



Astitva 2018 - Open Discussion on Gender Equality



ISAY- India Safe Abortion Youth Advocates

13th March, 2018

Grant Medical College and J.J. Hospital, Mumbai

This event was organized as a part of the medico-cultural festival (Astitva) of Grant Medical College, Mumbai, where ISAY took the opportunity to moderate and participate in the open discussion on the topic Gender Equality. A total of 20 students actively participated in the discussion.



YC Suyash started the discussion by asking the participants what they understand by Gender Equality, to which most of the responses were focused on equal rights for both men and women (mainly in terms of education and job opportunities). Following which, the next question asked was why they need gender equality in our community. This shifted the discussion on how gender discrimination arises in the first place, and although the concept of gender equality is very much accepted, discriminatory practices yet persist. Few of the participants opened up about how they face sexism and are limited by stereotypes and gender roles in their everyday life despite of living in a so called progressive society.

YC Zainab introduced the concept of gender equity and spoke on women’s rights and the existing women’s rights’ movements across the world. The discussion which followed spoke about gender equity not only in terms of education, but how there is a gap when it comes to sexual and reproductive rights of women, and lack of bodily autonomy. Instances of a woman being forced to bare children after marriage, having to give up on her job/education were discussed, and the reason being dominance of men in our society. It also gave the participants an idea of the extent to which patriarchy exists in our society, and how we most of the time unknowingly contribute to the pre-existing stigma around such topics.



At the end of the discussion, everyone decided to support gender equality not just in theory, but as a cause, to improve the quality of life of women, practice equity and equality, identify sexism and challenge gender roles in their personal and professional life.