavesdropper* and *Miracle Under the Kumbuk Tree*, and is the only Sri Lankan writer to have won the State Literary Award for Best English Novel three times. His *The Saadhu Testament* (1998) is recognised as Asia's first e-novel, marking his early and influential engagement with

electronic publishing. A recipient of the SAARC Literary Award (2013), Dissanayake's work explores history, non-violence, religion and cultural memory, while his advocacy of open access and Creative Commons has shaped conversations around literature in the digital age.

Plenary Addresses

Prof. Kaustav Bakshi



Dr. Kaustav Bakshi (he/him) is Professor, Department of English, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India. A Charles Wallace India Trust Fellow, his doctoral thesis, written with partial funding from the Trust, is entitled 'Family, Sexualities and Ageing in Sri Lankan Expatriate Fiction: Kinship, Power Relations and the State'. An activist for gender rights, he is a member of the editorial advisory board of *Queer Studies in Media and Popular Culture* (Bristol: Intellect Bks.), and an occasional contributor to *InPlainspeak*, the digital magazine of *TARSHI* (Talking About Reproductive and Sexuality Health in India). He has presented

papers in several national and international conferences in institutes such as Columbia University, European University Institute (Florence), St. Andrew's University, Birbeck, University of London, University of Connecticut, Syracuse University, CLAGS-City University of New York, European Conference on South Asian Studies (Paris), Jawaharlal Nehru University, Indian Institute of Advanced Studies (Simla), Ambedkar University, IIT (Hyderabad), Delhi University, Tezpur University, University of Central Rajasthan, etc. He has published in several international peer-reviewed Scopus-indexed journals such as *Media, Culture, Society* (2025), *LGTIQ+ Family: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (2024), *Cultural Trends* (2023), *South Asian Review* (2012), *Postcolonial Text* (2015), *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film* (2013), *South Asian History and Culture* (2015, 2017, 2021, & 2022) and *South Asian Popular Culture* (2018). He has also written for *The Wire*, *The Telegraph*, *Outlook*, *Queer Archive for Memory, Reflection and Activism*, *Critical Collective*, *The Hindustan Times*, *Café Dissensus*, etc. His latest published books include, *Cultures of Ageing and Ageism in India* (Routledge, 2024), *Popular Cinema in Bengal: Genre, Stars, Public Culture* (Routledge, 2020), *Queer Studies: Texts, Contexts, Praxis* (Orient Blackswan, 2019) and, Rituparno Ghosh: *Cinema, Gender and Art* (Routledge, 2015). His upcoming books include, *Queer Homing Desires: Politics of Imagining Home in LGBTQ+ Narratives from India* (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2025) and *Is there a Queer in the Class? Pedagogy and Sexualities in Higher Education in India* (London: Bloomsbury, 2025). He is currently working as a research consultant on a Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland funded project on queer cinema and festivals of India in collaboration with the University of

Glasgow. At Jadavpur University, Kaustav teaches courses related to gender and sexuality, apart from regular courses on English and postcolonial literatures and cultures and critical theory.

Dr. Tania Chakraverty



Dr. Tania Chakraverty is the Principal of Shri Shikshayatan College, University of Calcutta, Kolkata. She has previously served as the Dean of Students Welfare, Diamond Harbour Women's University. Her areas of academic interest include Gender Studies, Women's Studies, Feminist Criticism, American Literature, and Literature of the Diaspora, with a special focus on Ernest Hemingway. She completed her Ph.D. on Gender Representations in the Fiction of Ernest Hemingway. Her research and teaching engage critically with questions of gender, representation, diaspora, and literary traditions, and she is also interested in the field of translation studies.

Conference Committee

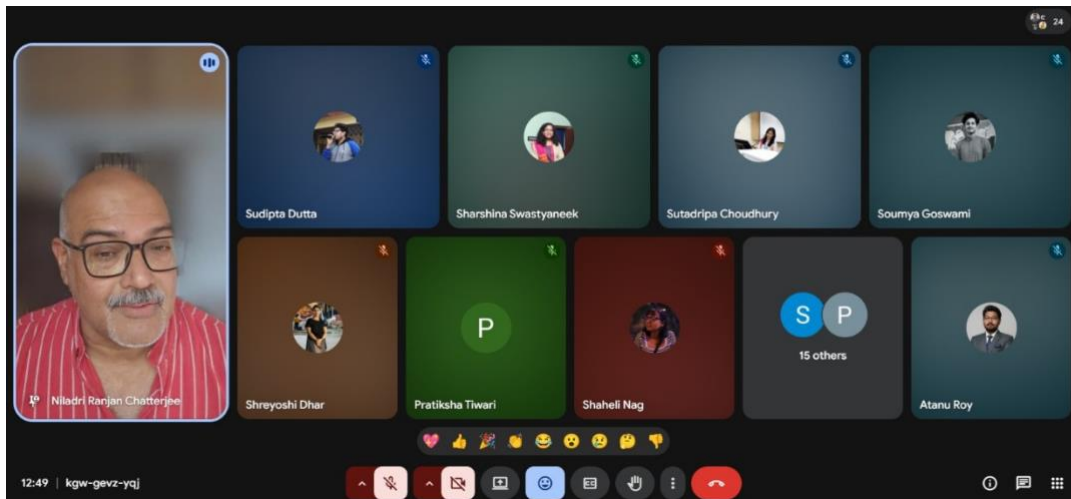
The committee was formed well in advance of this conference. The committee members included Prof. Deb Narayan Bandyopadhyay, Chief Executive Director (Academics), Swami Vivekananda University, as the Mentor, and Dr. Rituparna Chakraborty, Head, Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, and Deputy Director, Centre for Gender Studies, Swami Vivekananda University, as the Convener. Other members involved:

- Dr. Madhumita Roy (Associate Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)
- Dr. Shubham Bhattacharjee (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies & Coordinator, Centre for Gender Studies, SVU)
- Dr. Hindol Chakraborty (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)
- Dr. Shreyoshi Dhar (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)
- Dr. Tirna Sadhu (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)
- Dr. Soumyarup Bhattacharjee (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)
- Dr. Natasha Verma Chatterjee (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies)
- Mr. Agnidepto Datta (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)

- Mr. Sudipta Dutta (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies & Co-coordinator, Centre for Gender Studies, SVU)
- Mr. Debarshi Arathdar (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)
- Ms. Sharshina Swastyaneek (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)
- Mr. Sumit Saha (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)
- Ms. Sutadripta Dutta Chowdhury (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)
- Mr. Soumya Goswami (Asst. Prof., Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, SVU)

Conference Report

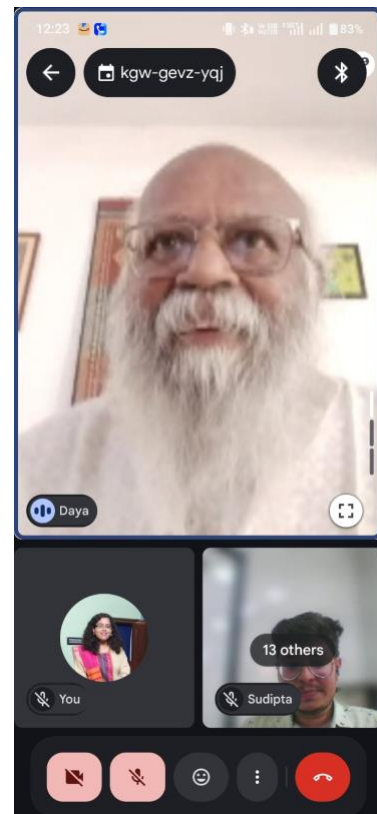
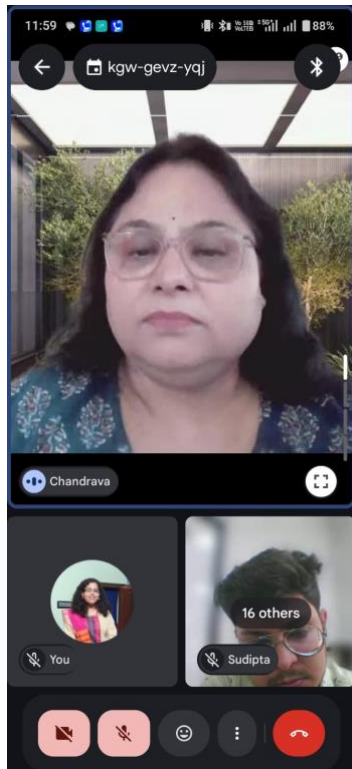
The keynote address was delivered by Prof. Niladri R. Chatterjee, Professor, Department of English, University of Kalyani. His lecture was titled as “**”Poor You!”: The Normative Production of Queer Identities.**” From ancient classical literature to modern day classics, from Indian epics of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* to texts like *Babarnama* his lecture highlighted depictions of queer identities by apparently normative hands. His humorous approach to complex criticality marked a superb beginning to the conference.



Next up, we were delighted to have Prof. Kaustav Bakshi from the Department of English, Jadavpur University who delivered the first plenary address of the session. His talk was titled “**Technology and the Messiness of Gender.**” He explored how with the advent of AI, cyborgs and other technological beings and non-beings, the question of gender identities become more nuanced. His session was followed by a vibrant QnA session which benefitted all the participants.



To begin the next day, Prof. Chandrava Chakravarty, Professor, Department of English, West Bengal State University delivered a special address. The title of her presentation was “**Queer Psychogeography in Today's Bengali Cinema.**” Her deliberation in this regard consisted of technical discussions on films such as *Nagarkirtan* and *Grihapravesha*. This well-structured lecture brought in numerous genuine queries from the participants.

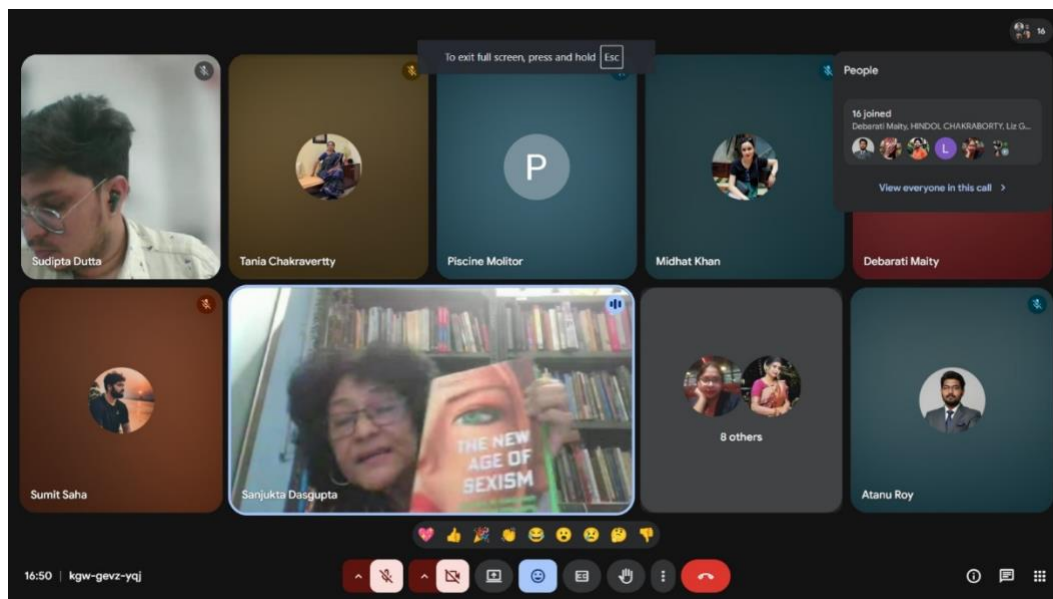


Daya Dissanayake, a renowned author from Sri Lanka delivered the second special address of the day. His simplistic approach to the vital question of “**Gender in Near Future**” grabbed much critical attention from the delegates.

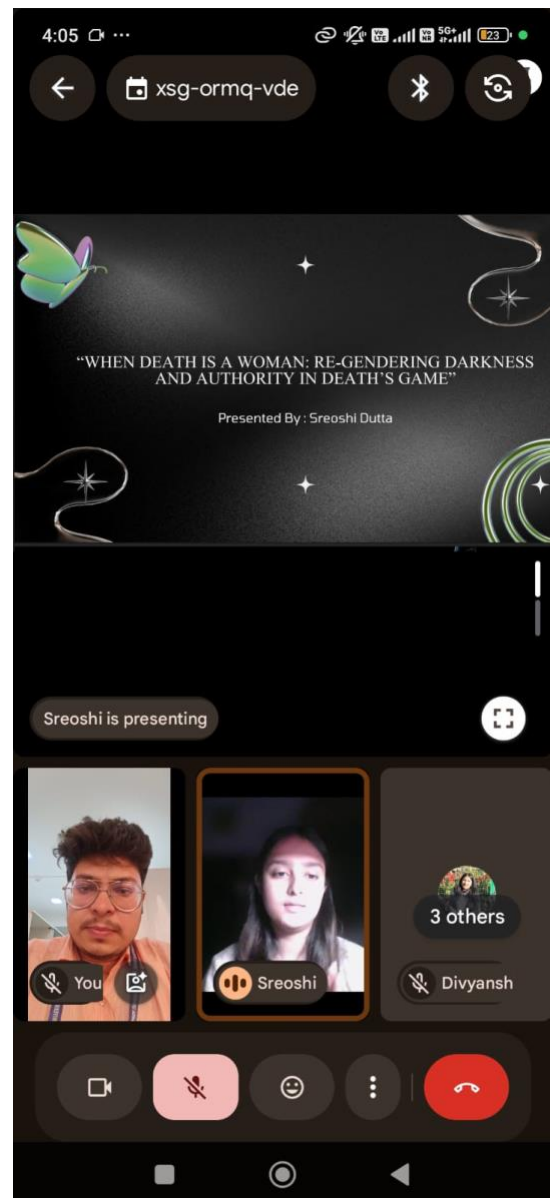
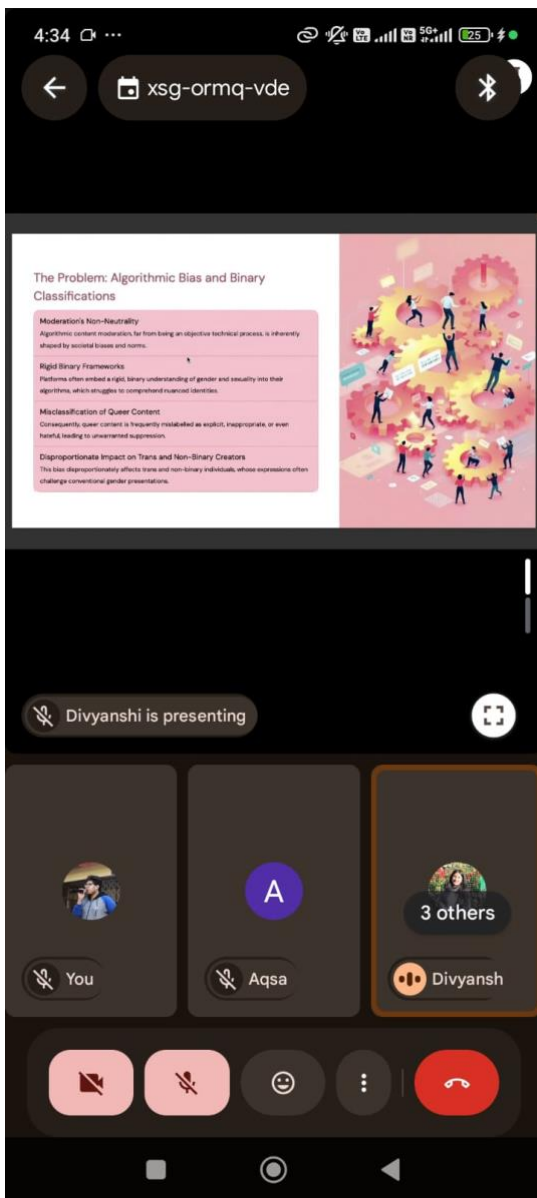
Dr. Tania Chakraverty, Principal, Shri Shikshayatan College delivered a plenary address on the second day of the conference. Her talk titled “**Gender in Theory: From Wollstonecraft to Butler**” covered the entire spectrum of Gender Studies. Her critically detailed lecture particularly helped the young researchers who chose to participate in the conference.

The Valedictory address of the conference was delivered by Prof. Sanjukta Dasgupta, Former Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Calcutta. She did not only summarize what has already been covered by the scholars in the two days of the conference, but she directed all to a brand new approach to the

way the universities should approach Gender Studies in future. Her emphasis on praxis besides studying theory was the heartwarming point where the conference came to a closure.



Apart from these aforementioned sessions, a select number of 15 presenters showcased their thoroughly researched papers across three technical sessions.



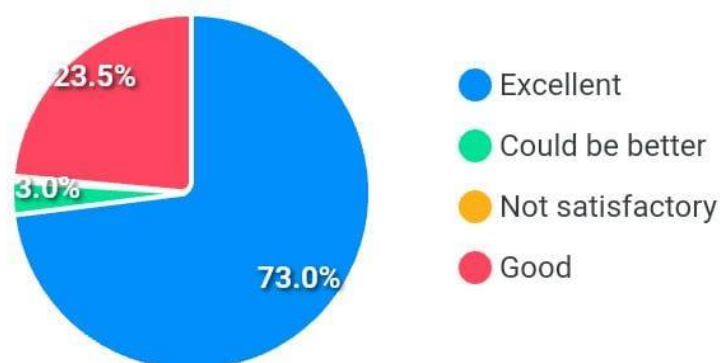
Paper Submission and Publication

Total number of papers submitted for the conference: 19

Total number of papers presented: 15

Presently, the Centre is reviewing the papers for future publication in peer-reviewed journals or in edited volumes with ISBN.

Feedback



Programme Outcome

The two-day international conference 'Beyond Binaries: Interrogating the Multiplicity of Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Society' brought together scholars, researchers, activists, and practitioners from across India and internationally to engage with cutting-edge questions of gender and sexuality. The event successfully facilitated interdisciplinary dialogue on subthemes ranging from gender performativity and queer trajectories to digital cultures, ecologies, and literary representations. Participants gained new insights into intersectional frameworks and were exposed to diverse methodological approaches from sociology, literary studies, law, political science, and digital humanities. The conference strengthened scholarly networks and fostered collaborative possibilities for future research. It also provided a platform for emerging scholars to present their work alongside distinguished academics, contributing to the broader academic discourse on gender multiplicity.

Sample Certificate for the Participants



Conclusion

The International Conference on 'Beyond Binaries: Interrogating the Multiplicity of Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Society,' held online on 21st–22nd January, 2026, and organised by the Centre for Gender Studies and the Department of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, Swami Vivekananda University, was a landmark academic event. The conference successfully created a rigorous yet inclusive intellectual space that brought together diverse perspectives on gender and sexuality from across the globe. Distinguished keynote, valedictory, special, and plenary addresses enriched the event, while the technical sessions provided a stimulating forum for emerging and established scholars alike. The event reaffirmed the University's commitment to fostering scholarship

that is socially engaged, theoretically rigorous, and globally connected, and will undoubtedly serve as an impetus for future interdisciplinary research in the field.