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GENDER CITY

Introduction

Cities are hubs for economic growth and social change and have the potential to ensure well-rounded development. However, as the world is undergoing rapid urbanisation, does not necessarily translate into equal and adequate opportunities for all genders. Socio-economic inequalities, exclusion and segregation of citizens is more evident than ever. Owing to their internal differences, citizens in different social contexts experience cities in very different ways due to gendered norms, customs and culture, and face several challenges that the cities must address.

" Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development, and building good governance."
- Kofi Annan

The intensity of these challenges is even more severe with marginalized gender groups, i.e., women and LGBTQIA+ face even more severe implications concerning safety, inadequate sanitation and mobility, disproportionate distribution of domestic duties, and unequal access to public participation and resources. Therefore, achieving gender equality is explicitly upheld by SDG 5, New Urban Agenda, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and various other international conventions. Moreover, Indian cities have traditionally been male-dominated and trapped in the shackles of patriarchy, which has long dictated citizens' socio-cultural habits and preferences. Therefore to ensure cohesive, inclusive and sustainable cities, it is imperative to incorporate gender equity in urban planning, regulations and governance.

That being the case, the road to gender equality remains long and ever-shifting—particularly regarding the nuanced ways gender intersects with race, class, and sexuality. This series of work subsequently investigates "Gender and the Indian City". The theme explores the everyday challenges experienced resulting from the biological differences between the citizens highlighting the need to visualise gender as a spectrum instead of two sets of opposing ideals.

The Team

Editorial Team

Nabamalika Joardar
India Smart Cities Fellowship Manager

Monika Thakur
Advisor

Nikhil Sanjay Shah

Prasanna Bhangdia

Rashi Jain

Shonit Nayan

Tarini Gupta

Design Team

Abhishek Chatterjee

Akruti Murhekar

Roshni Gera

Sarayu Madhiyazhagan

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1 Between Being a Researcher and a Woman

"Bechari ladki…" (poor/ helpless girl) or *"uss mohale nahi jaana…, 'safe' nahi hain ladki ke liye…"* *(Don't go to that neighbourhood (pointing towards me), it is not safe for a girl…"*, or *"ladki ko ye karne ki kya jarorat hain…isse kya hoga (Why does a woman need to do it (research), what will happen with it"*, these are a few usual remarks that I have encountered as a woman researcher on the field. This reflective piece discusses my 'positionality', explicitly focusing on the gender aspects. Drawing from the fieldwork experiences and literature, I particularly bring out how the social construct of 'being a woman' affects the process of research, especially methodology. Here, gender implies physical qualities and encompasses the roles (as prejudices and biases) attributed to a specific gender. Also, gender bias in research may be defined as a systematically erroneous "gender-dependent approach" related to social construct, which incorrectly regards women and men as similar/different (Ruiz-Cantero, et.al, 2007). This bias can be found from the inception of the research to the results and affect both the researchers and research participants.

This piece is solely based on my four-year-long field experience as a researcher (geographically spread across South Bihar, Delhi, and Bengaluru). The interviews (which includes key informant interviews and focused group discussions) were commonly used methods. I want to specify my positionality; I identify as a woman and belong to the so-called upper caste. I was born and raised in an agrarian family in a small village in North India.

I share what Rose (1997) urged to work with; acknowledging the position rather than ignoring it. Hence, instead of considering interviews as a 'neutral' research tool, as the feminist scholars observe it, I believe that interviews are 'co-production' of knowledge and the production of research and knowledge as

From Ghummenhera
Source: Author (2021)

'subjective experiences'. Therefore, in this co-production, a researcher's positionality (gender, caste, age, race, ethnicity and many more) is instrumental as the research objective, questions, methods and results. The question of positionality arises from a reflexive orientation (which is about situating the knowledge to counter the neutrality and universality of the knowledge production, especially in academics) towards research practices and processes (Beebeejaun, 2022). As a geographer and urban planner, Susan Moore (2005: 391) notes, "[S]elf-presentation and impression management in the interview is not only a methodological challenge but are themselves key data, which often get overlooked in research geared to typifying development processes…".

While situating gender at the heart of the analysis, I present a few incidents I experienced while conducting fieldwork in Delhi and Bihar.

During fieldwork in Ghummenhera, a rural village (Rural village is a settlement classification by the Delhi Master Plan to demarcate the settlements characterised by agricultural activity. Currently, there are 227 rural villages in Delhi. These villages are under the rural use zone of the master plan) in Delhi (April 2021), I was staying on the site on an abandoned floor of a home offered by a resident. I was conducting life history interviews for a project. The homeowner (a retired man) was the first 'point of contact' who helped me to get access to the village. However, soon, the point of contact turned into the gatekeeper. He asked me not to visit specific neighbourhoods of the village, which are considered 'unsafe' for a girl. As a researcher, the social construct of what being a girl means and what 'unsafe' constitutes, one responsible for understanding all the facets.

As a woman, I enquire about how to deconstruct 'research' amongst social constructs and cope with such constructs while ethically upholding the intricacies of the research.

During field visit in Bodh Gaya
Source: Author (2022)

Again, in Delhi, I wanted to study the regional rapid transit system (RRTS) and its significance to different stakeholders in the National Capital Region (NCR). I decided to take 'labours lives' as an entry point. While on the construction site, I found that there are exclusively 'men', i.e., male labour force engaged with such extravagant projects. It was pretty uncomfortable for me to be the 'only woman in such a space; hence, I was accompanied by a 'male' researcher to help me throughout the process. In my recent fieldwork in Bihar (March 2022), I realised that I ended up interviewing most of the women while studying slums in Bodh Gaya. Here, I don't claim that male researchers do not experience such incidents; instead, I want to acknowledge that the socially-constructed biases are inevitable to the research methods.

Furthermore, this reflexivity also answers the 'androcentrism' of the research since, historically, research has been the domain of men. Hence, how one manages 'with whom' while conducting research becomes as crucial as 'by whom, for whom'. In other words, the gender dynamics concern needs to be acknowledged rather than ignored. Besides these, I

experienced and believed that most of my fellow woman researchers would agree with me, especially while conducting research in rural or small towns. I was often asked to dress 'appropriately' and not in an 'urbanised' way (yes, there exists a dedicated researcher wardrobe). As a researcher, I am responsible for consciously deciding the dress for the field.

These were a few glimpses from the everyday life experience of a woman on the field. I accept the limitations and could not reflect on the caste, class, power dynamics and many more. In conclusion, while engaging with the 'how' of research and knowledge, researchers' positionality should be recognised as integral rather than incidental to the research process (England, 1994; Rose, 1997). Hence, the produced knowledge does shape by 'by whom', 'for whom' and 'with whom'. And lastly, there is a 'woman researcher' who is passionate about the research between being a researcher and a woman.

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Ritika Rajput

2 Beyond the Social Veil of Normalcy

Being gendered is not someone's fundamental identity. Who wants society to confirm their existence based on their gender expressions? In our country, gender binary is considered normative, so being non-binary creates complexity and tension owing to already constructed norms and people's mindset towards the idea. As gender and its representation is always evolving through various scales, legislation, contexts and political regimes, the city should be gendered through experiences of its inhabitants.

Rahul Upadhyay, a member of Gandhinagar Queer Pride Foundation revealed his journey as a person being from the LGBTQIA+ community in a personal interview. He spoke about their entire journey, from having a two membered team to establishing their own NGO and proliferating their marks in a city like Gandhinagar. Unlike big metropolitan cities like Delhi and Bangalore, Gandhinagar was never familiar with the thought of being a queer friendly city, it never had a significant place in the queer map of India. Also, in a bigger city living with anonymity is still possible, but in cities like Gandhinagar where everyone knows their neighbours, anonymity is neither an option nor a choice. Therefore, the fight to raise awareness of the LGBTQIA+ population is a never-ending battle. Conservatism has always overpowered or denied the gender expression of non-binary people. As a result, revealing their identity as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community has always been a struggle. Therefore, the fight to raise awareness of the LGBTQIA+ population is a never-ending battle.

However, through constant interaction inside and outside the city and participation in various formal, virtual and informal meet ups with non-binary and transgender communities, many queer identifying individuals have ultimately built a safe space to accept their inner selves.

The conversation turned towards ways in which the COVID-19 lockdown impacted the NGO's effort. The NGO intends to unfold stories of struggles which gave visibility to a fair share of the society, who

were otherwise neglected. For most, social exclusion and isolation were nothing new, so during COVID, while the rest of the world was coping with and complaining about physical distancing, the team used this chance to connect virtually with people beyond Gandhinagar. The digitally enhanced platforms aided in creating and expanding their inclusive safe space to share their experiences with the rest of the world.

In a question on the change of societal perspective of the LGBTQIA+ community, Rahul replied, *"Mujhe nahi lagta society change hone ki mood me abhi bhi hay"* (which translates to *"I don't think the society is in a mood to change its perspective as of now"*). Though the revolutionary amendment of section 377 has helped manynon-binary and transgender people to reveal their identity and sexual orientation, they are still constantly vigilant on the streets of every city. When a significant section of the society still considers the existence of the LGBTQIA+ group as unnatural or points them as psychologically and physically ill, expecting a legal amendment to make them embrace the idea is unrealistic. He also stated that many expect same-sex marriages

to be the next milestone to achieve. Still, in reality, proper implementation of the same will be achieved only when these married couples can get an apartment in any housing society without being judged or questioned about their choices.

Ina discussion on ostracisationand persecution of non-binary or transgender people in a heteronormative society, Rahul highlighted that many of the old Hindu religious scripts mention the third gender. Transgenders, a part of the oldest LGBTQIA+ community, were well recognised and held religious authority, respectable court positions and administrative roles because of their loyalty and trustworthiness. This begs a fundamental question, "If transgenders were well recognised from ancient history, why do we still deny them?" The answer lies in the homophobic legacy of British colonisation, which legally prohibited consensual gay sex and condemned them as an 'unnatural act'. We live in a society that will invite a transgender person to their house to bless a new born or a newly wed couple, but will refrain from accommodating them in the same social and physical space.

'Do you think labelling a part of the society as LGBTQIA+ community

Informal meet up at a tea stall in Gandhinagar
Source: Author

is also a way of marginalisation and discrimination?' Answering this, Rahul said, *'It's the other way round'.* Constant discrimination based on gender expressions has resulted in the naming of this community. If society could honour the human rights of everyone, naming every community differently would not be necessary. Breaking entrenched stereotypes has always been a struggle.

In recent years, nonbinary identities have slowly infiltrated the existing binary societal construct. Now is the prime time that it should also be reflected in the urban arena of Indian conglomerate cities. Though radical changes in the city's design and mindset will take time, efforts like decriminalising homosexuality, toilets for third gender and more have been a breakthrough towards achieving gender-neutral inclusive city. Cities should be reconceptualized on the basis of the diversity of spatial aspects via constant negotiations of diverse people in their everyday life. Engaging masses through various mobilizing programs, representation of gender inclusivity in literature, educational and cultural initiatives, and creation of interactive spaces can evoke interest in everyone. They can make them see beyond the margins of normative thinking, towards intersectionality. Successful implementation of both top-down and bottom-up approaches can make the cities fairer and more equitable.

Kastury Biswas

3 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): A Review of Legality

The World Health Organisation defines FGM as 'all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injuries to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The United Nations has declared Female Genital Mutilation a human rights violation under Article 10 - The Right to Life, but India still has not observed a ban over it.

For long, FGM or khatna as the Bohras call it, remained a well-kept secret within the community. However, according to a UNICEF report (2022), at least 200 million girls have undergone mutilation. However, this ritual is veiled in secrecy. As a practice, it reflects the deep-rooted patriarchal mindset and inequality between the sexes. It constitutes extreme discrimination against women and girls, violating their right to health, freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and their right to life when the procedure results in death.

There is no mention of khatna in the Quran, but many Bohras believe it is a religious obligation. Dawoodi Bohra Women for Religious Freedom (DBWRF), a group of pro-khatna women, argue that Khatna is more egalitarian than discriminative and is done to purify the women. In the community, the clitoris is also known as 'haraam ki boti' or 'source of sin' or, more simply, 'unwanted skin'. Khatna for males and Khafs for females as both genders have an equal right to purity. The sole purpose of the clitoris removal is to rule out the possibility to derive pleasure that might 'stray' out of their marriages. Anti-khatnas believe that khafs is performed on women to control and/or curb their sexuality.

Community Influence and Conformism:

There is pressure from the Dawoodi Bohra clergy to continue female circumcision, there are profound social ramifications for whichever community member casts doubt on their authority, and a sustained community effort exists to hide this practice from the larger public. For example, Nushrat Bharucha (an Indian film actor) from the Dawoodi Bohra community reveals that her father, who did not comply with the tax system dictated by the clergy, was not allowed to bury his father upon death till he complied. Families succumbing to the pressure of the clergy and the community even if they are unwilling reinforces the idea that there is a need to put in place a deterrent approach to this problem in the form of a ban. Furthermore, a report titled 'The Clitoral Hood a Contested Site: Khafd or Female Genital Mutilation in India' (2018) points out that in the absence of law, India could become a global hub for FGM due to highly publicised hearings in USA and Australia against FGM (Diler et al. 2018).

In 2015, an Australian Supreme Court hearing against the mother of two young girls from the Dawoodi Bohra Shia Muslim Community, a community elder (female) and their community leader – Mohammed Vaziri, on account of suspected FGM.

During the hearing, the elder female accused of cutting two young girls claimed that what she did was not 'cutting'; instead, it was 'symbolic cutting' – i.e., 'just' touching the tool to the clitorises of the girls.

"I'm insulin dependent diabetic and it was way past my lunch time… I may have touched her a bit harder on one side because my hands were trembling and that's when the young girl said "it hurt me, Mum","she argued in response to the evidence that she had caused the young girl some physical harm. Moreover, call records between her and the young girl's mother highlighted the former advising the latter to explain the genital wounds as rough play while out in the garden.

Eventually, the three accused were found guilty under the Australian FGM law of NSW – one for performing genital mutilation, the mother for requesting the same and the local priest for not reporting it.

Source: Nurse accused of FGM 'horrified' when child protection workers investigated; https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/oct/20/nurse-accused-of-fgm-horrified-when-child-protection-workers-investigated

The Legislative Hesitation:

A PIL filed by advocate Sunita Tiwari against the practice of FGM prevalent in the Muslim Bohra Community led to the first Parliamentary acknowledgement of the issue, although short-lived. The Minister for Women and Child Development, Maneka Gandhi, in May 2017 publicly announced the government's intention to pass a law banning FGM/C if the community did not voluntarily abandon the practice. On the contrary, in December 2017, they responded to an inquiry by the Supreme Court by submitting an affidavit stating that "there is no official data or study (by National Crime Records Bureau, etc.) which supports the existence of FGM/C in India."

A year after the PIL was filed, the Supreme Court took cognisance of the practice of Khatna, and a bench of Justice Misra, Justice Chandrachud and Justice Khanwilkar strongly condemned it despite the Parliamentary silence. The judges firmly stood by the fact that it was in contravention of both the right to life (Article 21) and the prohibition of discrimination on the ground of religion and gender (Article 15). The court upheld that the autonomy

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'It is now widely acknowledged that [FGM] functions as a self-enforcing social convention or social norm. In societies where it is practiced it is a socially upheld behavioural rule. Families and individuals uphold the practice because they believe that their group or society expects them to do so. Abandonment of the practice requires a process of social change that results in new expectations on families.'

- UN General Assembly

and bodily integrity of a woman is paramount and that a woman's control over her genitalia is central to her dignity as an individual. However, after six months of deliberation, the matter was referred to a 'larger' Constitutional Bench of five, citing that the issue needs to be considered from 'all perspectives.'

Conclusion and Way Forward:
The fight here is between Secularism, which talks about modernity and equal rights for men and women, and Personal Law, which is interpretive and against women's freedoms. Several women from the Dawoodi Bohra community have spoken out and admitted to being in pain, feeling violated, hurt and cheated on due to this practice. Many of them have claimed that they have faced problems sexually and during childbirth due to khatna.
The bottom line is that FGM/C is risky and harmful. It gravely affects women's sexual pleasure and their physical & psychological well-being. It has thus been banned from several countries, including Egypt, where Bohras trace a part of their ancestry. Countries with laws and regulations against FGM include Burkina Faso, Central African

Republic, Djibouti, Ghana, Great Britain, Guinea, Sudan, Sweden, and the United States. Even the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (with 57 member countries) opposes the practice.
Unfortunately, there is an evidenthypocrisy when the practice of Triple Talaq is vehemently opposed and criminalised to empower Muslim women, but FGM does not garner the same kind of enthusiasm. If Triple Talaq could undergo the test of constitutionality despite being under the ambit of religious practice, what makes FGM an exception? Moreover, India has banned several other harmful traditional practices that are discriminatory, like Sati, Dowry, and child marriage. There is no reason why FGM must be treated any differently than these other harmful traditions.

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Tarini Gupta

4 Raat ki Rani

"In our negotiations with the night sky and city streets, we find a way to register our presence in small ways – with a sticker, with a song, with a chalk drawing and sometimes even with silent contemplation."

Women Walk at Night, Delhi

In an egalitarian world, where every social group or gender is deemed to have equal rights, there remain large chasms waiting to be filled by the promised rivers of parity. In a country like ours, where diversity is immense – such social chasms might seem depressingly inevitable and evident– but not for those spirited enthusiasts who are tirelessly striving to bridge this gap of gender disparity. In their hands, such old divisions are presented as new opportunities.
One such unique group of enthusiasts is the 'Women Walk at Night' collective, comprising women who share a common interest of filling in these urban voids of disparity in

safety – especially for women and girls. Despite the country having extensive legal protections, India is ironically ranked as one of the most dangerous places for women in the world, with the crime rate against women rising around 131% in May, 2020. (Priya, 2022). This makes it abundantly clear that laws and legal frameworks alone cannot bring about the change we wish to see. Instead, legalities need to be complemented by the distinctive and innovative approaches of these smaller groups of enthusiasts to stir real change.
The 'Women Walk at Night' collective founded by Malika Taneja, a theatre practitioner from Delhi, was inspired

by Maya Krishna Rao's performance 'The Walk', created in response to the December 2012 Nirbhaya case. Over the years, the collective not only reached a large number of women but also conducted 50+ night walks in multiple localities across Delhi.

The group uses social media platforms to connect with those interested in participating in their monthly scheduled 'night-walks'. These walks are organised regularly to leisurely deconstruct the invisible patriarchal paradigms that restrains women from walking on the streets alone at night. Each of these night walks take place in different precincts every month, enabling more awareness and participation from women. Such initiatives also help us reflect on the lingering disparity in safety within the public transport sector. The daunting isolation of unoccupied public vehicles, with the large amount of uncertainty of availability and frequency, deepens this chasm of disparity. On the other hand, the 'Women Walk at Night' collective also found an opportunity in this setback. Since women joining the night walk (usually scheduled from 10pm-12am) come from various parts of the city, the social media groups created, help women connect with fellow walkers residing near them in order to coordinate logistics to and from the walk by simply sharing autos or cabs. This simple yet effective hack draws more and more women to join these night walks without the fear of having to commute alone. More importantly, it also encourages us to think, what if more women from our own neighbourhoods walked with us, closer to our homes. This would help us develop a sense of comfort and safety through these simple practices of walking or merely being physically present and empowering one another.

Five young women from the India Smart Cities Fellowship Program 2021-22 Cohort, namely – Akanksha Singh (Patna), Akruti Murhekar (Vasai), Ojaswini Bansal (Indore), Sarayu Madhiyazhagan (Vellore) and I, Roshni Gera (Bangalore) were fortunate to have been a part of one of the night walks. What better way for a woman to feel reinvigorated than to leisurely take a midnight stroll whilst also reclaiming the streets of the national capital! This night walk was particularly special as it was organised on World Women's Day 2022.The walk lasted two hours from Nehru Park in Chanakyapuri to Lodhi Gardens on Lodhi Road, Delhi. These two hours brought to us sheer amazement and introspection of how

and why most of us have never done this before and pondered over the possibilities of doing this more often. With the hope of easing this difficult relationship women have with the streets at night, collectives such as the Women Walk at Night bring together more and more believers and enthusiasts, hoping women in all cities, villages and towns feel just as comfortable being able to walk onto the streets in the middle of the day or the night, without having to be bound by the shackles of gender disparity.132 years –that's how long the World Economic Forum estimates it will take the world to reach gender parity, but with groups like this, I am certain we can reduce the number at least by a couple of decades.

Reference:

Priya, T., 2022. Women Safety In India: Why Do I Not Feel Safe In This Country?. [online] SheThePeople TV

Roshni Gera

5 Voice to My Claps

"Loud makeup, shimmering saree and a typical clap with palms meeting crossways followed by voice shouting and demanding money, announces their arrival and it is hard to overlook this section of society, the third gender"

- Divya Pant

The term "Hijra" or "Kinnar" refers to a person whose gender identity is neither recognised to be male nor female but whose birth sex is male. A small percentage of Kinnar are thought to be genetically predisposed. However, most have been castrated or desexed before or after puberty.

This segment of society claims that mainstream society is far behind in accepting them. They are not treated as "regular" people. Eunuchs undergo adversities from birth and are exploited on a daily basis. They have always been sidelined, treated with contempt, and blatantly ignored. They are the victims of different forms of bigotry and intolerance and frequently live in filthy, lonely conditions. This piece of writing attempts to demonstrate the most acceptable practices in various sections of the country that encourage steps towards achieving inclusivity.

Dr. Manabi Bandopadhayay (Principal)

Shabnam Mausi (MLA)

Laxmi Narayan Tripathi (Social Activist, Astitva)

Satyarthi Sharmila (Lawer)

K Prithika Yashini (Polics Officer)

Padmini Prakash (Anchor)

Joyita Mondal (Judge)

Original Photo Source: https://thelogicalindian.com/news/indias-first-transgender-university/

Opportunities for Education:
Transgender are forced to beg on the streets after being abandoned by the society and even their parents. If we can make it easier for people to have better education, they will be able to hold desirable positions in government or private institutions.

Tamil Nadu: Manonmaniam Sundaranar University (MSU) in Tamil Nadu has made all courses available to transgender students free of charge. This effort encompasses all courses from undergraduate to doctoral level. The decision taken in 2020 intends to boost the economic well-being of members of the transgender community. Under the university's inclusive decision, principals of all institutions have also been given instructions to establish separate bathrooms for transgender students, employees, and guests.

Tamil Nadu has made genuine and innovative efforts to ensurer holistic development of the transgender community, such as hiring the country's first trans police officer and staging the country's first-ever pride march in 2009. A transgender man from Salem has become the first sub-inspector of police in Tamil Nadu to demonstrating the importance of providing the right opportunities for people to advance in life and live in a dignified way.

Uttar Pradesh: In the Kushinagar district of Uttar Pradesh, the nation's first institution dedicated just for transgender students was proposed in 2019, facilitating education for the population from pre-kindergarten to post-graduate levels. The Akhil Bhartiya Kinnar Siksha Seva Trust (All-India transgender education service trust) is building the university, which will open in the district's Fazilnagar block.

Initiative to Gender Neutral Toilet:
Kochi: The Better Kochi Response Group (BKRG) in 2019 has opened a unique 'Container Toilet' on MG Road near Atlantis Junction as part of their initiatives to make Kochi a better place to live, with financial assistance from Cochin Shipyard under its CSR initiative. The toilet isopen to all genders owing to its gender-neutral design and is Kerala's first public restroom for transgender people.

Mumbai: This year, 2022, in Mumbai's Goregaon neighbourhood, a new public restroom opened just for the transgender population in Omble park in Aarey. The action aimed to protect them from gender discrimination and create a safe atmosphere. Created by the Saarthi Foundation, an NGO devoted to assisting the disadvantaged in health and education.

Delhi: The DMRC has taken initative to established provisions allowing transgender people to use restrooms that were previously only available specially-abled people, in 2021, to make the metro more accessible. The decision to install the city's first transgender toilet will undoubtedly increase the confidence of the third gender minority community to use public transport and feel safer in public spaces, which frequently feels uncomfortable in public restrooms. The Delhi Metro now has 347 individual specialised restrooms throughout its stations (in addition to the common restrooms for other passengers). Bilingual signage in English and Hindi and emblems for "Persons with Disabilities" and "Transgenders" have been placed next to these restrooms to direct transgender people to them. Additionally, any transgender person who wants to use a restroom specific to their gender identity is free to do so.

Original Photo Source: http://cms.newindianexpress.com/cities/kochi/2019/jun/08/kochi-gets-its-first-gender-neutral-container-toilet-1987475.html

Provision of Shelter:

Lok Sabha: In 2021, to provide a safe and secure shelter to the people from the transgender community in need, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is setting up 'Garima Greh' shelter homes.. The minister informed the Lok Sabha that the government had established 12 pilot transgender shelter homes and financially supported community-based organisations (CBOs). He also mentioned the states of Maharashtra, Delhi, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Tamil Nadu, and Odisha to host these pilot shelters.

Bengaluru: The nation's first house for transgender youngsters in need of care and safety in 2020.. Two government-run children's homes specifically designated for transgender children would be built in Bengaluru Urban, according to the minutes of the supplemental Project Approval Board (PAB) under child protection services. The project received approval from the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Orphans, abandoned children, street children, child labourers, and abused children are among the youngsters who need care and protection.

Original Photo Source: https://www.mensxp.com/lgbt/life/89263-indian-state-governments-with-useful-and-goof-programmes-for-trans-people.html

Job Opportunities:

Karnataka: During the upcoming recruitment in 2022, the Karnataka government has decided to reserve 1% of teaching vacancies for people from the transgender community. The decision was stated in the draft guidelines released by the state Department of Primary and Secondary Education for recruiting 15,000 teachers to various government schools across the state. This is the first time in Karnataka's history that transgender people have been employed in the educational system.

Kerala: In 2019, as part of a new programme, the Social Justice Department and the Kerala State Women's Development Corporation (KSWDC) decided to provide financial aid to transgender people who want to start their businesses. Transgender people can apply for a loan of up to Rs. 3 lakh from KSWDC to start their businesses. Through this effort, transgender people can earn a living and live a regular life like any other person while becoming financially independent. By creating a "Transgender Policy" in 2016, Kerala became the first state in India

to have initiated rightful integration ofthe transgender people into society. As a result, Kochi Metro Rail Limited began hiring members of the trans community.

Assam: The gender options to choose from for the state of Assam's state civil service exam forms now includes "transgender," which was added in October 2020. They were the first state in India to achieve this. As a result, residents of the state's transgender community will now be able to apply for jobs such as state police officers and other civil officials.

Odisha: The Odisha Police Department declared in 2021 that they would begin hiring transgender people for sub-inspectors and constables. They have also welcomed applications for the same.

Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh & Andhra Pradesh: Several social security and pension plans have been implemented by several states over the years for members of the transgender community. It has been observed that states with some sort of welfare board or social security programme will begin focusing on topics like education and employment.

Original Photo Source: https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/featurephilia/story/transgenders-and-employment-in-india-opening-doors-of-opportunities-for-transgenders-1640493-2020-01-27

Conclusion

Although mainstream society is far behind in accepting transgender people as "regular" people, the article brings to light several initiatives undertaken across different parts of India to make the unheard voices heard. A smart city requires more than smart infrastructure to achieve its goals; it also requires a social infrastructure that promotes freedom of movement and work. Gender mainstreaming is the process of taking into consideration the consequences of any planned actions for its citizens, whether they are legislative, policy, or program decisions. As part of the smart cities mission, steps could be taken to make cities friendly for all genders, where people can travel freely, express their ideologies freely, and feed their mouths freely. Without having a proper gender-based framework of development, a city cannot transform into a safe and smart city. The road to living free and equal in a vibrant, equitable and inclusive society is long, but it's better late than never.

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Irene Anna Shaji   Nishant Raj Tonk   Shonit Nayan   Soumya Srivas

6 Women and COVID
The Widening Gender Divide during the Pandemic like a Giant Chasm

COVID-19 has proven to be a deadly virus, affecting lives in multiple unanticipated ways, with women at the center. The lockdown was no less than a giant chasm pushing back gender equality, as the gender divide is once again gaining prominence. Inequitable distribution of domestic chores between men and women, homeschooling, child rearing, work from home, and, to top it all, a lockdown meant that women were doing a lot more work than ever before. The pandemic and the subsequent lockdown have intensified the stigmatization of the role of women in the public sphere and led to the escalation of existing social and economic inequalities amongst genders. A BBC report (1) based on new research by scientists in India studied the infection and infected death percentages from a gendered perspective and highlighted that the number of men getting the virus was higher than women.

Additionally, based on estimations by the researchers, among the COVID-positive patients, 3.3% of infected women die compared to 2.9% of men (1). One of the reasons contributing to this could be that; the women of the house are primary caregivers, taking care of the elderly and sick in the family. When they are sick, they tend to overlook it or try to treat themselves at home while managing other routine chores at the same time. Besides that, women and girls have also battled numerous health and hygiene issues like unsanitary menstrual patterns, respiratory problems from wood smoke, etc. The pandemic has only worsened the situation. Government data (1) shows that female health and hygiene are minor concerns in the family. In a predominantly patriarchal society observed in many parts of India, the head (generally male) of the family is more likely to spend on a male member than a female one. When the resources become limited, the women of the house cut down on their nutritional requirements, as they are naturally wired to sacrifice.

To further aggravate the situation, government aid supporting women from lower-income groups through various schemes was shut down, compromising women's nutrition and health further. For some women, the most dangerous place on Earth became their home. According to a World Health Organization (WHO) report, (2) "One of every three women globally experiences domestic violence or intimate partner violence in her life." The cases of such violence have drastically shot up during the lockdown. There are multiple reasons for such incidents within each section of society, with stress and frustration of men being the common link. The patriarchal societal conditions give unspoken power to men to let out their frustration on women by harming them mentally or physically. The situation worsened during the tough times as the possibility of reaching out for support became complex and challenging. Ashwini Deshpande, Professor of Economics, at Ashoka University, says, "India has some of the worst gender statistics (3) in the developing world."

Gender imparity is a global phenomenon and is not just limited to India. Recent research (4) by economists at Cambridge University found that women are providing roughly 6 hours of child care and homeschooling a day, which is fairly more than their male partners, regardless of their employment status. There is also evidence (2) of more significant anxiety amongst women than men about the lockdown and the pandemic. A recent study (2) found that 61% of women find it harder to stay upbeat (positive) in their daily lives than 47% of men. There is a good reason for this increase in anxiety, as prior to the pandemic employment rate of women of working age reached a record high of 72.4%, including full-time and part-time workers. The impact of COVID-19 on women's work-life and domestic life will be there long after the situation is under control. A survey (4) shows that coming out of this pandemic, women's incomes are expected to fall by 26% compared to 18% for men in the next few months. The impact of this situation on women is grimmer than on men. With pay gaps as large as 35–40% plus salary cuts, it becomes slightly unsustainable for women to earn less, save less and hold on to a less stable job. All of this might reduce the ability of women to absorb the aftershocks of such exceptional times. In some cases, if women lose their jobs and hence fail to contribute to their families, it may lead to tension and conflict, resulting in acts of violence. The lockdown was a break from the routine for most privileged people. More time with family, communicating and studying over video calls, and aimlessly resting. But while enjoying it, we overlooked the pressure and work imposed on the homemaker. The work earlier done by the house helps was done mainly by the women. Besides that, for women, the lockdown was an invasion of their personal time or space, leading to additional emotional and physical exertion.

Experimenting with virtual working, most women are now working from home. I hope businesses can learn from this period and take the best of the virtual and flexible working with them to enable every gender in the future to have a better balance of work and family life equally. We have to rethink the work patterns with gender and flexibility planned now rather than waking up after 5–10 years and realizing that we missed the opportunity to create more gender-neutral workspaces, i.e. every gender getting paid the same for the same job and that both alike can progress through the company either in-office or through technology.

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Rashi Jain

7 A Tale of Women, Traditions and Economy in the Towns and Villages of Himachal Pradesh

Mountains have always been the most sought after tourist places in a tropical country like India. Over the years, tourists from the plains have fled to the mountains during summers to beat the heat and play with snow during winters. However, starkly different narratives lie with the people who stay in the mountains handling the extreme and adverse weather conditions and the tough terrains. Necessities and survival imperatives always led to inventions and innovations. Consequently , people in the mountainous settlements have adapted to the harsh conditions through local innovations that have been practised and evolved as traditions over the years.

For long, like any other place, women in the mountains have been battling the negatives of contemporary practices resulting from ignorance and lack of deeper knowledge. In spite of the difficult and tedious lifestyle that the women in the mountains follow at par with the men, from farming, chopping of woods, and rearing cattle to the inevitable household chores of cooking, looking after children, weaving and so on, women's lives have been for long largely restricted to the indoors.

Amidst the nationwide stories of discrimination against women, in Naggar, a princely town in the lap of the mountainous Himachal Pradesh, a unique story of women empowerment surfaced. A walk through the marketplaces of Naggar and adjoining Himachal villages like Jana has put forward a relatively unfamiliar yet significant story of women empowerment in the quaint Himalayan small cities.

The economy of Naggar, like any Indian mountainous town, largely depends on tourism, and it is a usual scenario to see the faces of men in the tourism business. However, the backbone of the tourism industry in the mountains have always been women. Everyday way of life gives birth to traditions. Traditions followed in a region give rise to culture. The simple traditions of wool weaving, husk weaving, woodworks and so on that form the Himachali culture, are also the products tourists revere that contribute to the economic growth. Bound by these traditional activities within the confines of their houses, women play an important role in flourishing the economy.

Be it the newly emerging homestays providing scrumptious mountain delicacies and traditional hospitality, or the traditional market of woolen garments and local handicrafts, women are the hidden faces in this business of tourism. This article narrates the story of a few women in and around Naggar, who are successfully running their small business ventures and becoming the visible faces.

Kusum Devi
Woolen Handicraft Shop Owner

" Mei soch rahi hu ki agar humhara saman aage neeche tak jaye... ya Mumbai wagera ho"

Coming from her in-laws' house battling the oppositions, Kusum Devi is attaining the heights of entrepreneurial success. Starting alone from her home in Naggar and later joined by nine other women from the village, Kusum Devi has gradually established a well reached out business of local weaving and handicrafts called 'Kulvi Wims'. Not only are her products gradually spreading outside Naggar to places like Bangalore and Mumbai, but she also trains the upcoming generation of women in the traditional art of weaving, helping keep the local culture alive.

Kamla Devi
Woolen Handicraft Shop Owner

" kya sharam hai? paisa kamane mei aur apna haat ka kaam karne mei? kya sharam hai?"

Running her shop of woollen garments and handicrafts for more than 20 years now, Kamla Devi has her shop in a prime location in the local market of Naggar.
Trained in weaving since her childhood days, Kamla Devi has a tremendous passion for weaving which she carried on in spite of the struggles that she faced with her in-laws after marriage. Gradually with her money, she has established her own successful business in Naggar all by herself.

Chandi Devi
House Elder

" Ye toh humhara roj ka kaam hai"

A forever-been housewife, now the elder of the house, Chandi Devi,has sometimes cooked for even 20-30 people who have come to the village to experience the traditional Himachali lifestyle and stayed at her house. With the increasing trends of homestays in the mountains, Chandi Devi along with her daughter-in-law and granddaughter, have served the tourists authentic traditional flavours, all the while staying behind the curtains of the main room.

Sudha Devi
Grocery Store Owner

" Padai sirf job ke liye nahi, knowledge ke bhi to jaroorat hai"

Another leading example of modern day women empowerment is Sudha Devi from the heritage village of Jaana, 12-13 km from Naggar. Pursuing her academic degree in M.Com even after her marriage, she manages her study and the shop for some extra income.

Himachal Pradesh government has been one of the leading state governments in women empowerment with its excellent steps and programs undertaken to empower women. Regardless of these actions, the women in the small towns and villages of Himachal are still bound strictly by traditions. The distinct division of labour amongst the genders has never been a scenario in the rigorous lifestyle of the villages in the mountains. However, a subtle line dividing the indoors and outdoors has always kept the women inside. Until a few years back and even today, they have faced stringent superstitions associated with menstruation. Overcoming all these restraints, a few women in and around Naggar have ventured out beyond the limits of their property boundaries to become women entrepreneurs in their own small ways. The stories of these small achievements just a corner away pave the way for larger success stories of women empowerment.

Note: The study has been done as a part of the academic curriculum at CEPT University, Ahmedabad for Summer Winter School 2018 under Nisha Subramaniam, a doctoral student and part-time faculty with Shrishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology.

Upama Ghosh

8 A Conversation with Self

My words represent millions of human voices that have suffered and been discriminated against; based on their skin colour, visual perception of beauty, body type, the idea of perfectionism and majorly been overlooked by society, making them feel unaccepted, disparate and inferior.

Image 1: Brewster, (Jan - Nov, 2020) Thinking while Black, The Phil Lind Initiative 2020.

The narrative begins 25 years back when a girl was born in an economically middle-class family in the heart of India, Bhopal. Treated as a gem by her family, she grew up believing that everyone around her was caring and

Image 2: Surabhi, Understanding & accommodating the neurodiverse – everyone's responsibility. Encouraging dialog on mental health in India. The Shrinking Couch.

longed for her happiness and well-being. She won a battle by surviving against the odds of having a prematurely complicated beginning, marking her presence in this silly world.

Soon she felt baffled as her illness changed her appearance, making her look dull, dark and skinny, which to her surprise, changed the world's behaviour towards her. Body shaming, mockery, neglect and humiliation became her life's everyday affair. Gradually, she started isolating herself and questioning her existence, thereby inducing self-doubt.

At the age of 11, her negotiations with the society pushed her into the lane of depression, leaving her parents to wonder what was going wrong with her

and their upbringing. This phase of her life significantly impacted her mental health and well-being, which affected her decision-making, often emerging with negative repercussions.

Her health improved within a couple of years, and with her mother's utmost care, she grew up into a beautiful teenager with time; a bold and smart lady. But still, the seeds of insecurity and self-doubt kept her esteem low, making her seek validation for everything she did. She would not trust herself but others who were there to take advantage of her weakness. She thought all this was normal, and this is how life is.

Deciding to move out for her higher studies was a favourable decision, so she chose the farthest option for her freedom. Seeking freedom from thoughts and struggle with self, she was unaware that all this was within her and would accompany her everywhere. But the universe had a plan for her. The alien land embraced and accepted her, showering happiness, blessings and appreciation, which made her a bit expressive about her struggles and emotions. Her notions then were shaken and questioned as she started her journey of knowing herself in that period. She found

Image 3 : The benefits of Meditation

some friends and mentors who were loving and caring and introduced her to the spiritual journey and meditation. She was extremely joyous, helpful and caring for the ones who became a sojourn.

Her good days soon took an accidental turn when the ones she trusted and kept close to her heart used her weakness to take her down as they could no longer dominate her. She was shining like a star whose radiance could not be caged anymore, which made her friends insecure, and they started to demean her character, leaving her alone in her time of need. Their toxic nature made her slump

into severe depression. She tried to hold herself up, motivating her character to move on the positive front. But as she was born a fighter, she changed her context and used all her energy to give herself inner strength.

As they say, what you seek is seeking you; she was seeking inner peace, where she could be herself, care for and love herself whilst understanding her emotions. In the last few months, she came across mentors, self-growth sessions and, most importantly, exploring her

life and relationship with herself and others, strengthening her identity in the life-changing environment of Zainabad. Now he believes in herself, trusts herself and is a powerful individual who never fears stating and expressing her opinion.

Image 4 : Kenneth S. Bordens, Josh R. Gerow, Nancy K. Gerow, Essentials of psychology, 4th Edition.

Becoming self-aware and self-conscious, she is in unison with her core and writing this piece reflecting on how far she has come from the girl who once refused to look in the mirror to the one who loves, adoresand is proud of herself.Grounding her energy by strengthening her esteem, she is one of the warriors now working for mental health and well-being. It's easy for her to relate to people who undergo rough patches in life due to prolonged stress, anxiety and depression because of numerous personal, professional and environmental reasons. She is working in ways to provide a safe

Image 5 Ref : Gohar, Spiritual Master, Writer, Poet, C.E.O & Co-Founder of M.F.I

space to express, where there is no fear of being labelled or judged. Her passion is to create a society, where mental health is acknowledged and the stigma around it is normalised. People can express their feelings and emotions, seek professional help and understand that feeling not okay is okay.

Image 6 Ref : Robbins, (2020 July 31), Ecopsychology : How Immersion in Nature Benefits your health.

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Image 1: Brewster, (Jan - Nov, 2020) Thinking while Black, The Phil Lind Initiative 2020. https://lindinitiative.ubc.ca/series/thinking-while-black/

Image 2: Surabhi, Understanding & accommodating the neurodiverse – everyone's responsibility. Encouraging dialog on mental health in India. The Shrinking Couch. https://www.theshrinkingcouch.com/understanding-accommodating-the-neurodiverse-everyones-responsibility/

Image 3 : The benefits of Meditation
https://in.pinterest.com/pin/322851867022341650/

Image 4 : Kenneth S. Bordens, Josh R. Gerow, Nancy K. Gerow, Essentials of psychology, 4th Edition.
https://books.google.co.in/books/about/Essentials_of_Psychology_Fourth_Edition.html?id=HC7wwQEACAAJ&redir_esc=y

Image 5 Ref : Gohar, Spiritual Master, Writer, Poet, C.E.O & Co-Founder of M.F.I
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Rashi Jain

9 Dream Vs Reality
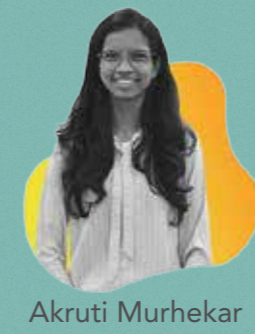

The UN-Habitat Report says that "it is…widely acknowledged that women and girls living in low-income urban contexts are disproportionately affected by safety hazards such as gender-based violence, unstable housing and inadequate sanitation facilities or lighting."

A city should ideally be an inclusive environment where all people can succeed, regardless of gender or ethnicity. Inadequate urban environments make life difficult for everyone, especially affecting women more acutely. It reduces their ability to participate in school, work, and public life. It limits their access to essential services and their enjoyment of cultural and recreational activities, and negatively impacts their health and well-being.

Adequate gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive planning in the provision of services and infrastructure can become an empowering force that enables women and girls to fully enjoy their right to public space including public transportation and promotes gender equality, including equal access to income, education, health care, justice, and political participation and influence.

The following comic throws light on the longingness of working women living in a metropolitan city; her aspiration for a vibrant community, safer public amenities and public transportation etc. But when she wakes up, she waits for the dream day to come true.

Akruti Murhekar   Anshul Rathore   Vignesvar J.

10 The Journey to a Better Future for All Continues...

Climate change impacts people on a daily basis and comes at a high cost to communities worldwide, primarily due to gender differences. Women, girls, and gender minorities face specific, life-threatening consequences following any climate-related disasters (Environment, 2021). Appu and Dadi (grandmother) endure on their journey in this article, conversing on the effects of climate change on various genders and how each gender becomes a vital stakeholder in addressing the issue of climate change with specific climate action.
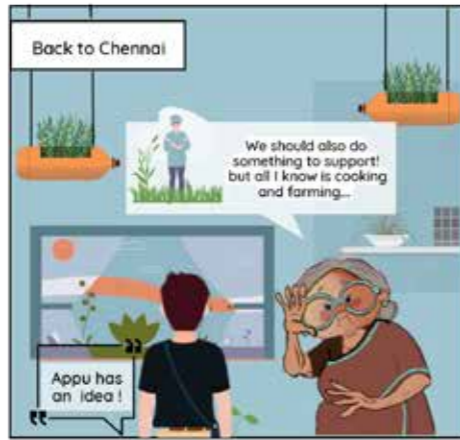
The Human Development Report, 2008 by UNDP indicates climate change is likely to amplify existing patterns of gender disadvantage (Watkins, 2008). The piece would reflect upon how all genders form an integral part of critical decisions on the global scale, the stepping stone of which was the formal recognition of women's rights and empowerment in climate change and gender equality in the COP-21 in Paris in 2015. The adoption of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) at the COP-23 in 2017 bolstered the role of women in climate action and mainstreamed gender in all stages of the Paris Agreement processes, right from negotiations to strategy to reporting (Roy, 2018), marking the next step in this direction (Roy, 2018). Certain notable women activists are doing exceptional work in this field, strengthening the decision to make them a part of key discussions and actions on climate change. One such environmental activist, Sunita Narain, the director-general of the Centre for Science and Environment, India, has worked extensively on climate change,

(tsunami-quarters_08, 2017)

with a specific interest in advocating for an ambitious and equitable global agreement (Bio - Sunita Narain, 2021). To further encourage the role of women, the C40 Mumbai Women4Climate Mentorship Programme was launched in 2020. The programme ties 25 committed women leaders from the business sector, international organizations, and community organizations to support them to become expert influencers, while inspiring others to join them in their efforts to accelerate climate action (Women4Climate Mumbai, 2020).

LGBTQIA+ individuals, who are socially marginalized, are hidden victims of climate change to a broader extent because of lack of adequate access to assets, resources and information compared to the general population (As per the transgender persons (Protection of Rights) Bill 2019, discrimination against a transgender person, including unfair treatment or denial of service in relation to employment, education, healthcare, access to public goods

and facilities, etc. is prohibited.) For instance, the lack of access is mostly due to familial conflict, social stigma, and a lack of opportunities and support due to exclusion from mainstream social networks. All of these factors affect their resilience and make them less equipped to handle environmental catastrophes, thereby putting them at the risk of poverty and homelessness. In the end, the unemployment rate in transgender people being three times higher than that of the general population (Behal, 2021). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) findings also state that the severe impacts of climate change will be faced by those who are already the most vulnerable and marginalized (Behal, 2021).

In Indian organizations like the Sahodari Foundation, established by Kalki Subramaniam, an activist from the transgender community in India, works for the welfare of transgender people, saw the need for the community to take part in the climate change discourse, and also

had plans to educate them by conducting awareness sessions and workshops regarding the same (Menon, 2022). A series of capacity-building workshops for LGBTQIA+ members led by the Mumbai-based Humsafar Trust and TRANScend were conducted to understand, engage and facilitate climate action at local, national and international levels under the umbrella Queers for Climate Action (QCA), starting from January 29, 2022 (Sadler, 2022).

Appu and Dadi share their day-to-day stories of progress that played an adequate part in building the inclusive outlook of awareness, connection, empathy and mutual respect. In conclusion, they realise the need for providing LGBTQIA+ community with means and channels of financial empowerment to ensure equitable access to the same asset, resources and information as the general population. All of these, in turn, illustrate the importance in acknowledging the connections between climate change and gender, thereby, strengthening the

resilience of gender minority groups by ensuring their involvement in significant climate change decisions and actions.

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Kaustubh Mirajkar   Ojaswini Bansal   Sarayu Madhiyazhagan

11 Queens Residency

"Imagine a bold plan for a world without discrimination, in which women and men are equal partners in shaping their societies and lives, let's picture It!"

- Nicole Kidman

Hello everyone, it is a sunny day, and I am sitting in the office with my colleagues. During our tea break, we had an informal discussion on random topics, and I learned about the Queens Residency. We recently came to Kochi for work and are looking for options for extended stays. Queen's residency (working women's accommodation), where my two office colleagues, Irene and Soumya, choose to stay because it is just five minutes from the office. According to the Cambridge dictionary, Queen is a woman who rules a country because she has been born into a family, which by tradition or law has the right to rule, or the title was given to such a woman who is considered the best at what she does. In chess, the Queen is the most powerful piece on the board.

Ironically, Queens Residency represents our so-called "non-conservative" societies that talk about freedom and equality but have "terms and conditions" attached. The gate closes at 7:00 pm, after which no queen is allowed to go out or come in; also, if any queen wants to eat outside, she should order it before seven because gates shut after that. They also cannot charge their electronic gadgets in their room. In addition, if anyone wants to cook for themselves, they cannot because they are not allowed to. Along with all these facilities, queens are getting Z-level security by installing more than 10 CCTVs inside the premises. On the other hand, an ordinary civilian like me, who is earning the same salary, is not getting similar facilities as they have, like I can go out or come in at any time of the day and night. Order food online anytime, and I can even charge my EV vehicle if I have one and can cook for myself if I want to. After discussing all this, we could not conclude because the queens had to rush back to their residency, as it was 6:30 pm already, and the queens were returning to their premises before time.

Nishant Raj Tonk

12 Mundane

The first ray of light fell on Vedant's face as he struggled to open his eyes. Squinting through the blur, he saw the burgundy fan spinning its way to glory, even after ten years. It's Monday again! The same old week, the same old faces, the same old life, everything the same. With great enthusiasm, he picked himself up, defying gravity and his dislike for his monotonous life in the last two decades. Picking up his spectacles, he slid his slippers and approached the washroom when the cooker's whistle blew. Vedant knew Seema was making Dal Fry for him again. There existed a typical aroma of Monday mornings, he realised, Dal fry mixed with his Monday blues. Can things ever change at 45, he wondered?

His revolutionary thoughts were broken by Seema's announcement of breakfast getting ready. He hurriedly finished his morning routine and got into his striped blue shirt.

On the breakfast table, while he extended his hand towards the Gobi parathas, Seema instructed Vedant to drop Ruchi, their 13-year-old daughter, off at school. Suddenly a bout of protest rose from both ends. Well, which teenager would like their father to drop them off at school, and for Vedant, he usually avoided returning to the place he had spent 13 years of his formative life. Some corners of the hallowed institution pull him back to the self he had been repressing for his entire adult life. But who could argue with Seema? So, the Rawals gave up their protest and succumbed to the wishes of the boss lady around.

The car ride from the quarters to the school was more silent than the dead of the night. As the red Alto crossed the stone arch of the centennial school, Vedant's heart skipped a beat. He turned right towards the portico and pressed the brake when they reached under it. Ruchi flung open the door and nonchalantly moved towards the main entrance. Vedant raised his right hand to wave goodbye in vain. She had already disappeared among the youngsters in gray and white. His eyes swayed to the old stairs leading

up to the classrooms and back again on the matt black steering wheel, silently reminding him of being late for work. Vedant regained himself from the time wrap and turned the key in to move towards his office.

From a distance, the twenty-five-storey grand gray building looked like the tower of Sauron. Vedant is constantly amazed by the grandiosity even after twenty-five years of coming here five days a week, sometimes six. He parked his red Alto in his fixed parking space and paced towards the elevator. He pressed the button thrice, hoping it might speed up the elevator's descent. He reached the fifteenth floor in the next couple of minutes. As soon as the elevator opened, he saw Pandey pacing. Pandey came towards Vedant, informing him about the new director and his wish to see them speed up with all the projects. Vedant hurriedly kept his bag in his cabin and moved towards the director's cabin. As soon as he opened the door, he immediately recognised the face of his new boss. It is his old classmate from school, Vikram Bhattacharya. He still had an athletic body with slick back hair. The only change was his salt-and-pepper look, rimless glasses, and French-cut beard.

"Hey, Good Morning, guys! I have been told that I will be brought up to speed by the gunslingers of the firm," Vikram quipped.

"Sure, sir," responded Vedant. "Come on, give up with this sir culture already. Call me Vikram". Vedant sheepishly replied, "Sure, Vikram," and began giving the project details.

Throughout the time, Vedant had one more thing running through his head, "Does he not recognise me?". The update meeting went on for the next three hours, and finally, the three men gave in to their exhaustion.

"Okay, gentlemen, I am officially a bad student. I dazed out after two and half hours; we will continue this some other day," Vikram said, laughing his heart out. He added, "till then, I will continue reading the files you so generously gave me as a welcome gift," and asked us to proceed with our day's work.

Listening to him, both Vedant and Pandey stood up and started walking towards the door. "Oh, Vedant, if you could just stay back," Vikram said, looking back at his laptop screen. Pandey closed the door on his way out.

"Yes Vikram?"

"Do you think I have forgotten you?" Vikram asked, moving his eye towards Vedant's face.

"I am not sure how to respond to this, Vikram. I surely hope so," said Vedant, his throat turned dry as the Thar.

"I remember you well" "It would be really good to catch up after so many years. Would you like to go out tonight for dinner?"

"I will have to check that with my family, Vikram. They had some plans today."

"Well, no pressure. If you decide to come, I will be at Mocambo at 7. The seat by the window".

Vedant turned towards the door to go out. He again was pulled back in time. Twice a day, he thought, why was this Monday not mundane? Back in his cabin, he leaned against the swivel chair. His heart beat racing, lips dried with shortness of breath. He had a panic attack. He ran towards the washroom and splashed some water on his face. The water calmed him down a bit. Now, what to do? A dinner with an old classmate, that's what it is. Why is he getting anxious? Vedant's mind jumped across these questions. Finally, he decided to let time roll the dice.

Vedant picked up his phone to call Seema. "Hey, I am going out with a colleague for dinner. I will be late. You go ahead and have your dinner today," said Vedant, "Okay. Let me know once you leave for home," came the response from the other side. He disconnected the call and moved towards his car. He unlocked the car, pulled the handle to open the door, and stood there questioning his decision.

In the next moment, he shunned it all away and moved towards Mocambo. He parked his car in Free School Street and walked towards the heritage continental restaurant. Outside the gate stood a concierge. "There is a reservation for two in the name of Vikram Bhattacharya," said Vedant. The concierge led him halfway through the restaurant when he could see Vikram looking outside the window in anticipation. His glasses reflected the neon lights of the shops opposite Mocambo. "Hi" Vedant moved up to the table and smiled.

"Wow! Hi! I was honestly not expecting you," Vikram responded, standing up to hug his old classmate

quickly. "So, no trust in me, boss?" chuckled Vedant. "No, it's not that. Just that you mentioned your family had some plans. Hope it was not an inconvenience?".

"Not at all. So how are things with you?" Vikram responded while making himself comfortable in the 100-year-old remodeled chairs. "It is going great with me. I took a transfer from the London office and joined the Calcutta office today. Rest. I hope I don't have to mention the three hours lecture you gave me on my first day," laughed Vikram.

"Yet you came back for more post office hours. Anyway, how is Prachi and the kids?"

"Hopefully, they are doing well in their heavenly abode. They fought bravely, but I lost them to COVID last year." Vikram took out the handkerchief and wiped the sweat off his forehead. Vedant could not help but notice Vikram sweating profusely in a room where the temperature was hitting the lower end of the thermometer.

"I am sorry, Vikram. I had no idea you were going through this. Why didn't you try to contact me earlier".

"I did not know how to face you, Vedant. I spent the last year thinking, why is this happening to me? Trust me; I had no answer except for self-loathing. I thought of contacting you many times over the years, and especially when everything turned upside down, I just did not know how to."
Vikram removed his glasses to wipe his tears before they took their form. The waiter came in to take their order. "Two prawn cocktails, please," both said in unison and smiled slyly.

"Let bygones be bygones. I have a family now." Vikram said, suppressing a lot in his mind.

"Vedant, I could never be free. You knew that day I wanted to run away from my marriage and come to you, but I could not muster the courage to go against

father. I have been running away from myself ever since, and, finally today, I stand here in front of you standing and not running" Vikram extended his hand to put it on Vedant's hand. Vedant retracted, "you thought I would be free in this city? You left for the USA with your newly-wed wife and left me waiting here, without any direction or anything to look forward to; my existence became null and void".

"You know Vikram, the reason I fell in love with this city was you and you are the reason I started loathing it. I never left because I wanted to find a new reason to fall in love with it. Spoiler alert, I never could!",

"I know what you must be going through but our society back then would have never accepted us and neither did I have the courage or the knowledge to fight against it. Now we can. This country has changed for the better. People are accepting us. We can be together now" responded Vedant with hope in his eyes.
Vedant smiled and replied, "You are right Vikram; the country has

indeed changed for the better. We no longer have 377 and the generation today is freer than us. Although, there is a lot to change but we are moving towards the better" Vikram nodded in agreement.

"But you know, my freedom will come from the fact when I will be able to accept my current life. The life I am a part of for the last two decades and have not been fully involved. The society did not crush me, you did, and I have thought several times of discussing this with you. Just never knew which way it might go and I am glad I chose the freedom in my mind than the one you think is justified for me."

The prawn cocktails had been served on the table, but Vedant decided to leave it as it is. Outside the white doors of Mocambo, a common man paced towards his car with a tear rolling down. As he reached his car, he looked back at a Monday which was not at all mundane. Life had indeed come a full circle. Twenty-Five years ago, he kept waiting for his lover from school in the same seat by the window with two prawn cocktails. The

wait was over today, not really though. As Vedant stretched his seat belt and turned on the car, he heard a tap on the glass. A small kid selling the national flag smiled, "Happy Independence Day, Sir." Vedant smiled and replied, "Indeed!"
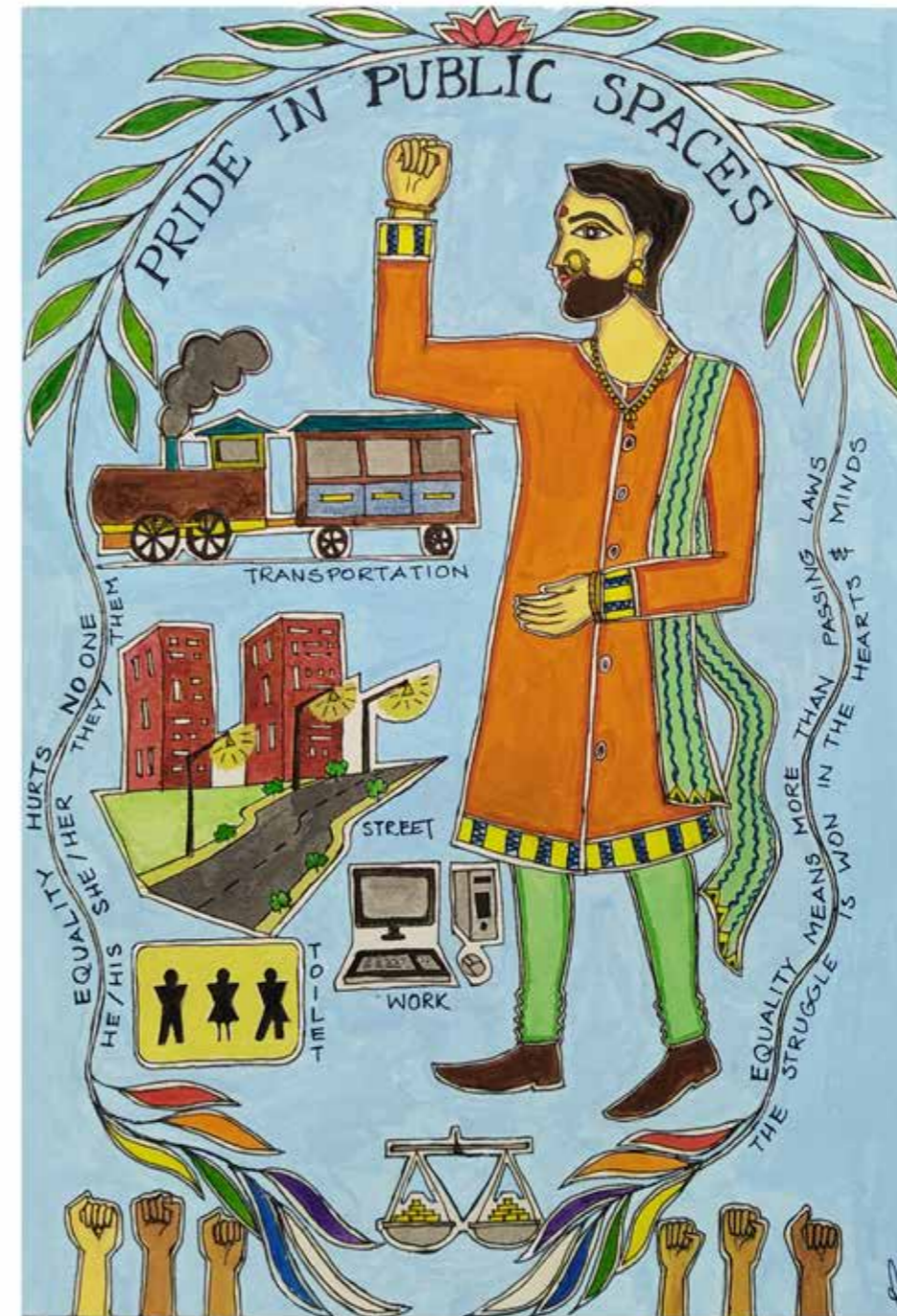
Abhishek
Chatterjee

13 Pride in Public Spaces

LGBTQIA+ Pride is an integral cultural concept for promoting self-affirmation, equality, dignity, and increased visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) people as a social group. It represents collectivity, social identity as well as resistance to discrimination and violence. Its associated symbolism (the pride flag with rainbow colours) communicates to individuals and society that LGBTQIA+ members are welcome as valuable members of the community (UCSF, n.d.).

LGBTQIA+ people are often invisible and are subjected to a lot of violence, both in public and private spaces and in many cases, their right to enjoy urban spaces is not even thought about. Some of the significant initiatives of inclusion of Pride in Public Spaces can be seen in Brazil's Draft Law on Public Access Bathrooms for trans people and transvestites. The initiative aims to address the symbolic and physical violence represented by gender toilets (Sarah Gamrani, 2021). Another example is the South Bank in London, which features

public artworks, artistic lighting and decorative street furniture, such as rainbow crossings, as indicative of inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people (Pippa Catterall, 2021). Other initiatives include LGBTQIA+ Citizenship Centres, public facilities where legal, social and psychological services are offered to the people from the community, and to acting as a spur by promoting public policies to combat homophobia, transphobia and promote LGBTQIA+ citizenship. In terms of street design and planning, the greenery and lighting could be a mechanism to break up the spaces, the sight lines and provide more privacy for the pride in public spaces. The representation of queer heritage through statues, memorials, plaques, and street and building names would emphasize the community's existence. Thus, the changes in design and planning processes will make cities and neighbourhoods feel more accessible, diverse and inclusive for LGBTQIA+ (Sarah Gamrani, 2021).

To establish professionalism, respect, diversity, dignity and equality in public spaces for the community, we as urban designers and planners need

to integrate inclusive and safe spaces for the community. In the artwork which is inspired by the paintings of Jaimini Roy, I have tried to highlight the different facets as examples where Pride can potentially generate an inclusive, equal, diverse and safe environment. The human figure represents the LGBTQIA+ community standing for their rights. Their reservation in public transportation like railway compartments is necessary; they are often marginalized in the general reservation and abused in the female reservations. The community requires provisions for their identity and recognition in public spaces like toilets and transportation. They also need equal opportunity for job recruitment, representation in job applications, work benefits, and salary. The incorporation of proper street lighting will provide a sense of safety for the community and prevent crime due to dark spots. The overarching umbrella of the tree shows the different avenues of public spaces, which requires representation of the community. The rainbow coloured leaves symbolise the pride flag which represents hope in many cultures and

the promise of better times to come (Vince, 2020). . The arm and the fist of people show the city's skyline , people and their rights. The quotes and the pronouns represent the equal rights, recognition and their inclusion through the gender-neutral and inclusive pronouns.

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Satarupa Roy

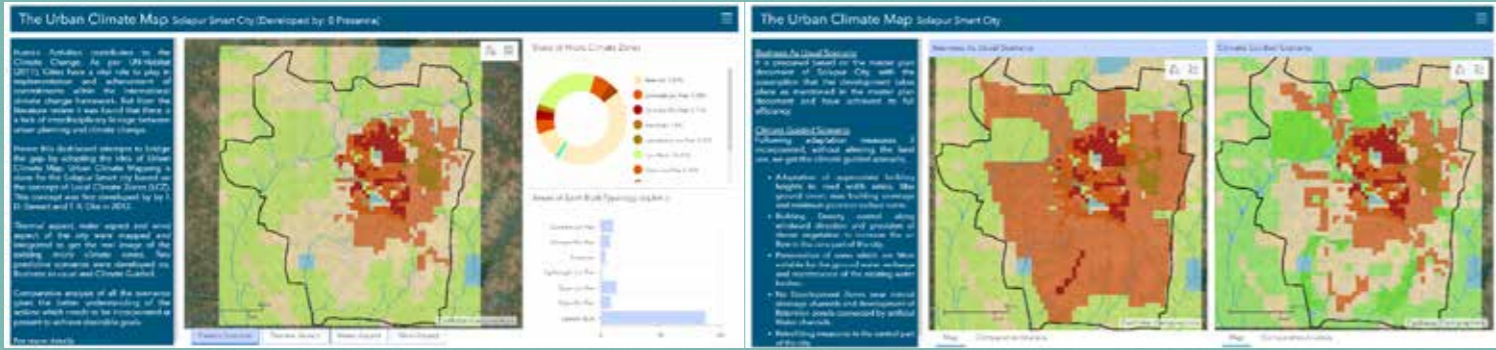## 14 The Urban Climate Map, Solapur Smart City

Image 1: Landing page of the dashboard developed (Source: Author)

Image 2: Comparative study of the maps prepared (Source: Author)

The dashboard can be found here- https://iuo.mohua.gov.in/portal/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/375ab779b9a84a5b8adee7517e5383cc

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and the Smart Cities Mission organized an Urban Geospatial Data Stories Challenge 2022, intending to find innovative solutions to India's pressing urban issues by combining geospatial technology, analytics and open innovation. Participants were required to submit their proposals in the form of interactive visualizations, informative story maps, and dashboards, along with a detailed report covering all the aspects of the proposed solution. Thus, creating an opportunity for individuals to co-create visionary narratives of a future urban India. When I came across this competition, being an urban planner and an architect, I decided to work on a

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When I came across this competition, being an urban planner and an architect, I decided to work on a proposal that could help city planners

integrate climate change with city planning for improved and effective decision making. Previously, at Malviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur, my dissertation study was on urban planning interventions to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Once I registered for the event, other participants and I were given access to a large data pool;Dataspace Ecosystem, consisting of multiple downloadable datasets across sectors and cities. In addition to the datasets available, we were also allowed to use diverse data viz. remote sensing data, IoT sensor data, crowdsourced data, open data, etc. from various credible sources. Based on my past experiences and the available data set, I started working on this idea. The

systematic process of Ingest, Blend, Ideate and Transform explained in the challenge helped me to convert my thesis idea into a viable product. For development of my project, I started by mapping the microclimate zones of Solapur city on Geographic Information System (GIS) software. Two scenarios were projected for this study purpose; the first one was 'Business as Usual' and the second one was 'Climate Guided' scenario. After that, I developed the dashboard for which I used the Environmental Systems Research Institute's (ESRI) GIS platform to host it. The main objective of this dashboard is to help mitigate the climate change impacts at micro level in the city. Image 01 shows the landing page of the dashboard developed, and Image 02 shows the comparative study of the maps prepared.

About 900 participants registered for this challenge all across India. The final evaluation of the submission was done by a panel of experts from the geospatial community, comprising members of academia, industry partners, think-tanks, etc. based on novelty, feasibility, sustainability, scalability, and impact of the submission. When results were declared, I found that I stood first in this challenge and was invited for felicitation at the 'Smart Cities Smart Urbanisation Conference' organised by MoHUA, which was scheduled to be held in Surat from 18th to 20th April 2022. I was honoured to receive this award from Shri Kunal Kumar, Joint Secretary and Mission Director of the Smart Cities Mission.

This was the first time I participated in a national-level challenge and witnessed the development of an actual product from just an idea. What made the event more special was that my mother accompanied me on the stage while I was being felicitated. I sincerely thank the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the Smart Cities Mission for conducting such a challenge. I would also like to thank the National Institute of Urban Affairs and the India Smart Cities Fellowship Programme for creating an environment where I could channelize my ideas and efforts in the proper direction.

Image 3 :Author receiving award along with his mother from Joint Secretary and Mission Director of the Smart Cities Mission
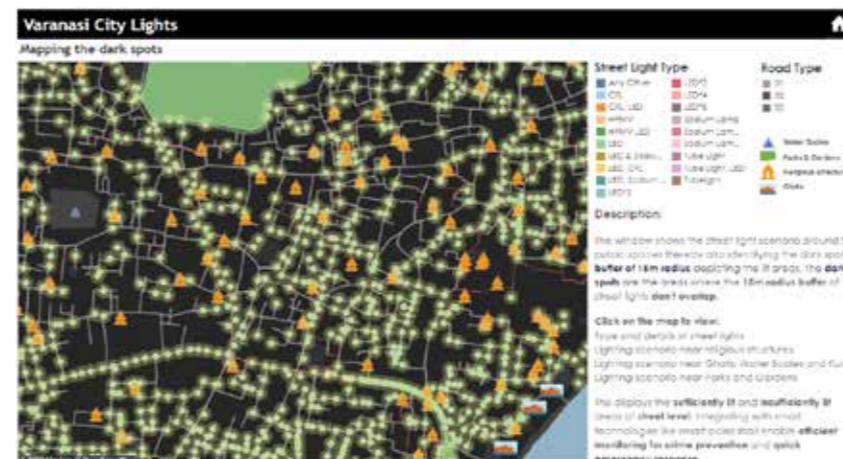
Prasanna Bhangdia

15 Street Lights and Women Safety: City's role in making its women feel safer

A safe city creates an attractive social and economic environment for its residents. Moreover, augmenting safety and security leads to smart growth and proper utilisation of public spaces. The sense of being unsafe in Indian cities is not only attributed to the number of reported crimes, but also the process of severe discomfort that changes the perception of Safety in Urban Public Spaces. (The Enabling of Safe public spaces in Delhi, 2017). According to the theory of CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design), tactical design and effective use of the built environment can reduce the incidence and fear of crime. One of the major components of the built environment that contributes to CPTED are the street lights. Cities have taken various initiatives to identify dark spots which are more prone to the incidents of crimes. Multiple reports show that well-lit public spaces have more accessibility and a sense of safety for the citizens, particularly women and vulnerable groups. While safety is all-inclusive, women have been predisposed to feeling unsafe in their daily lives. Thus, Team Urbane (Upama Ghosh, Satarupa Roy, Priyanshu Raj and Kastury Biswas) from ISCFP proposed a solution for the Urban Geospatial Data Stories Challenge 2022, enabling city administrators to enhance their monitoring in terms of the safety and security of a city, while assisting women and other alike in ensuring their safety during their commutes outside the safe confines of their houses. The team proposed a dashboard; 'Citylights,' that operates on spatial recommendations using the geo-location of streetlights, promoting inclusivity and walkability, reducing the crime rate and consequently boosting local economic opportunities among all genders. The dashboard uses data such as the streetlights, the road network, places of public importance, and significant footfall to analyse and display the dark spots within the city. Additionally, the dashboard gives a ward-level analysis of the lighting conditions of the city based on the density of street lights, helping the city administrators to identify places of intervention for new street lights and continuously monitor the status and condition of the existing street lights. Furthermore, the dashboard will help the citizens, especially women, in their decision-making for daily commute routes as per the presence of the dark spots.

The dashboard incorporates the data of road network, distribution of street lights, public places and respective footfalls to analyse the dark spots across the city which will eventually provide a ward wise comparative analysis of illuminance level. City of Varanasi, a hub of tourism and culture, was chosen for developing the dashboard as pilot city on the basis of sufficient street light density in the core city. However, the peripheral areas lacked the same. Major tourist spots like temples, ghats in the city are sufficiently lit while other public places which have lesser tourism potential and lower footfall are moderately or insufficiently lit. More accuracy in the analysis can be ensured by more datasets on existing street light conditions which on integration with a feedback mechanism involving citizens and administrative bodies will provide a comprehensive platform to identify the places of interventions for monitoring, maintaining and decision making.

This system will enhance the ease of movement especially for women and help in their daily commute route choices avoiding the dark spots. Improving the illumination in the city will not only ensure inclusivity of all genders in every part of the city to a certain level but will also boost the morale of people especially women that their city has their back and they have the freedom to access every public space.

Kastury Biswas   Upama Ghosh   Satarupa Roy

16 Post-disaster Climate Responsive Indigenous and Local Construction Systems of North Gujarat, India

Image 1 :Pakkha dwellings, Dhragawandh, Kutch
(Documented by First Author)

With my journey in architecture, urban design, and the diverse nature of cross-disciplinary engagements in academia and grassroots-level civil society organizations, I have been actively disseminating my field experiences with local communities through published research work. One of the recent publications includes my work with Hunnarshala Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation in Bhuj, where we worked in the North Gujarat region of Kutch with local communities exploring and evolving sustainable habitats in a participatory manner under various local and national government rehabilitation and housing schemes.

This research explores and reflects upon the sustainable indigenous and local construction systems and practices of the North Gujarat region of Kutch. These have emerged even more strongly post-earthquake in 2001 as a result of collaborative, participatory processes between local communities, master artisans, and community-centric local developmental organizations ,which have been fundamental to the co-creation and ecologically sensitive process developmental trajectory of the region. This has been instrumental in re-establishing nature's economy and the sustenance economy of the local communities in a deep synergy with the vivid and rich ecological diversity of the region. It engages with diverse geographical and climatic settings and the critical regional architectural and construction systems which have evolved with the local materials resulting in minimal ecological impact, making them invariably resilient to prevailing climatic vulnerabilities. This entails detailed analytical narratives of Pakkha dwellings, Bhungas, and Gujarati Stone houses. It reflects upon the construction systems at multiple scales, from building elements and morphological type to the details as evolved by the communities' representatives of their aspirations and identities. There is a high degree of emphasis on the reuse and recycling of the existing and reclaimed construction materials making it an exemplary model for ecological sensitivity of the highest order in an ontological manner rooted in the community values. This would also narrate the unique 'ways of living', world-views, and the synthesis of form as a deep culturally embedded, and rooted process in a continuous dialogue with the geographical context. It brings about a shift in the conventional architectural operational modes of the contemporary times towards a system that grows bottom-up and strengthens the idea of commoning at multiple scales and in various forms. At the functional scale, this study describes unique construction elements like shallow domes as a roofing system, debris blocks as a walling system for the informal marginalized settlements, mud rolls, and fly ash lime rolls as a roof insulation system.

Finally, the research brings about the notion of India as a land comprising diverse cultures, languages, and identities, and a variety of topographical conditions, climate conditions, and enormously rich micro-contextual histories. Expressing this regional identity in architecture is critical as it helps develop and sustain traditional wisdom, ensuring human comfort and balanced, sustainable development. This study concludes with the manner in which sustainable living systems, local construction technology, and building materials support the ecosystem of a place and result in diverse contextual morphological responses. It gives an actionable process of engagement comprising; an understanding of the local building practices, building materials, and its interface with the urban form at the planning scale.

Nikhil Sanjay Shah

17 **Off to the field**

Fostering the idea of work-life balance and having fun alongside work, the smart cities fellowship program hosted multiple informal events to encourage peer participation and build up healthy relationships amongst all by knowing everyone's strengths.One such event hosted by the informal engagement team was the "FPL"; the Fellowship Premier League. The FPL began with an auction event where four teams were formed namely;Courageous Centaurs, Dominant Dragons, Headstrong Hippogriffs and Proud Pegasus, followed by organising cricket matches amongst them.Cricket being benchmarked or usually perceived as a men's game makes women hesitant to engage with it. The fear of not playing up to the expectation and then being in the public eye based on the perception of masculinity attached to the sport or not being taken seriously discourages even more females from enjoying this game. So, as a first step to show our stand against this social stigma due to which women never got

their share in sports, the cohort of 2021-22 played a series equal in its structure and with an open mind. Gender was not kept as a criterion during the formation of teams for the same reason. As a result, many girls who were hesitant at the beginning of the series turned out to be strong players the opponents were terrified to face. Many others reignited their liking for such sports activities, wondering what made them move away from it in the first place, not realising it was society's unfair attitude. The realisations also led to much thought-provoking discussions, which inspired the cohort to make a fundamental shift in varied dimensions of gender and the city while making the smart cities as inclusive. As much as we have to break this bubble of masculine identity attached to many sports that have become a commonplace association in many ways, we cannot ignore the steps already taken to break and bring about a shift in these biases. Due to various people's struggles, women's cricket nowadays is more mainstream, attention has been given to the pay gap, and

other changes have been made to increase gender balance. For example, enhanced training facilities, increased exposure and inclusive tournaments have curbed the struggles of many female players; Shafali Verma had to disguise herself as a boy to get trained due to the absence of an academy for female players. Similarly, Mithali Raj faced many challenges as basic provisions that a sports person gets to play were not available back then for females. Apart from such small changes in our system, the fellowship has given us an opportunity to explore various avenues in the work culture itself by delivering a relatively flexible structure that led us to think beyond and gave ourselves a space to bring into practice our ideology about gender inclusivity.

Ojaswini Bansal

18 A bolt from the blue!

India Smart Cities Fellowship Program is an excellent platform to have first-hand experience in tackling the ongoing urban issues in the smart cities in India. Along with this, I was fortunate enough to participate in various ministerial activities like Open Data Week and a few others. Open Data Week focused on the importance of data-driven governance and informing the citizens of the city's efforts about the same through various outreach strategies like print media and social media. The event was divided into two parts where the former required the city officials to upload all the datasets and data stories of the city pertaining to the predefined urban development sectors as specified on the smart cities open data portal. The latter was a one-day event, open data day. Participating in the event enabled me to access all the information of hundred smart cities related to urban development from one single platform and utilise it for my fellowship assignments. For the latter part of open data day, the cities organised an event and invited various stakeholders such as academia, NGOs, officials from an authority, and field practitioners, making them aware of the city's initiatives for data-driven governance. The event helped me hone my communication skills and networking. The motive behind it was to act as a point of contact for the nodal officers and city data officers of twenty-five smart cities to coordinate and encourage them to participate in the event with total efficiency. I played a crucial role in suggesting suitable ideas for the cities to carry out productive open data day- for instance, conducting hackathons, expert talks or webinars to have a fruitful result of the data day, thereby developing my ability to spontaneously resolve queries that came up to all the cities. I was also handed the responsibility of creating a repository of social media posts for all the hundred cities as it formed another aspect for evaluation which helped me to understand active cities on social media through their social media handles- for the outreach parameter of the fellowship projects. Along with this event, I was also selected to participate in other activities like ICCC city page creation, wherein I incorporated the concerned information of twelve cities given by the city officials and updated the smart cities website; which helped me learn the current use-cases in multiple smart cities and to further shortlist a city for the fellowship project to be implemented based on the sector of use-case active in the city. I was also involved in testing a chatbot developed for the smart cities mission. It provided detailed information about the mission, its various initiatives and the ongoing efforts to enlighten the citizens. I had to interact with the bot by interrogating it thoroughly and identifying if there were any shortcomings and reporting it to the concerned personnel. Thus, educating myself about the Smart Cities Mission as a whole. These unexpected experiences have been catalytic for all-rounded learning as an individual, aiding me in my personal growth.

Kaustubh Mirajkar

Srinidhi Ravishankar

Two years as an India Smart Cities Fellow have helped me progress rapidly in a challenging but flexible, fulfilling, and meaningful environment. I got the opportunity to team up with like-minded fellows to channel my ideas and knowledge into developing innovative solutions that address most pressing challenges pertinent to Indian cities. Being a part of the ecosystem, I benefited from national and international exposures to further shape the project and successfully implement it. It further enabled me to build professional and personal relationships with stakeholders across civil society, business and government institutions over the course of two years. Just as importantly, I am glad to have been a part of a diverse and exceptional group of fellows committed towards sustainable urban development.

Rohitaash Debsharma

India Smart Cities Fellowship Program was my first ever fellowship. I feel grateful enough to have been a part of it. This fellowship cuts straight down to what contemporary Indian cities need today. The ideation phase of the fellowship helped me develop an entrepreneurial mindset to create an innovative product. I had the opportunity to work on a smart heritage & tourism project with the Varanasi Smart City Limited. The management helped me execute the entire project life cycle over 24 months. The guidance and support from the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) and the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) has helped me throughout my fellowship to understand the exigent urban challenges and address them in a holistic manner. They gave me many opportunities to showcase my knowledge and skills. Alongside my fellowship project, I got a chance to work as a coordinating member at 'India Cycles4change Challenge', 'Streets for People', 'Transport for All' & 'Placemaking Marathon' initiatives in collaboration with the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) India Programme & World Resources Institute (WRI) India, giving me an excellent opportunity to network with a diverse range of subject matter experts as well as various dynamic and pioneering IAS officers of our nation. From managing people and projects to holding diplomatic conversations with high-level officials, this fellowship gave me an experience of all that's required to work with the Government of India.

Abhisikha Das

ISCFP offers to dive into your core rationalism and subsequently develop what you believe in. It gives you a platform to share your ideas and arrive at solutions for emerging problems in the urban landscape. In my journey through the fellowship, I always was keen on taking up opportunities to explore beyond my subject matter and formal training. I have always felt responsible for my actions, and as being a part of the government institution, the responsibility becomes heavier considering its societal impact. I was determined to contribute to sectors that were not core for the ULBs, like education and health which were equally important as revenue or building infrastructure. During my fellowship journey, I would say I have won with people collectively- you can't win alone; you need to collaborate. Working with colleagues from diverse disciplinary training , we initiated the WIN Programme to track the SARS COV 2 virus in wastewater, - trying to create an ecosystem of health surveillance along with our ongoing fellowship project. This was only possible because NIUA and MoHUA encouraged and supported our ideas to flourish and shape under their adept guidance.

Reach out to us

🐦 iscf_goi

f isfc.goi

📷 iscfp_mohua

in ISCFP MoHUA

✉ iscfp@niua.org

🌐 https://smartnet.niua.org/iscfip/