

**Master Design**



**Manushi Khatlawala**



Design and Layouting:  
**Manushi Khatlawala**



This thesis is dedicated to all the women  
who made me who I am today.



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Master Design



Manushi Khatlawala

Part 1

# Research Thesis

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# Trigger Warning

Exploring community-driven design approaches to leverage preventive interventions contributing to the reduction of sexual harassment in Western India.

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MA Research Thesis  
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Master of Arts in Design: Master Design

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# Affidavit



I hereby solemnly declare that I have independently prepared this final year thesis. Ideas directly or indirectly taken from outside sources are indicated as such.

The work has not previously been presented to another examination authority nor otherwise published in the same or similar form. When writing the thesis, I used the AI-powered writing tools Grammarly and Claude to optimize text, grammar, and manage citations. The program “Zotero” helped me to keep my citations and references organized. This work has not been submitted in the same or a similar form to any other examining authority, nor has it been published.

Lucerne, Switzerland  
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# Abstract

This thesis investigates the socio-cultural determinants of sexual harassment in India and develops a framework for future community-based design interventions to create safer environments for women. Through a transdisciplinary approach combining Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) methodology, primary research (interviews and workshops), secondary data analysis, and case study examination, this study identifies key contributing factors, including socio-economic conditions, patriarchal structures, cultural norms, and media influence, particularly Bollywood's role in perpetuating gender stereotypes.

The research reveals how deeply embedded cultural practices and power structures facilitate sexual harassment while simultaneously identifying cultural resources that can be leveraged for positive change. By analysing successful interventions through detailed case studies, this thesis demonstrates that effective solutions must be contextually grounded, culturally sensitive, and community-driven rather than imposed from external frameworks.

***Keywords***

Sexual Harassment in India, Community-based design, social transformation, Social design, Localization for social change

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Last but not least, a special thanks to my parents, brother and partner for their constant support throughout.



# List of Abbreviations

**IPV** - Intimate Partner Violence

**SSA** - Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

**GBV** - Gender-Based Violence

**GBE** - Ghya Bharari Ekatra

**VAW** - Violence Against Women

**CBPR** - Community-Based Participatory Research

**NGOs**- Non-Government Organization

**LGBTQIA+** - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual

**PSAs**- Public Service Announcements

**UN Women** – United Nations Women

**MCSU**- Shree Maharani Chimnabai Stree Udyogalaya

**SNEHA** – Society for Nutrition, Education & Health Action

**CSA** - Child Sexual Abuse





# 1. Introduction

**Although sexual harassment and abuse are widespread problems in many regions of the world, their resulting manifestations, cultural frameworks, and potential solutions are greatly influenced by local systems, religions, traditions, and power structures. Ancient cultural customs, fast urbanization, and changing gender roles combine to create a complex environment in India, where sexual violence cases have drawn attention from around the world. This calls for locally tailored interventions.**



### **The problem**

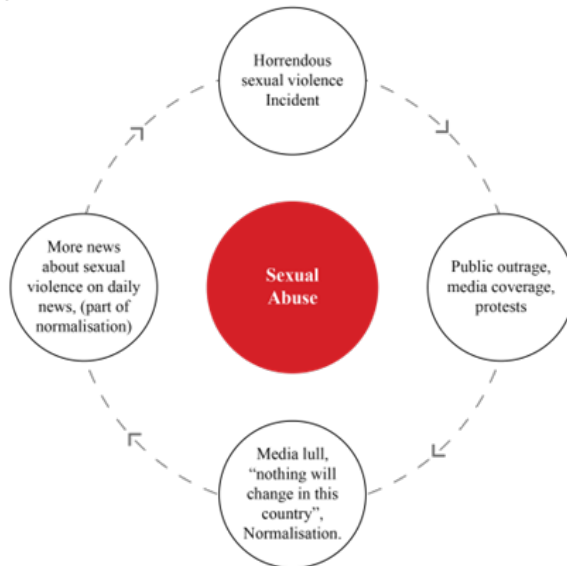
Sexual abuse remains one of the most deeply rooted forms of violence in India, cutting across lines of age, caste, religion, and socioeconomic status. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB, 2021), India reported 28,046 rape cases in 2020 (J K et al., 2022). Additionally, as of 2021, it is noted that a woman in India is raped every sixteen minutes (Murmu, 2023). Thousands of other instances of sexual assault indeed go unreported, with approximately only two percent of sexual assaults being reported in India, compared to a global estimate of eleven percent. This underreporting is influenced by factors such as widespread victim-blaming and the harsh societal treatment of rape victims in India (J K et al., 2022). Furthermore, systemic issues, including deficiencies in administrative data and the legal system not recognizing marital rape, contribute to the significant underreporting of sexual violence (Dandona et al., 2022b, 2022a; Deosthali et al., 2022). The extent of gender-based violence in India is an urgent problem that requires immediate attention as well as creative approaches to intervention.

While legislative frameworks such as the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act of 2013 have broadened the legal definitions of sexual violence and introduced stricter punishments, the persistence of abuse suggests a complex interplay of sociocultural, psychological, and infrastructural factors that remain inadequately addressed.

The 2012 Nirbhaya gang rape in Delhi became a turning point in the country's discourse on gender-based violence (PTI, 2023). It triggered widespread public outrage and led to a global conversation about the status of women's safety in India. Yet, more than a

decade later, the frequency and brutality of such crimes suggest that systemic reform must go beyond the legal and punitive. A recurring pattern of societal response to sexual violence emerges upon understanding of India's handling of high-profile cases, showing what can be characterized as a "cycle of normalisation".(Akbar & Ghazal, 2023)

This cycle starts with incidents of extreme sexual violence that achieve national importance, such as the example above, the 2012 Nirbhaya case. These are typically extreme crimes that evoke widespread public outrage and often spark a collective consciousness (Figure 1.1).



*Figure 1.1 Cycle of Normalisation (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)*

The immediate aftermath typically is multiple civil society responses: mass protests demanding justice and systemic reform, social media campaigns, widespread content creation addressing the issue, and long-term media coverage. This creates pressure on the legal and political establishment, often resulting in the passing of new legislation and policy reforms. The incident dominates national attention for months, featuring in news debates, academic discussions, and everyday conversations.

However, as subsequent cases of sexual violence continue to surface in media coverage, there is a desensitization that occurs within the public sphere. The repeated exposure to such incidents, while initially shocking, gradually leads to what can be termed “normalisation through exposure.”

This process results in a measurable decline in public engagement, reduced media attention, and a corresponding decrease in advocacy efforts. Eventually, societal attention shifts elsewhere, conversations subside, and the issue retreats from immediate public consciousness, a return to what is perceived as “normal” conditions.

This pattern is itself cyclic, as demonstrated by the 2024 Kolkata doctor case (India, n.d.), which occurred twelve years after Nirbhaya, yet followed an identical trajectory of public response. The recurrence of this cycle suggests limitations in how society processes and responds to sexual violence, indicating the need for interventions that can break this pattern of temporary mobilization followed by collective dismissal.

This is where design, as a socially aware and interventionist practice, can make a meaningful contribution.



The focus of this thesis is the belief that meaningful change is only possible through a study that adopts a transdisciplinary approach and combines primary research (interviews, workshops, surveys) with secondary data (reports, academic literature, case studies). Drawing on successful international and local design-led campaigns, such as the national Bell Bajao campaign by Breakthrough or, more locally, Naari ki Sawaari by Shri Maharani Chimnabai Stree Udyogalaya, it examines the visual and strategic tools that have successfully shifted mindsets (Dey et al., 2023). A rethinking of prevention strategies is required in light of the rise of violence against women. This rethinking must shift from reactive to proactive, community-centred approaches that can address both immediate safety concerns and the systemic factors that contribute to gender-based violence.

Ultimately, this thesis does not claim to solve the crisis of sexual abuse, which is deeply systemic and generational. Instead, it aims to demonstrate the unique and often underexplored potential of design in reducing abuse by influencing cultural perceptions, introducing safe interactions, and empowering individuals through knowledge and agency.

## 1.1 Focus and Extent

**2/5 fully or partially agreed with 'Women moving around at night deserve to be sexually harassed'.** (UN Women Supported Survey in Delhi Shows 95 per Cent of Women and Girls Feel Unsafe in Public Spaces, 2013).

This alarming statistic, along with frequent media coverage of nighttime assault cases (Night and Day: The Hindu Editorial on Sexual Assault Cases in U.P. - The Hindu, n.d.), clearly indicates that an intervention focusing on nighttime would be most impactful for this research.

This study, therefore, focuses on nighttime sexual harassment and abuse, a temporal dimension that highlights preexisting vulnerabilities and intersects with cultural taboos surrounding women's mobility after dark. Nighttime presents unique challenges: increased vulnerability in public spaces (Plyushteva & Boussauw, 2020), limited access to formal support networks (Almanza Avendaño et al., 2022; dipankar@krishworks.com, 2023; Dubey et al., 2025), heightened cultural restrictions on women's movement, and reduced visibility for both prevention (Sur, 2014) and reporting. This focus enables a targeted examination of how design interventions could address the specific conditions that make nighttime harassment both more likely to occur and more difficult to prevent or report.

### Research structure

The thesis is structured in the shape of an Hourglass. It starts with the general Indian context with primary research, which is then backed up by secondary research explaining multiple factors influencing gender-



based violence in India, and contextualizes the thesis. It then moves to case studies of successful interventions—two indigenous to India, and one adaptation from Global practice. Zooming out again, the thesis moves to discuss the design interventions prototyped in the last year and the future plans.

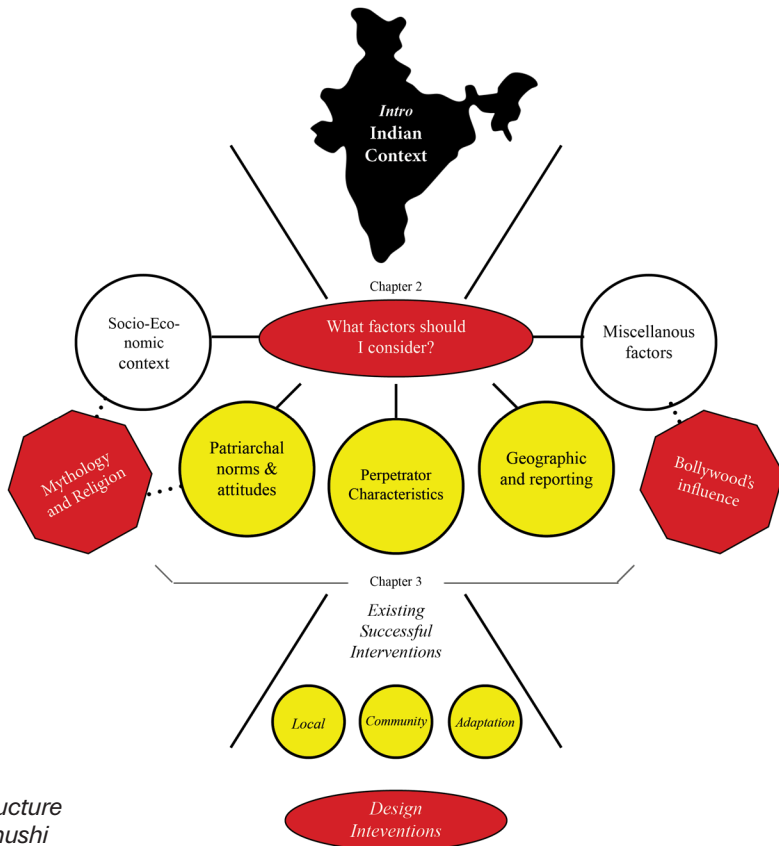


Figure 1.2 Structure of thesis (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)

## 1.2 Research question

While significant efforts have been devoted to enhancing public safety and establishing legal frameworks to address sexual harassment in India, a more nuanced issue persists, revealing an underlying cultural and systemic structure that presents obstacles to effective prevention and meaningful behavioural change in addressing sexual harassment.

As a result, a critical analysis of these factors is imperative, leading to the formation of a central research question:

**“What are the key factors contributing to the persistence of sexual harassment despite existing legal and institutional frameworks?”**

While writing this paper, a relentless search was conducted for any such papers that employed design in the Indian context when sexual harassment is concerned. While extensive research exists on sexual harassment prevention programs, policy interventions, and isolated awareness campaigns, there remains a significant gap in understanding how design thinking and creative methodologies can be used to create systemic change at the local level. A realization occurred while inspecting the problem globally and locally - the difference in the approach only exists due to cultural differences. And to bridge this gap, proactive, subjective and community-centred solutions are necessary.

Therefore, another question emerges:

**“How can community-driven design approaches be leveraged to create preventive interventions contrib-**



**uting to sexual harassment in Western India?”**

This research seeks to move beyond reactive measures toward innovative approaches that attempt to reshape the conditions that enable sexual harassment to persist fundamentally, utilizing design thinking to prototype



The American Psychological Association defines Sexual abuse as “Any nonconsensual or exploitative sexual behaviour imposed on an individual, often involving physical force, coercion, threats, or the manipulation of someone unable to consent.” (APA Dictionary of Psychology, n.d.).

Similarly, within the Indian legal context, sexual abuse comprises non-consensual sexual acts, harassment, exploitation, or the violation of personal dignity, as defined under the Indian Penal Code.

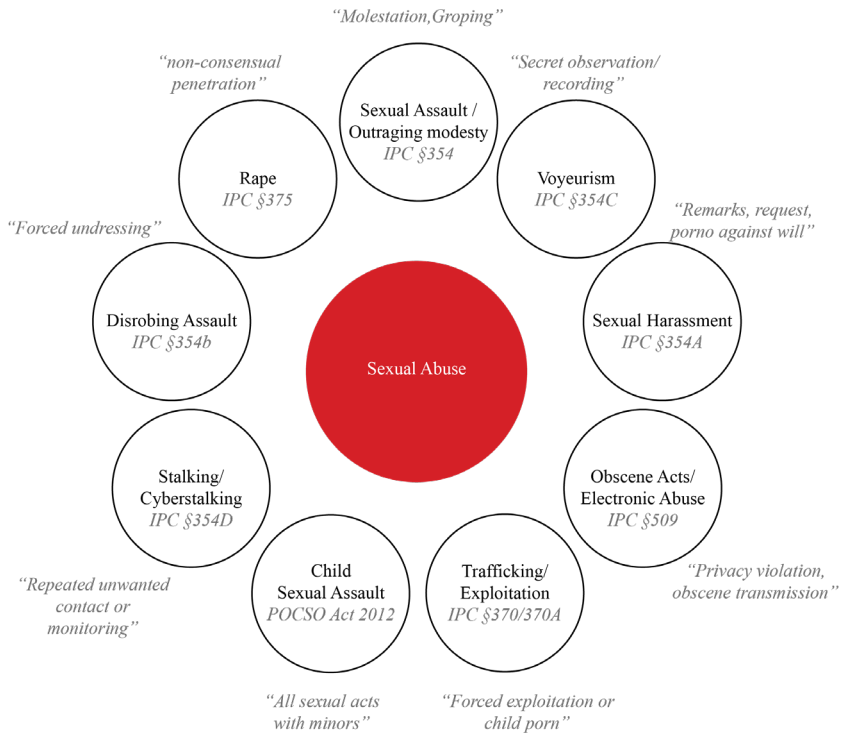


Figure 1.3 Overview of Indian legal context -crimes against women (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)

However, it is important to acknowledge the significant gaps between these legal definitions and lived realities. While these frameworks appear comprehensive, the Indian legal system excludes certain forms of sexual violence that international human rights standards recognise as violations.



**Most notably, marital rape remains unrecognized as a criminal offence under Indian law, with Exception 2 to Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code explicitly stating that sexual intercourse by a man with his wife is not rape, provided she is above 18 years of age.**

While there is growing pressure and campaigns to criminalise marital rape, the Indian government has argued that doing so would be “excessively harsh” and disruptive to the institution of marriage. The underreporting of sexual violence within marriage further complicates the issue, making it difficult to assess the true extent of the problem. (Deosthali et al., 2022). This legal exclusion creates a disconnect between the stated commitment to preventing sexual abuse and the reality experienced by a lot of women who face sexual violence within marriage. The assumption that marriage constitutes blanket consent fundamentally contradicts the principle of bodily autonomy and the right to refuse sexual activity, principles that form the foundation of contemporary understanding of sexual consent.

This gap between legal frameworks and protection highlights multiple factors that dictate laws preventing basic women’s rights and perpetuate gender inequality. (Firstpost, 2024)



# 2. Research Methods

**Addressing sexual abuse and harassment in South Asian communities requires understanding the complex topics of cultural norms and traditions. To achieve this, I conducted extensive desktop research to explore the history and socio-cultural factors that shape the daily lives of women. The subsequent section describes this in much detail. This includes several key elements, including Indian mythology, the Indian government's Women and Child development department, multiple NGOs, including Arpan, as well as the Indian constitution. Additionally, when studying this topic, it is essential to consider the methodologies of trauma-informed design research.**

**Moreover, the objective of the preparatory research was to understand the common links that bind different cases of sexual abuse and harassment. This included**

**the environment, the social backgrounds of the victims, the support systems in place and the psychology of both victims and perpetrators. In pursuit of this objective, I delved into the experiences of various women from different demographics and psychologists.**

## **2.1 Sensitivity training and expert interview.**

In order to gain a deeper comprehension of the approach of psychologists towards this subject and measures taken after, I held an interview with Dr Krupa Shah, psychologist, education facilitator and Neuro Linguistic professional.

The interview was held in two parts: firstly, it was sensitivity training while hosting victim interviews and secondly, her insights regarding women's behaviour and beliefs when sexual abuse and harassment are concerned.



*Image 2.1 Screenshot by Manushi Khatlawala, with Krupa Shah, online meeting via Zoom.*

The interview was emotionally heavy and revealed insights about sexual abuse survivors in therapy. The key findings were:

*Boundary-focused approach:* The therapist's philosophy was to respect client boundaries and only extend help as much as the client wanted. She mainly indulged in short worksheets, reflection/ introspection models, and unstructured dialogue exchange as therapy methods. She shared her experiences and helped me curate a vocabulary that I could utilize while conversing with my stakeholders. And she did not forget to teach me how not to accidentally trigger someone's emotional scars.

## Questions for User Interviews

Discussion with

**Krupa Shah**

Psychologist | Mental Health Professional | Therapist

Parivartan, Vadodara, India

Three sections of questions.

No. 1

I would like to ask a few questions to women of different demographics about their experiences of safety, discomfort in situations where, upon introspection, there was no life-threatening situation.

I would like to note:

- Start a rapport - build a rapport
- Be super open about this, semi-structured, freedom, chance to approach, and express need.
- Typically 5th or 8th session. ( due to certain triggers)
- Comes through exploration
- Empathy might not be the way. Don't say "I understand your pain" often - more "I am sorry there was no one to help you"
- Eg patient
- Fear-based reaction IS ALWAYS THERE IN INDIAN WOMEN.
- URBAN women
- Written consent for usage - purpose, voluntary, skip questions, withdrawal of consent at any point, confidentiality important, maybe even anonymous, ask before screenshot. Make sure they know it is a safe space and non-judgmental. What is the data going to be used for? Contact info for reverting. When they are comfortable
- Background knowledge of my studies - studies, papers (it will be easy for them to answer as well.
- VERBAL CONTENT as well
- "If any question feels heavy, on-demand withdrawal is allowed.
- Study their body language and proceed accordingly.

*Image 2.2 Screenshot of Vocabulary List and interview notes(Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)*

The second part of this interview focused on the experiences of Krupa Shah regarding her encounters with female clients:

1. **Silenced trauma:** In her experience, women who experienced abuse or harassment were told by their families to forget what happened. They came to therapy for other problems like social anxiety, trouble with intimacy, panic attacks and insomnia - not directly for the abuse.
2. **Socio-Cultural and Economic factors:** During conversations with clients about their harassment experiences, it becomes evident that social hierarchy, community divisions and education often influence these incidents. Some clients, especially those from rural backgrounds, with significant deficiencies when education and religious superstitions were considered, describe how their caste identity directly impacts the nature and severity of harassment they face. This is also confirmed by studies conducted by Deutsche Welle- "When it comes to sexual violence, a potent mix of caste-driven rivalries, and sometimes religion-based ones, has been the prime motivational reason." (Caste Dynamics behind Sexual Violence in India - DW - 05/10/2018, n.d.)
3. **Resistance to therapy:** After realizing the connection between their symptoms and past abuse, some victims resist therapy due to denial.
4. **Persistent fear:** Survivors continue to feel "in danger" throughout their recovery process and beyond. Many of them also felt like they could not rely on public institutions and formal support.



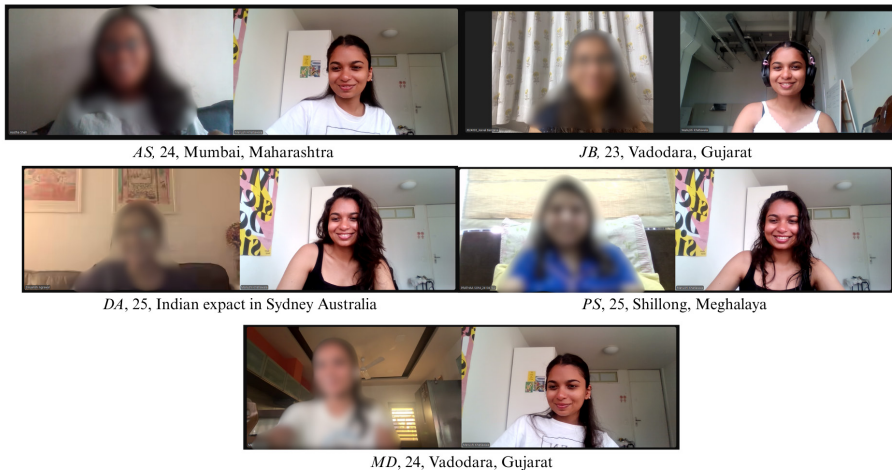
***“Police/ court ka toh kya hai, ek case ke baad saalo tak court kacheri ke chakkar maro, and insaaf toh mile, na mile? Sirf paise kharch honge, usse zyada kuch nahi”*** - paraphrased by Krupa Shah.

*Translation: “What about the police or court? We would likely be running around the courts for years, without any justice. It will only cause financial strain, nothing else.”*



## 2.2 Victim Experiences

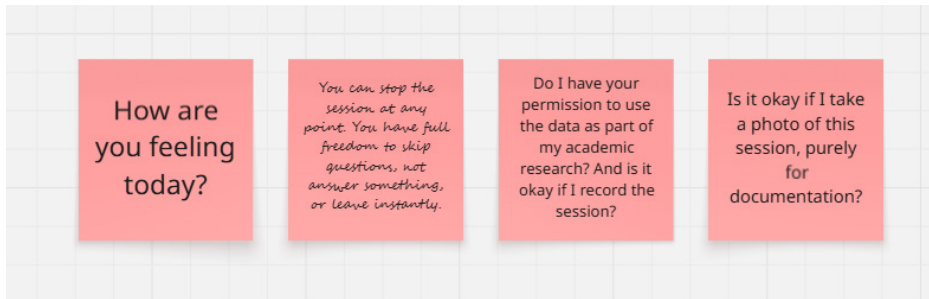
To understand the lived experiences of sexual abuse and harassment survivors, I conducted online workshops with 8 women aged 23-26. These participants came from both disadvantaged and privileged family backgrounds but shared a common experience of working in cities away from their hometowns. The workshops provided direct insights into how survivors navigate trauma, family responses, and their journey toward healing.



*Image 2.3 Screenshot of Interview (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)*

The workshop had 3 parts. They are as follows:

**First** was the “ice-breaking” part. I introduced the topic and explained what the interview would be like. I informed participants that they could stop the interview at any time if they felt uncomfortable and reviewed the basic rules. I also asked some simple questions to help everyone feel more comfortable.



*Image 2.3 Screenshot of workshop part 1 (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)*

The **second** part was an unconventional step for an interview, but it was extremely effective in initiating a conversation between the participants and me. It was a reflection through a game of Bingo.

### **Purpose and Design**

This interactive bingo activity explored the range of participants’ experiences with gender-based harassment and discrimination. This exploratory tool served to build rapport while identifying common themes across participants’ lived experiences. These common themes of gender-based incidents were recognized after the talk with Krupa Shah and were placed in each square.



**Activity : Indian Women Bingo**

Name:  Enter name here

B	I	N	G	O
Never given "the talk"	Asked to wear longer skirts that cover your knees.	Avoided eye contact on public transport	Parents did not allow to wear certain clothes	shushed while talking about period health and stains were shameful
Told to stay home after dark	Catcalled on a street	Staying out after 9pm was frowned upon.	Stigma around sexual health	"Boys will be boys"
Family feared bold career choice	Middle seat in auto felt unsafe	Free Space	Gynaec said "menstrual cups are for married women."	""How will you marry if you dont get fit?" comment
Forced to touch elders' feet	Not believed when telling truth	Sacrificed wants/desires for male sibling	have an entitled-manchild friend called "raja-beta"	Had a man body-shame you and say "I was joking"
Was told to smile more	Male colleague stared too long	Denied an opportunity and given to a less worthy male employee	Taught to not sit with legs open	Mom was told to be a housewife.

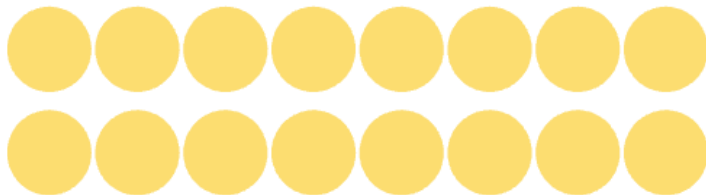


Image 2.4 BINGO activity for workshop part 2 (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)



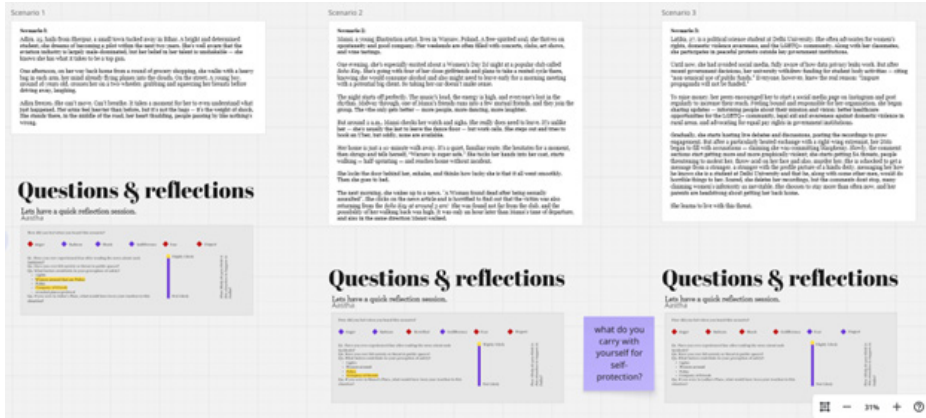


Image 2.6 Part 3 Online Workshop via Miro. (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)

### Purpose and Methodology

This segment was designed to build empathy among participants by exposing them to diverse experiences of sexual harassment. The scenarios represented different contexts - urban transportation, nightlife venues, and academic environments - to demonstrate the nature of such incidents across various settings.

### Interactive Component

Following the presentation of each scenario, participants were asked to reflect on their emotional responses and consider whether these real experiences would influence their own perceptions, behaviours and attitudes towards sexual harassment in public spheres during nighttime hours. This approach encouraged participants to move beyond their personal experiences and develop a broader understanding of the systemic nature of nighttime harassment faced by women.



### Research Objective

The activity aimed to gauge whether exposure to others' experiences could shift participants' awareness and empathy regarding nighttime safety challenges, ultimately enriching the data collected about perceptions and attitudes toward sexual harassment in public spaces after dark.



Image 2.7 Part 3 of online workshop via Miro Answers (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)



### **Outcome**

These experiences revealed a range of influencing factors. For example, harassment was more prevalent in situations linked to a family's religiousness or parents' educational background. Additionally, specific types of harassment were found to be more common in certain parts of India.

## 2.3 Primary Research final outcomes

Through the interviews and conversations, I held, certain themes started to emerge. While every woman had her own story and experienced sexual harassment, there were also some common underlying patterns. The results did not only reflect individual struggles, but also pointed toward deeper cultural and social roots that shape how Indian women experience safety and freedom.

The findings suggested that women's vulnerability at night in India cannot be understood in isolation. Rather, it is tied to larger structures that have historically defined and controlled women's roles. Four important aspects stood out as implied results: socio-economic factors, geographical considerations, patriarchal norms, and the objectification of women by perpetrators. These aspects together reveal how cultural narratives and social systems continue to reinforce inequality, limiting women's independence and security.

Although sexual harassment in the public sphere and at night has been explored by many researchers before, India as a cultural backdrop has some unique features that influence the wide array of sexual abuse/harassment in India. The subsequent section explores these unique themes, and attempts to reinforce this research's position within the global design context.





# 3. Background and Context

**As established in the preceding primary research, socio-economic factors, geographical considerations, patriarchal norms, and the objectification of women by perpetrators are critical underlying factors contributing to its prevalence (Berik et al., 2024; Hardt et al., 2023; Khan, n.d.).**

**Sexual harassment and violence against women is influenced by various interconnected factors. These include: -**

1. ***Socioeconomic and Demographic Status:*** Women with no or primary education, as well as those from the poorest wealth index, face higher odds of experiencing sexual violence. (Ramamurthy et al., 2025). Women from scheduled castes and Muslim communities also experience domestic abuse, including sexual violence, more frequently.(Patel & Desai, n.d.)
2. ***Patriarchal Norms and Attitudes:*** Patriarchal gender attitudes often justify harassment, maintaining traditional gender norms that may restrict women's public presence and contribute to victim-blaming (Berik et al., 2024; Satyen et al., 2024a). And confirming my assumption about the cycle of normalisation, this normalisation of public-space sexual harassment,

sometimes termed “eve-teasing”, is also a significant factor in some South Asian countries, including India (Akbar & Ghazal, 2023). Here, mythology and, in turn, religion are major contributors to this behaviour.

3. ***Perpetrator Characteristics:*** Factors associated with intimate partner violence (which includes sexual abuse) linked to men’s characteristics include their age, education level, IPV-justifying attitudes, alcoholism, and substance abuse (Chandra et al., 2023; Yasmin et al., n.d.).
4. ***Geographic and Reporting Challenges:*** Rape and sexual violence show spatial heterogeneity across India, with clusters in central, northern, and northeastern regions, potentially linked to variations in socioeconomic status, demographics, urbanization, and gender equality (Mathews et al., 2024). Underreporting of crimes is also due to social stigma, fear of reprisal, and biased attitudes from service providers, despite laws against harassment (Akbar & Ghazal, 2023; Yasmin et al., n.d.)

## 3.1 Socioeconomic and Demographic Status

The incidence and nature of sexual harassment in Western India are profoundly shaped by complex socioeconomic and demographic factors. As highlighted by the primary research, these determinants, including economic status, educational attainment, restricted mobility, and power dynamics within relationships, create varying degrees of vulnerability and exposure for women. Understanding these underlying contexts is critical for developing effective community-driven preventive interventions.

### Poverty and Urban Informal Settlements

Concentrated poverty, particularly within informal urban settlements, significantly exacerbates women's vulnerability to sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence. These settlements are often characterised by overcrowding, inadequate housing, insufficient access to basic services like water and sanitation, insecure land tenure, and hazardous living conditions (Gram et al., 2023). Such environments foster a climate where women face heightened risks due to a lack of safe public spaces, poor lighting, and limited effective governance, which can reduce accountability for perpetrators. For instance, recent estimates from Mumbai's informal settlements indicate that a substantial proportion of women have experienced physical (13%), sexual (4%), and emotional (19%) violence within the past year (Gram et al., 2023).

This prevalence underscores how the structural disadvantages of poverty and unplanned urbanization create fertile ground for violence, making women

disproportionately bear burdens as primary caregivers while simultaneously being more exposed to exploitation and harassment (Gram et al., 2023). The economic precarity associated with these settings can also limit women's ability to seek redress or leave abusive situations, further entrenching their vulnerability.

### **Educational Attainment and Economic Empowerment**

Education levels and economic empowerment play intricate roles in shaping women's experiences with sexual harassment. Lower socioeconomic status and low education are consistently identified as risk factors for intimate partner violence (IPV) in India, a broader category of violence that often intersects with or includes sexual harassment (Mittal et al., 2023). Education is generally recognized as a protective factor; evidence from India's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), a national program for universal primary schooling, suggests a long-term impact on reducing IPV rates and shifting attitudes that condone violence against women (Nandi et al., 2025). This indicates that improved educational access can empower women by increasing their knowledge, enhancing their agency, and potentially altering societal norms over time.

However, the relationship between economic resources and sexual violence is complex and sometimes counterintuitive, necessitating a nuanced approach in intervention design. A study focusing on married youth aged 15–24 in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan found that having no economic resources was associated with lower odds of sexual violence (Mehra et al., 2023).

This finding contrasts with the general assumption that economic independence universally protects against violence. One possible interpretation is that women

with limited economic resources may have restricted physical mobility, keeping them confined to their homes or more controlled environments, thereby reducing their exposure to public spaces where forms of sexual harassment, such as “eve-teasing,” are prevalent. Conversely, increased economic independence and associated greater mobility might, for some women, lead to increased exposure to public harassment, which is a significant issue in India (K et al., 2021). This highlights that while economic empowerment is crucial for overall well-being and agency, its effect on specific forms of violence like sexual harassment in public spaces requires context-specific understanding and complementary safety measures.

### **Physical Mobility and Decision-Making Power**

The degree of physical mobility and the extent of decision-making power afforded to women are also critical demographic and socioeconomic indicators. The study in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan revealed that restricted physical mobility had a negative association with sexual violence (Mehra et al., 2023). This suggests that limitations on women’s movement, while curtailing their autonomy, might inadvertently reduce their exposure to public sexual harassment in certain contexts. However, this comes at the cost of personal freedom and access to opportunities. In contrast, a lack of decision-making power was strongly associated with higher odds of both physical and sexual violence (Mehra et al., 2023). This clearly demonstrates that a woman’s ability to make decisions about her life is a fundamental protective factor against violence, with its absence indicating profound disempowerment and increased vulnerability.



**Demographic Imbalances and Under-reporting.**

Demographic imbalances indicate gender discrimination that fosters environments permissive of harassment. Punjab's sex ratio of 895 females per 1,000 males (846 for children) reflects gender bias that can normalise violence against women (K et al., 2021). Young marriage age also increases IPV risk, as younger women often have less empowerment and greater vulnerability (Mittal et al., 2023).

## 3.2 Patriarchal Norms and Attitudes

These deeply ingrained societal structures underpin a range of challenges for women, impacting their autonomy, safety, and overall well-being. Understanding these norms is essential for developing effective community-driven interventions to prevent sexual harassment.

### Gender-based violence Normalisation

At its core, patriarchy establishes a system where male dominance is upheld across societal, community, relationship, and individual levels (Sabri et al., 2022; Sabri & Young, 2022). This translates into social and cultural norms that can either encourage or inhibit violence against women (Sabri & Young, 2022). In the Indian context, patriarchal beliefs often lead to a broad acceptance or normalisation of GBV under certain circumstances, such as a woman's inability to perform household chores or her deviation from prescribed gender roles (Sabri et al., 2022; Sabri & Young, 2022). Such attitudes are further compounded by the stigma associated with divorce and separation, which can trap women in abusive situations (Gram et al., 2023; Sabri & Young, 2022). Traditional practices like dowry and arranged marriages without the explicit consent of both partners also place women at heightened risk for GBV (Sabri et al., 2022; Sabri & Young, 2022).

### 3.2.1 Religious and Mythological Foundations of Gender Control

A unique and profound aspect of Indian patriarchy is its deep intertwining with mythology and religion. Hindu nationalism, for instance, promotes values rooted in fundamental religious practices that reinforce gendered

conservative norms and a clear division of gender roles (Sabharwal, n.d.). These narratives and practices often idealize certain feminine virtues, associating women's honor and family prestige with their adherence to modesty and restricted movement (Berik et al., 2024).

While the direct explicit mention of mythology as a patriarchal construct in the provided sources is limited, the strong emphasis on "social and cultural norms and beliefs" (Sabri & Young, 2022), "patriarchal beliefs" (Satyen et al., 2024b; View of The Impact of Patriarchal Norms on Women's Empowerment in Rural Indian Families, n.d.), and "gendered conservative norms" (Sabharwal, n.d.) suggests that traditional stories and religious interpretations significantly shape these expectations. They can implicitly (or explicitly, in some interpretations) justify male guardianship and control over women's behavior, thereby normalising restrictions on their freedom and making them vulnerable to harassment (Berik et al., 2024).

### **Factors and Examples from Mythology**

Religion and mythology in Indian texts have historically been used as tools to control women's bodily autonomy and reinforce their subordinate status.

- ***Patriarchal Authority:*** Women in the Ramayana are strictly expected to adhere to dharma by being obedient daughters, sisters, and wives. Any deviation from the order established by men, such as Sita crossing the protective line (Lakshmana rekha) or Ahalya succumbing to Indra, results in suffering, disgrace, or punishment. The text emphasizes a patronizing tone towards women, asserting male authority and treating marriage as a necessity for girls.

- ***Sexuality and Agency:*** Ambitious or sexually assertive women like Surpanakha are depicted as deserving of punishment, reinforcing the danger of female autonomy and sexuality when not constrained by accepted social roles.
- ***Marriage and Obedience:*** The Ramayana portrays marriage as a necessity for women and asserts male authority over them, diverging sharply from the Vedic texts that mention some degree of female autonomy and choice.

Factors and Examples from the Mahabharata

- ***Subservience Mixed with Agency:*** While women such as Draupadi exhibit agency, questioning, influencing politics, and seeking justice, obedient, self-sacrificing wives are lauded. The epic still treats women as upholders of male honour and, at times, as commodities to be wagered, such as in the episode of Draupadi's disrobing.
- ***Bodily Autonomy:*** The use of women as pawns in political games and wagers demonstrates a lack of autonomy, showcasing them as property or symbols of male honor. Draupadi's humiliation is not only a personal violation but also a catalyst for war, underlining the perceived link between women's bodies and male power.

### **Use of Mythology as a Tool**

- ***Didactic Purpose:*** The paper argues that these epics were not merely descriptive but didactic, aiming to shape and control social norms. They promoted an ideal of submissive, obedient, and self-sacrificing women to reinforce patriarchal structures during periods of sociopolitical consolidation. (Conceptualising Brahmanical Patriarchy in Early India: Gender, Caste, Class and State, n.d.)



- ***Manipulation of Historiography:*** The reinterpretation or rewriting of these texts, especially in the Early Medieval period, was likely intended to manipulate societal attitudes, legitimizing power by curbing women's autonomy through religious doctrine. General Observations
- ***Contrast with Vedic Period:*** Vedic literature allowed somewhat greater education and agency for women, including rights to remain unmarried. The later epics, however, emphasized rigid patriarchal norms and sought to confine women physically and socially.
- ***Warnings and Threats:*** Themes such as abduction and the need to remain within protective boundaries (physical or metaphorical) function as warnings against female autonomy, reinforcing control through fear and social pressure. (WomeninIndianMythology\_AnAlternativePerspective (1), n.d.)

Addressing these deeply rooted patriarchal norms and attitudes, including their mythological and religious underpinnings, is crucial for developing effective prevention strategies.

### 3.3 Perpetrator Challenges: Human Instinct and Evolved Behaviours

While exploring reasons for this behaviour, a pressing question arises: “What makes a human being act regressively towards a group, and how is it internally and socially justified?” Research in evolutionary psychology suggests that male aggression and dominance behaviours may have evolutionary foundations, with sexual selection theory proposing that males compete for reproductive success through displays of aggression and control (Archer, 2009; Daly & Wilson, 2017).

If dominance, aggression, and control are instinctive behaviours, what does that mean for men who grow up being told that power makes them more “manly”? Studies show that traditional masculinity is significantly linked to various forms of aggression and violence, suggesting that cultural reinforcement of these “natural” tendencies creates a compounding effect (O’Donnell et al., 2024).

I’m questioning whether we’ve actually evolved at all, or if we’ve just gotten better at finding socially acceptable ways to justify violent, primal behaviour, especially toward women.

### 3.4 Geographic and reporting challenges

This context underscores the critical need for localized, community-driven interventions that can adapt to specific cultural nuances and build trust where formal systems fall short (Gram et al., 2023; K et al., 2021). In Western India, various community-based initiatives demonstrate the potential of such approaches. For example, Nirdhar Groups in rural Maharashtra facilitate sustained change by using local interventions to address domestic violence, promote safe access to education and healthcare, and tackle financial oppression, aiming to instill gender equality and compassionate community values (Hayter et al., 2023).

Similarly, the “Ghya Bharari Ekatra” (GBE) intervention in Pune focuses on newly married couples, improving relationship quality, communication, and challenging norms around intimate partner violence (IPV), showing promising results in reducing psychological abuse and improving women’s mental health (Kalokhe et al., 2021). In urban settings like Mumbai, community mobilization interventions led by non-governmental organizations engage residents in addressing violence against women (VAW) through diverse responses, including couple mediation and referrals (Gram et al., 2023). Other projects in Rajasthan, such as SAWERA in Jaipur, employ a Gender Transformative Approach to empower youth and challenge biased social norms contributing to gender-based violence (GBV) (Mehra et al., 2023).

These grassroots efforts, by fostering collective action and engaging multiple stakeholders, are crucial in creating supportive environments, promoting



open discussion, and ultimately reducing violence against women and girls by directly confronting the deeply entrenched societal factors and barriers to reporting (Gram et al., 2023; K et al., 2021; Violence in Public Spaces Against Women and Girls: Narratives from India, n.d.).

## 3.5 Other factors contributing to the hostile nature of women

### **Bollywood's Influence on the Normalisation of Sexual Harassment in India**

The influence of Bollywood, India's mainstream film industry, has been critically implicated in the normalisation and perpetuation of sexual harassment within Indian society (Deonarain, 2020; Reports, 1 C.E.). A significant body of research and analysis suggests that the industry has a powerful role in shaping cultural norms, often to the detriment of women's safety and autonomy.

This narrative frequently depicts the woman's initial rejection as a mere formality, ultimately overcome by the man's relentless advances (Does Bollywood Normalise Stalking? | Bollywood | The Guardian, n.d.). Such portrayals can dangerously blur the lines between romantic pursuit and harassment, suggesting that a woman's refusal is not a definitive boundary (The Representation Of Stalking, I Mean 'Love', In Bollywood – Breakthrough Trust, n.d.) This cinematic trope contributes to a social script where aggressive male pursuit is valorized, potentially influencing real-world behaviors and perceptions (Rahman & Mehnaz, 2024a).

## 3.6 Community-Based Participatory Research

The previous section highlights the complex yet unique set of factors influencing the array of gender-based violence in India. To make sense of these complexities, the Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) conceptual logic model is employed, being an effective tool in design for social transformation. It is articulated by Wallerstein et al. (2008), and provides a theoretical and methodological framework, particularly suited for exploring community-driven design approaches in Western India.

It provides outlines for pathways for academic-community collaborations to achieve successful health (Sandoval et al., 2012). This model emphasizes equitable partnerships between academic researchers and community members, fostering mutual learning, shared decision-making, and collective action to achieve social change.

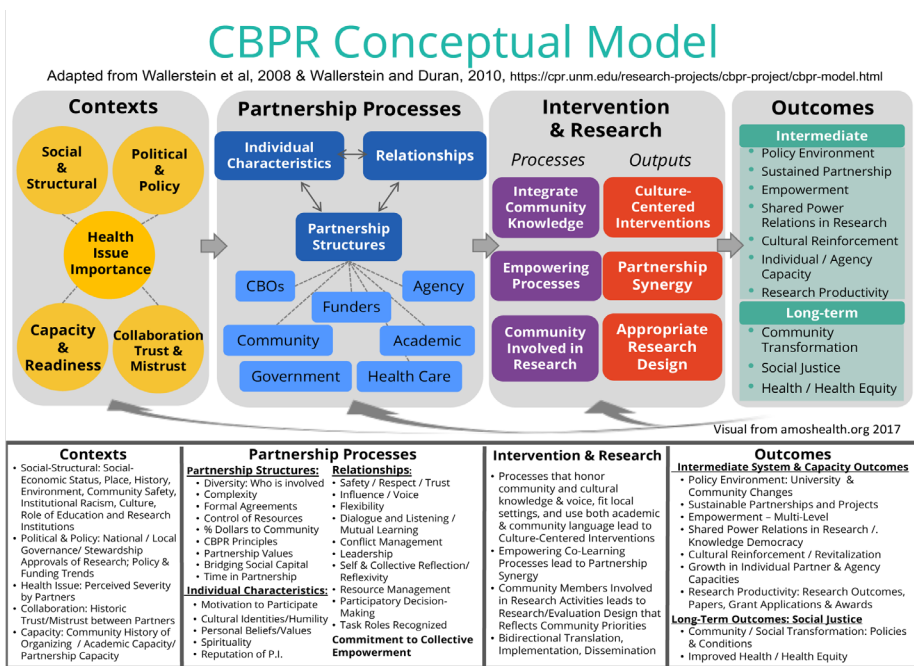


Image 3.1 original CBPR conceptual model (Wallerstein and Duran, 2010)

This model identifies four key components that influence outcomes:

1. **Context:** The specific environment in which the research takes place.(Sandoval et al., 2012)
2. **Group Dynamics:** The interactions and relationships among partners (Sandoval et al., 2012). This area has the most identified measures for evaluation.
3. **Community-Centeredness:** The extent to which interventions and research designs are culturally centred and directly involve the community.(Sandoval et al., 2012)
4. **Impact of Participatory Processes:** How these processes contribute to CBPR system change and health outcomes.(Sandoval et al., 2012)

CBPR fundamentally works on democratic partnerships, shared authority, and mutual benefit between academic and community partners (Berge et al., 2009; Wallerstein & Duran, 2010).

Taking inspiration from the CBPR model, the following figure adapts it to the research thesis for further ideation.

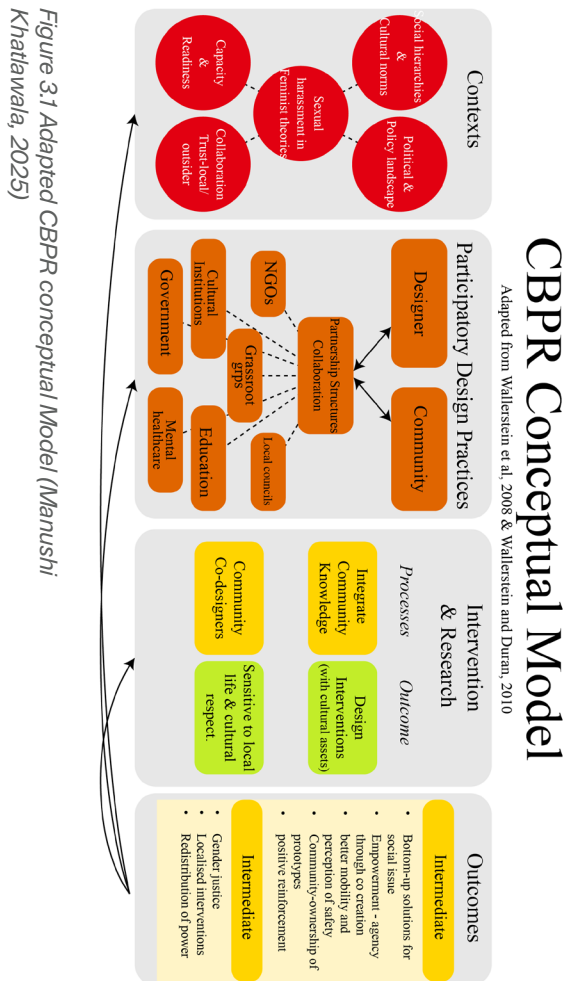


Figure 3.1 Adapted CBPR conceptual Model (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)



<p><b>Contexts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Social hierarchies &amp; Cultural norms: Understanding ingrained societal structures, power dynamics, and gender norms influencing sexual harassment in Western India.</li> <li>* Political &amp; Policy landscape: Analyzing existing local, regional, and national policies, as well as political will, relevant to women’s safety and anti-harassment initiatives.</li> <li>* Sexual harassment in Feminist theories: Grounding the research in critical feminist perspectives to understand the systemic nature of sexual harassment as gender-based violence.</li> <li>* Capacity &amp; Readiness: Assessing the community’s existing resources, knowledge, and willingness to engage in dialogue and action</li> <li>* Collaboration Trust-local/outsider: Building and sustaining trust between external researchers and local community members, recognizing power differentials inherent in such partnerships.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Participatory Design Practices</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Partnership Structures Collaboration: Establishing equitable partnerships with various community entities and ensuring shared decision-making throughout the research process.</li> <li>* NGOs, Grassroot groups, Cultural Institutions, Government, Local councils, Education sensitive to taboos (not afraid), Mental healthcare: Engaging a diverse array of community stakeholders for comprehensive input and broad-based support for intervention design.</li> </ul>

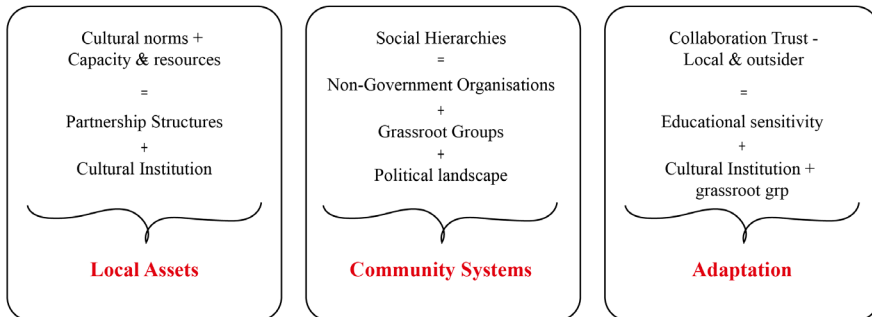
<b>Intervention &amp; Research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Processes: Integrate Community Knowledge: Utilizing local wisdom, lived experiences, and contextual understanding as foundational for all research and intervention development.</li> <li>* Outcome: Design Interventions (with cultural assets): Creating solutions that are not only effective but also deeply embedded in and reflective of local cultural practices and strengths, leading to “out-of-the-box” ideas.</li> <li>* Community Co-designers: Sensitive to local life &amp; cultural respect: Empowering community members as active designers, ensuring all interventions are respectful of and appropriate for the local socio-cultural fabric.</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Intermediate: Generating immediate, tangible results like bottom-up solutions, empowerment through co-creation, improved mobility, enhanced safety perception, community ownership of prototypes, and positive reinforcement for collective action.</li> <li>* Long-term: Aiming for sustained societal change, including gender justice, implementation of localized interventions, and a fundamental redistribution of power in shared public spaces (workplace, transportation, education, homes) within the community to address root causes of harassment.</li> </ul>

*Table 2.1 Adaptation and element explanation of the CBPR model (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)*



This model, figure 2.7 and table 2.1, adapts to the principles articulated by Wallerstein et al. (2008), emphasizing the critical role of understanding diverse **Contexts**, including social hierarchies, cultural norms, and the political landscape, alongside theoretical underpinnings from feminist theories on sexual harassment. It outlines **Participatory Design Practices** through genuine collaboration with a range of local stakeholders, from NGOs and grassroots groups to cultural institutions and local councils. This collaboration is crucial for ensuring that the design of **Interventions & Research** is deeply sensitive to local life and cultural nuances, leveraging cultural assets to co-design effective, bottom-up solutions. Ultimately, the model aims for **impactful Outcomes**, ranging from increased mobility and perception of safety to long-term gender justice and a fundamental redistribution of power within the community, ensuring that interventions are owned and sustained by those they are designed to serve.

*Key Takeaways  
from the adapted CBPR model*



*Figure 3.2 Key Takeaways from adapted CBPR conceptual Model (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)*

### Key Takeaways

This adapted Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) model forms the basis for understanding how communities drive effective interventions.

Firstly, “**Local Assets**” emphasize leveraging existing cultural norms, capacities, resources, partnership structures, and cultural institutions as foundational design elements.

Secondly, “**Community Systems**” highlights the significance of comprehending local power dynamics, including social hierarchies, the roles of non-governmental organizations, grassroots groups, and the broader political landscape, to inform effective intervention strategies.

Lastly, “**Adaptation**” underlines the necessity of cultivating trust between local and external collaborators, coupled with educational sensitivity and engagement with cultural institutions and grassroots groups, to foster innovation and contextualise external models. Hence, concluding that the most effective social interventions often emerge not from scaling global best practices, but from communities reimagining solutions within their own cultural and social frameworks.



# 4. Case Studies

**Building on the Key Takeaways of the CBPR conceptual Logic model, this section further goes into detail about the guiding principles of this research thesis. In the context of sexual harassment prevention in Western India, the principle of “localization as innovation” manifests through grassroots initiatives that transform local assets, cultural practices, social networks, and economic structures into powerful tools for systemic change (Murray et al., 2010, as cited in (هنات سلگ & ینئی ان یق داص, 2024); (Mulgan, 2006).**

**Developing this further, three key themes are articulated:**

1. **Local Assets as Design Resources** - How communities identify and leverage existing cultural elements
2. **Community Knowledge Systems** - How local understanding of power dynamics, social hierarchies, and cultural norms informs more effective intervention strategies
3. **Innovation Through Adaptation** - How communities modify, reject, or enhance external models to fit their specific contexts

These three key ideas are supported by real-world case studies that show how communities use design approaches to create effective solutions. Each concept is backed up by looking at specific examples where local organizations put design thinking at the centre of their work to prevent sexual harassment.

## 4.1 Local Assets as Design Resources

Communities often draw on existing cultural elements to create interventions that are both relatable and effective. Surface-level cultural assets, such as local dress, music, food, visual symbols, and colour schemes, can be readily incorporated into programs, making initiatives immediately recognisable and engaging (Hall, 1984, as cited in (Fisher et al., 2007)).

More importantly, deeper cultural dimensions, including shared values, beliefs, and assumptions, provide a foundation for intervention that resonates more profoundly and can produce lasting change (Kreuter et al., 2003).

By identifying and leveraging both surface and deep cultural assets, communities can transform everyday practices, social networks, and economic structures into powerful design resources that support local social innovation.

This point is further justified in the subsequent sub-section by two case studies that incorporate these ideas. Bell Bajao campaign on a national level, domestic violence awareness and Gazra Cafe, Vadodara, as a tool for a mindset shift towards the LGBTQIA+ community on a local level.

### Case study 1: Bell Bajao Campaign



*Image 4.1 Screenshot of Bell Bajao ft Boman Irani, YouTube*

Breakthrough's 'Bell Bajao!' launched in India in 2008, is a cultural and media campaign that calls on men and boys to take a stand against domestic violence.

The campaign seeks to reduce domestic violence against women and to highlight the role that men and boys can play in reducing violence.

Over 130 million people have viewed Bell Bajao's award-winning series of Public Service Announcements (PSAs). The announcements, inspired by true stories, showed men and boys stepping up and ringing the bell to interrupt overheard domestic violence. In 2010, Breakthrough's video vans travelled 14,000 miles through cities and villages screening these PSAs and involving communities through games, street theatre and other cultural tools, resulting in a sustainable, on-ground process of transforming hearts and minds.

Bell Bajao has won 23 awards at the Cannes 2010 advertising festival.

## Background and Key Players

The Bell Bajao campaign represents a comprehensive design intervention addressing domestic violence in India through male engagement strategies. Funded by the United Nations (UN) Women, executed by Ogilvy pro-bono and implemented by Breakthrough Trust, the campaign strategically targeted men and boys to transform their role from passive bystanders to active prevention agents. The global campaign, known in English as “Ring The Bell,” was launched at the Clinton Global Initiative.

## Creative awareness

Breakthrough uses innovative tools to engage youth and create a culture of human rights. Here are a few ways that Breakthrough spreads the Bell Bajao! message throughout the country:

1. **Celebrity involvement:** the actor Boman Irani, who is the brand ambassador for this campaign, weaves men into the initiative, saying that men can stop domestic violence by becoming sensitized and involved in the issue.
2. **Television, radio, and press:** 32 million people have seen and heard the message of Bell Bajao. Through television, radio, and the press. Television advertisements depict men and boys who hear domestic violence and take a minute out of their everyday lives to intervene and stop the violence.
3. **Interactive, dedicated website:** Breakthrough’s ground-breaking blog on [www.bellbajao.org](http://www.bellbajao.org) provides a platform, previously nonexistent in India, for dialogue about domestic violence. To date, witnesses, victims,

and advocates have all had an open space for personal testimony and reflection.

4. **Leadership Training:** The Rights Advocates program embodies on-the-ground youth and community leadership training to reaffirm the message of Bell Bajao! and help Indian youth recognise and fight domestic violence in their own communities. The training develops the capacity and life skills of the trainees in a variety of complex areas, like human rights, gender-based violence, and reproductive health. In 2008, the program trained over 100,000 people and aimed to double its reach in 2009.



*Image 4.2 Bell Bajao identity, by Codesign Studios*

### Implementation and Reach

The multi-platform campaign reached over 130 million people through television, radio, print advertisements, and community awareness programs. Six advertisements aired on major television channels, while mobile video vans were on the road for 150 days, traveling 80,000 kilometres across Karnataka, Maharashtra,

and Uttar Pradesh, reaching 5.5 million people in four Karnataka districts alone. The mobile units featured interactive elements including emcees, street theatre, gender-focused games, and promotional materials for helplines 103 and 1298.

### **Strategic Approach**

The campaign employed the ‘Bell Bajao-Champion Voices’ initiative, featuring prominent men and boys as role models to inspire behavioural change.

According to Breakthrough’s Communications Director Sonali Khan, the vans aimed to “engage the public in a dialogue on domestic violence, a topic that nobody wants to acknowledge.” (Ring Bell, Curb Domestic Violence | Mumbai News, n.d.)

### **Impact and Recognition**

The campaign’s effectiveness was validated through international recognition, winning the Film Lions category at the Cannes Advertising Festival for “The Bus Driver” advertisement, based on a real incident where a bus driver intervened in domestic violence. Additionally, 23 workshops were conducted with 575 NGO and community organisation staff members, (Bell Bajao, 2011) demonstrating the campaign’s multi-level intervention approach and sustainable impact strategy.

## 4.2 Community Knowledge Systems

As mentioned in the previous section, the national Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) framework (figure 3.1) inherently recognises that successful community-engaged research depends on the quality of collaborative partnerships between community members and academic researchers, which dictates the degree to which power dynamics are handled within the collaborative arrangement (Belone et al., 2016).

Following the CBPR conceptual model's emphasis on partnership processes, this research recognises that effective sexual harassment prevention interventions must be grounded in a deep understanding of local power structures. Just as CBPR partnerships require careful navigation of power dynamics between researchers and communities, successful awareness programs like Gazra Cafe again demonstrate how interventions become more effective when they are designed with knowledge of existing social hierarchies, cultural norms, and community power structures.

### Case study 2: Gazra Cafe by Shree Maharani Chinnabai Stree Udyogalay



*Image 4.3 The Gazra Cafe is backed by the Lakshya Trust patronised by Manvendrasinh Gohil of the Rajpipla royal family. (Express Photo by Bhupendra Rana)*

### **Context and Origin**

Gazra Cafe opened on August 18, 2023, in the middle of Vadodara City. What makes this cafe special is that its completely run by LGBTQIA+ community members, all the while having the support of the Royal Family of Vadodara. This shows how people with power and influence can work with the local communities to create real change.

The cafe is located in a historic building near Sursagar Lake, right in the centre of Vadodara. The cafe presents as an exceptional example of how a partnership between community members. The key supporters include the queen, Her Highness Radhikaraje Gaekwad from the Vadodara royal family and His Highness, Manvendrasinh Gohil from the Rajpipla royal family through his Lakshya Trust. By having royal backing, the cafe gets respect, acceptance, and creates legitimacy and sustainability for community-led entrepreneurship, which might have been harder to achieve otherwise.

The Gazra Cafe was launched with two purposes in mind: to provide livelihood opportunities for the LGBTQIA+ community and, consequently, advocate an inclusive notion of gender, one that challenges traditional binary constructs of male and female identities.

“We wanted a space that was inclusive and safe for all, and so decided to set up a café that would be manned by both LGBTQIA+ and cisgender people, and would welcome all people. Essentially, we’re humans for humans,” Meghal Shah, the Chief Executive Officer of

Shree Maharani Chimnabai Stree Udyogalaya (MCSU), an organisation by the Queen of Vadodara, says.(Gazra Café Brings a Dash of Pride to Vadodara | Condé Nast Traveller India, n.d.)

### **Cultural Integration Strategy**

Gazra Cafe's approach exemplifies how communities utilise cultural assets as design resources. The name "Gazra" (flower garland) draws from familiar local symbols, while the menu features traditional Maharashtrian and Gujarati cuisine, using familiar flavours as binding agents between different community groups. This cultural bridging strategy demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of how food and symbols can serve as neutral ground for social interaction.

Beyond commercial operations, the space functions as a cultural hub hosting art exhibitions, dance performances, and educational talks on women's issues. This programming approach recognizes that sustainable social change requires multiple touchpoints for community engagement rather than single-purpose interventions.

### **Implementation and Community Response**

As Vadodara's first LGBTQIA+ owned and operated restaurant, Gazra Cafe represents a significant social experiment in Gujarat's somewhat conservative cultural landscape. The implementation strategy prioritized visibility by locating the initiative in the city's historic center, ensuring it could not be marginalized or ignored.

Community response has been notably positive, with visitors frequently expressing appreciation for the inclusive atmosphere and quality of cultural programming.

The cafe has facilitated meaningful conversations between different social groups, demonstrating how physical spaces can serve as platforms for dialogue. National recognition, including visits from celebrity figures and cricket teams, has further normalised LGBTQ+ entrepreneurship within mainstream society.

*Analysis:* Community Knowledge Systems in Practice  
This case study illustrates three critical dimensions of community knowledge systems identified in the theoretical framework:

*Local Asset Leverage:* The initiative strategically utilized existing cultural elements (traditional cuisine, familiar symbols, historic location) and social structures (royal patronage, cultural programming) to create acceptance for progressive concepts. This demonstrates how communities identify and transform available resources into tools for social change.

*Power Dynamic Navigation:* Rather than challenging traditional hierarchies, the design leveraged royal influence to create legitimacy transfer, showing sophisticated understanding of how power operates in local contexts. This approach recognizes that sustainable change often requires working within existing structures rather than opposing them.

*Innovation Through Adaptation:* The initiative adapted familiar business models (restaurant, cultural center) and enhanced them with inclusive practices, demonstrating how communities modify external frameworks to fit their specific contexts and needs.

## 4.3 Innovation Through Adaptation

Communities often demonstrate remarkable capacity to transform global intervention models into locally relevant solutions that resonate with their specific cultural and social contexts (Adam et al., 2021).

### **Case study 3: SNEHA- 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence**

A good example is the adaptation of the international “16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence” (16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, 2024) campaign in India. The global campaign is an international initiative that runs every year from 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10 December, Human Rights Day, originally initiated in 1991. Indian organizations like Society for Nutrition, Education & Health Action (SNEHA) Mumbai have adapted this standardized global framework to suit local community needs. While the global campaign provides a standardized framework running from 25 November to 10 December, SNEHA transformed this external model by integrating it with their ongoing community mobilization work in Mumbai’s urban informal settlements, where over 40% of the city’s population resides.

### **Strategic Approach and Community Engagement**

Rather than simply implementing generic awareness activities, SNEHA enhanced the global framework by incorporating culturally specific interventions that utilised local assets. They partnered with Asmita Theatre Group for community performances that allowed 4,300 residents to “see, reflect about themselves, their situation, and relate to violence they face in their own

lives.” They subverted traditional gender expectations through women’s whistle campaigns that “attracted a lot of attention as community members came out of their houses” because “women whistling” challenged expected behaviours in spaces where “men whistling is a very common scenario.” Additionally, they adapted familiar cultural elements like the traditional “Snakes and Ladders” board game to convey prevention messages to over 2,000 community members.

This localised adaptation resulted in identifying 62 violence survivors while securing 5,000 community signatures supporting the cause, demonstrating how communities innovate by modifying external frameworks to align with local contexts, power dynamics, and cultural practices for enhanced effectiveness (Educate to Empower – A Reflection of SNEHA’s 16 Days of Activism Activities | SNEHA, n.d.)



*Image 4.4 Sneha (@snehaofficial, 2023) shared a photograph of an event featuring panel discussions, informative sessions, and interactive games, all centred around the theme.*

This adaptation process illustrates how communities do not passively adopt external frameworks but actively modify messaging, activities, and approaches to align with local languages, cultural sensitivities, and community structures, ultimately enhancing their effectiveness in addressing gender-based violence prevention at the grassroots level.

Another example of Organizational approaches inculcating local values is the Arpan NGO, which has its reach through comprehensive child sexual abuse prevention programs. **Arpan NGO** is a globally recognised, award-winning non-profit dedicated to eliminating **Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)** in India. While drawing from global best practices in child sexual abuse prevention, Arpan modified these frameworks to account for joint family structures, cultural sensitivities around discussing sexuality, and hierarchical adult-child relationships prevalent in Indian society.

Based in Mumbai, with a team of over 150 professionals, Arpan is India's largest non-profit providing CSA Prevention and Intervention services for both children and adults. As a thought leader in CSA Prevention and Intervention, Arpan drives for policy and systemic change at the local, state and national levels, through advocacy and research. Arpan's flagship Personal Safety Education programme in schools equips children and adolescents (ages 4 to 18) with age-appropriate knowledge and skills to recognise and respond to unsafe situations. Arpan also trains teachers and parents with the knowledge, attitude and skills needed to prevent and address CSA effectively. **Since 2007, Arpan has impacted over 19.2 million children and adults, and has received 8 National and 2 International Awards for its exemplary work.**



# 5. Design Intervention

**In the previous sections, I have elaborated on the unique features of India and how many successful social interventions exist in this space by embracing these socio-cultural differences.**

**This section outlines multiple “experiments” done throughout the year, one building on top of the other after feedback and limitations were recognized with each prototype. The semesters involved the execution of three major prototypes, with other small interventions and experiments throughout to provide a backbone. A small overview is presented in Figure 5.1.**

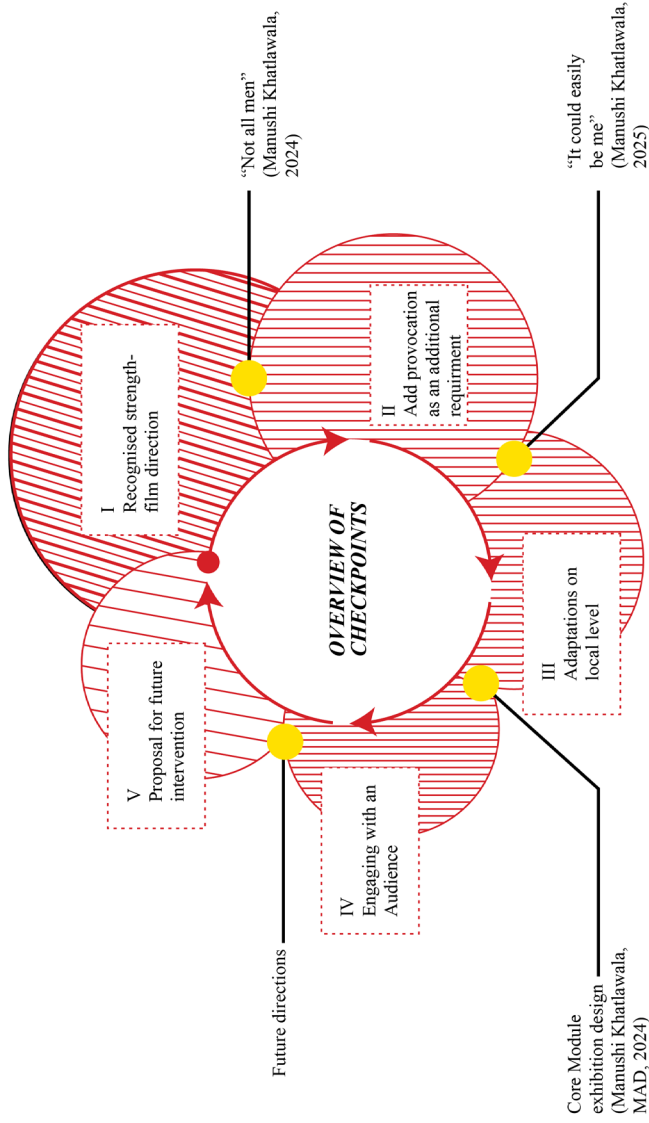


Figure 5.1 Overview of intervention exploration (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)

## 5.1 Prototype 1

The prototype, a short film, was meticulously conceived based on lived experiences and various societal touch-points concerning sexual harassment. The initial conceptualisation involved sketching out a detailed scenario of harassment, exploring it from multiple viewpoints to fully grasp the minute aspects of such encounters.

A significant inspiration for this approach emerged from contemporary television series: Netflix's "Maid" (Metzler, 2021), which powerfully portrays domestic violence, and "You" (Berlanti & Gamble, 2019), which chillingly depicts the motivations and romanticisation of violence from a stalker's perspective. These series offered excellent models for presenting common situations through an entirely different, often unsettling, lens.



*Image 5.1 Screenshot of "Not all men" (Manushi Khatlawala, 2024)*

The film intentionally places the camera as the "eye of a 'creep'," forcing viewers into the uncomfortable position of the harasser. It captures a woman's, in this case mine, palpable discomfort, directly immersing the audience and making them feel physically uneasy. This deliberate provocation aims to foster empathy by giving viewers

a direct, unsettling taste of the experience. It is kept in black and white for an eerie feel, to keep it unbiased and reduce visual clutter to keep focus divided between audio design and visuals, and it is shot on an iPhone, ensuring accessibility and a focus on raw depiction.



*Image 5.2 Screenshot of “Not all men” (Manushi Khatlawala, 2024)*

**Outcome:**

The film achieved its ultimate goal: most viewers reported feeling physically uncomfortable, validating its effectiveness in conveying the intended message and challenging perceptions through a locally relevant, community-adapted lens.

**Learnings:**

While the film “Not all men” was a good prototype, proving provocative and realistic in its portrayal, its impact as a standalone experience had its limitations. It successfully prompted individual introspection, making viewers feel and think deeply about the subject matter. However, the primary learning was that its passive nature, solely relying on individual consumption, often

led to temporary engagement; films, no matter how impactful, can be forgotten. To achieve maximum effect and ensure local relevance, it became clear that the intervention needed to go beyond mere viewing. The goal shifted from individual thought to collective understanding and dialogue, emphasizing the need for an active, interactive element.

This would move beyond simply showing a reality to actively involving the community, catalysing a more lasting societal reflection that addresses shared responsibilities rather than focusing solely on individual culpability.

*Provocative, uncomfortable and a reality.*

## 5.1 Prototype 2

The second prototype, a short film titled “It Could Easily Be Me,” dives into the important aspect of the perception of safety, highlighting how the pervasive narratives of other women’s experiences with abuse profoundly impact daily life. The film’s title itself emerged from a frequently voiced sentiment during the ideation phase: “It could easily be me,” highlighting the emotional burden carried by women.

This prototype’s foundation was laid through a participatory emotional journey mapping activity using colored threads, a successful initial ideation method designed to capture complex feelings.

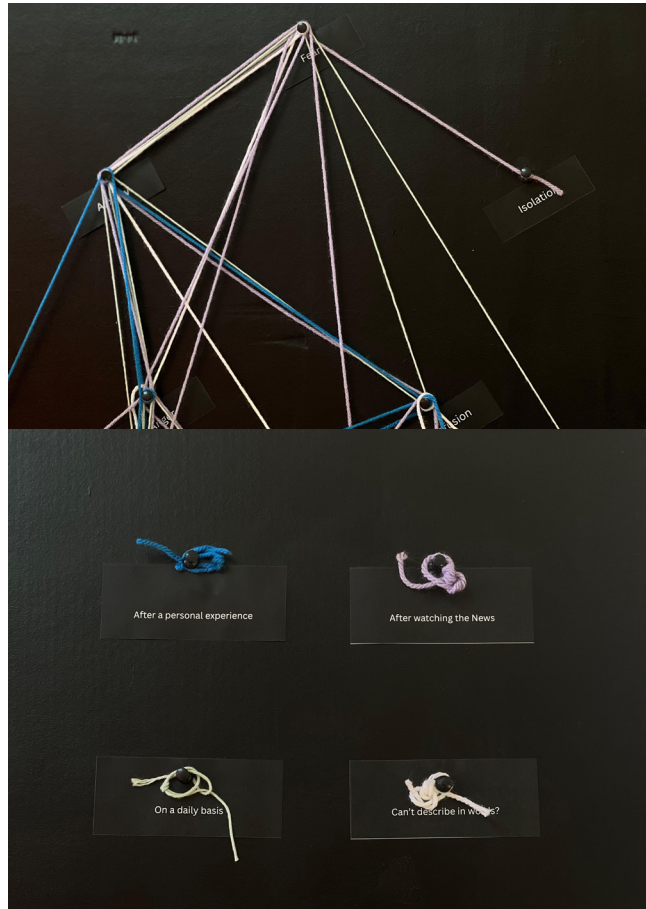
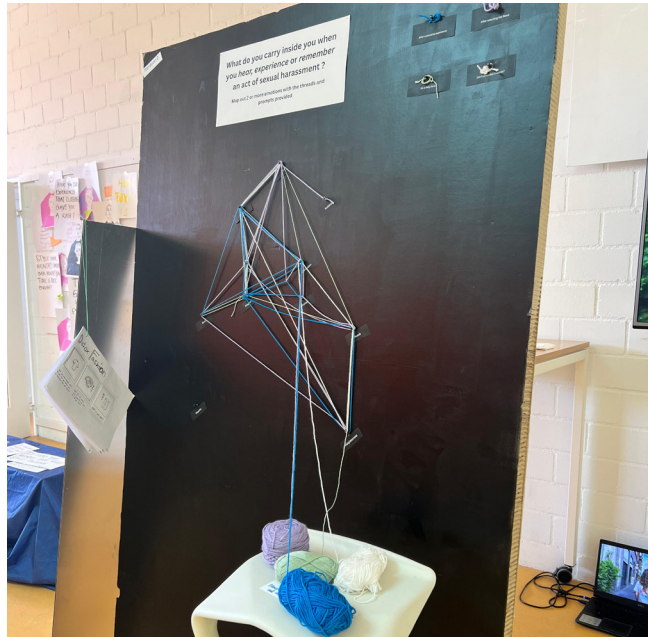


Image 5.3; 5.4 Emotional Mapping activity (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)

Participants articulated their emotions related to personal experiences, news consumption, and daily life, revealing prevalent feelings such as isolation, confusion, fear, and shame (as visually depicted in the ideation phase).



*Image 5.5 Emotional Mapping activity (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)*

The film aims to externalize this difficult-to-capture emotion. It features shots of women from behind in various daily scenarios, visually representing the universal and often anonymous nature of this shared experience.

This visual element is deliberately juxtaposed with an overlapping audio track comprising clippings from news channels and YouTube documentaries discussing sexual abuse.



*Image 5.6 “It could easily be me” film (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)*

### **Improvements with Learnings:**

While the “It Could Easily Be Me” film effectively conveyed emotional impact, it lacked direct community engagement. This led to the creation of the exhibit in the spray-paint room with the Core module. It presented the perfect opportunity to experiment with provocative design.

The confined space, covered in red light, was designed to be emotion-evoking. Red symbolized both India’s cultural associations of sensuality, love, and holiness, and simultaneously, the stark realities of danger, immersing viewers in a powerful, multi-layered experience.



*Image 5.8; 5.9 Stills from Core Module Exhibition (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)*

This sonic environment mimics the constant societal “chatter” surrounding these incidents, demonstrating how this continuous exposure creates an underlying sense of vulnerability, shaping women’s perception of safety even when not directly experiencing harassment. This prototyping module proved highly effective in translating this complex emotional scenario into a compelling design intervention.

#### **Outcome:**

The outcome was positive. While the interactive installation, stemming from the “It Could Easily Be Me” film, was notably well-received within a design school context for its approach to community engagement and sensory experience (utilizing a confined, red-lit space), a critical introspection revealed its limitations in the local Indian context. When attempting to explain its intent to an Indian audience, in this case, my parents, the re-

Image 5.10 Still from Core Module Exhibition (Manushi Khataiwala, 2025)





sponse indicated that while they found it aesthetically impressive, it did not elicit the desired level of personal introspection or profound provocation regarding sexual harassment.

This experience highlighted a significant learning:

As explained in the case studies section, effective community engagement for sensitive topics, particularly in India, necessitates a cultural adaptation to truly resonate and catalyze genuine reflection, moving beyond mere aesthetic appreciation or surface-level understanding.

## 5.3 Future Outlook

Keeping in mind the insights and feedback from the experiments, I am committed to persistently pursue an approach that engages the community on a more authentic level. Recognizing the inherent complexity of this issue, the upcoming design process will adopt a community-based approach, leveraging a strong background in fieldwork.

### Possible collaboration

A key proposal for this endeavour is a collaborative partnership with the non-profit organization Shri Maharani Chimnabai Stree Udyogalaya, Vadodara. This organization, supported by the Gaekwad Dynasty of Vadodara, possesses long-standing relationships within the target communities, offering established trust, valuable resources, and significant influence. This collaboration aims to reduce engagement barriers and enable the development of actionable plans and interventions that resonate locally.

As highlighted by the three key insights derived from Chapter 4's analysis, Local Assets as Design Resources, Community Knowledge Systems, and Innovation through Adaptation, my focus will now delve deeper into these critical areas, ensuring that future design efforts are culturally sensitive, contextually relevant, and truly impactful.

As highlighted by the three key insights derived from Chapter 4's analysis, "Local Assets as Design Resources," "Community Knowledge Systems," and "Innovation through Adaptation", my focus will now delve deeper into these critical areas, ensuring that future design efforts are culturally sensitive, contextually relevant,

and truly impactful.

### **5.3.1 Focus for design thesis**

The design thesis will focus on exploring innovative methodologies for addressing sexual harassment through a synergistic approach that integrates communication design expertise, design research principles, and the established ethos of local community organizations. Hopefully, the collaboration with the Shri Maharani Chimmabai Stree Udyogalaya, will strategically integrate communication design expertise to create impactful narratives and visual solutions with design research methodologies to understand and respond to community knowledge systems effectively.

Should this specific partnership not materialize, the design thesis will explore localizing global best practices, by adapting them to the Indian context. A key aspect of this localization will involve integrating local assets such as festivals, traditional motifs, and community rituals, transforming them into powerful platforms for dialogue and advocacy.

## 5.4 Why Vadodara as a ‘Pilot Program’?

This thesis examines how design, as a methodology and tool for social change, can be applied in the specific context of India. To achieve this, a pilot program is proposed in Vadodara, Gujarat, India.

Vadodara, formerly known as Baroda, is Gujarat’s third-largest city and a significant cultural and industrial centre in western India. The city, which has a metropolitan area of approximately 2.1 million people, represents the problems facing modern India: economic growth combined with persistent gender inequality, rapid urbanisation combined with traditional social structures, and the coexistence of progressive educational institutions with extremely conservative social norms.

Understanding that sexual harassment in India has an unbreakable connection to its complex socio-cultural matrix, which includes centuries of patriarchal traditions, the impact of colonial rule, and religious diversity is essential for readers who are not familiar with the Indian context.

In terms of the thesis, Vadodara’s urban environment is the focus of the geographic scope, which looks at how the city’s social networks, physical infrastructure, and cultural practices either support or may support preventing instances of sexual harassment after dark. This local focus is essential, as effective design interventions must be deeply rooted in the specific conditions, resources, and social dynamics of their intended context.



Naari



नारी

Master Design



Manushi Khatlawala

Part 2

# Design Thesis

97

**Naari**



**नारी**



# Naari: Connecting the dots

Bridging women-led initiatives with ideas and resources.

**Manushi Rajivbhai Khatlawala**

MA Design Thesis  
Lucerne School of Art and Design  
Master of Arts in Design: Master Design

First Supervisor: Christoph Zellweger  
Second Supervisor: Dr Andreas Unteidig

# 6. Design Thesis Documentation

**Sexual violence and gender inequality are global problems, but the forms they take, the structures that sustain them, and the interventions capable of addressing them are shaped almost entirely by local systems of religion, tradition, and power. In India, long-standing social customs, rapid urbanization, and shifting gender roles co-exist in tension, producing an environment where violence against women is both widespread and internationally visible. Solutions imported wholesale from other contexts tend to fail here. What India needs are interventions designed from within its own cultural logic, ones that work with the grain of tradition rather than against it, shifting harmful structures quietly from the inside rather than confronting them head-on.**

This documentation begins from that conviction but narrows to a single, foundational lever: **economic power**. In *Financial Feminist* (Dunlap, n.d.), Tori Dunlap argues that “money is power,” and that in a system historically built to keep money out of women’s hands, taking control of one’s finances becomes “**an act of protest**.” That framing **reorganised my entire approach**. Many

of the conditions that make women suffer in Indian society, from dependence to silence to immobility, are downstream of economic powerlessness. Addressing the root rather than the symptom means putting financial autonomy at the center of any feminist design intervention.

As an Indian student studying design in Europe, I am working at a distance from the context I want to serve. The feminist movement here is decades ahead, and I see it as my responsibility to learn from that maturity, reflect on it critically, and translate what is useful back into the Indian context rather than copy it. India will not follow the European path. Feminism here is far more likely to take shape through infrastructure, access, and **economic participation** than through public confrontation.

The gap I am responding to is not an **absence of support**. India already has a substantial network of institutional resources for women entrepreneurs: government schemes, grants, funding bodies, mentorship programs, and women-led networks. The problem is that this support is **fragmented, poorly communicated, and effectively invisible** to the women who most need it. Existing platforms address pieces of the problem but none of them treat a woman entrepreneur's needs as a single, connected whole.

This project, Naari, is my attempt to close that gap. It is a one-stop platform built to meet the **digital, financial, and connective needs of women entrepreneurs** in India in one place: surfacing the institutional support that already exists, lowering the barrier to claiming it, and connecting women to the networks and tools that sustain a business over time.

“

**The argument running through this documentation is simple. If money is power, then making financial and institutional support legible and reachable is not a convenience. It is the most practical form feminism in India can take.**

## 6.1 My Prototyping Journey

The third semester of the Master in Design was where theory had to become form. I arrived at it with a question I could state but not yet build: feminist discourse, sexual violence, and community-based intervention each occupied its own territory, and I needed to find the ground where all three overlapped. The work of the semester was the work of locating that intersection, not by reasoning toward it but by making things and watching what happened.

I began by listing the ways the question might be executed:

1. Artistic expression
2. Service design
3. Designing for positive futures
4. Scenography
5. Film and Media Design
6. NGO and Social Initiative formats

Each of these was a different door into the same room. Each carried its own assumptions about who would show up, what kind of engagement would hold their attention, and what kind of change was even possible through it. An artistic expression assumes a viewer willing to interpret. A service assumes a user with a need already named. Scenography assumes a body moving through space. Designing for positive futures assumes that imagination can precede infrastructure. None of these assumptions is neutral, and none of them survives contact with the Indian context unexamined.

So I tested them, one at a time. The point was never to choose in advance. It was to let each approach prove itself or fail under real conditions, to see which entry



points opened onto something durable and which collapsed the moment they met the weight of the place they were meant to serve.

Not all of them made it into the final thesis. But each prototype taught me something the next one was built on, and together they trace the path that led, eventually, to Naari.

# 6.1.1 Collective Prototyping

Trauma and Visual Depiction

**My first question was the most direct one: how do people give form to something as interior as fear? I wanted to understand how safety, sexual violence, and the felt sense of being protected or exposed move from sensation into expression, before language intervenes to organize and soften them.**

**As part of the prototyping module, I designed a ninety-minute workshop with my design cohort, structured around three activities.**



Image 6.1 "Collective Prototyping activity (Manvishi Khatalwala, 2025)

### Workshop part 1

We began with a short guided meditation. The aim was simple: to quiet the impulse to produce something correct, and to open a channel for honesty before the making started. I then introduced three words, one at a time, each meant to translate a different register of feeling into visual language:

## Safety. Scar. Unveil.

For each word, participants made a small painting, three in total. They were encouraged to reach for colour and texture rather than literal form, and the single constraint was absolute: no words. The instruction was to let the body lead the hand, to paint what a thing feels like rather than what it looks like.



Image 6.3 “Unveil” by Cajetana Oeschlin & Tanja Schupbach, in *Collective Prototyping activity* (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)



Image 6.2 "Safety" by Marja Cielecka, in Collective Prototyping activity/(Manushi Khatalwala, 2025)

## Workshop part 2

The final activity moved from the page into the hands. Using a limited set of materials, participants built physical depictions of the same three words. The transition from drawing to making was seamless, almost unbroken, as if the body had already decided what it wanted to say and only needed a new medium to say it in.

The results were varied and alive. No two representations were the same. Some reached for elaborate forms, full-body armour, structures of defence and enclosure. Others worked smaller and more provocatively, distilling the idea down to a single accessory, an object you could wear or hold. Each one was a different answer to the same prompt, and the range itself was the finding.



*Image 6.4 Stills of Faculty, Leah Schmidt and student, Marja Cielecka, in Collective Prototyping activity (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)*



### **Outcomes and Learnings**

The workshop confirmed what I had hoped to test: that visual expression could unlock honest responses. Freed from the pressure of words, participants reached past explanation and toward instinct.

But there was a catch: -

This worked beautifully with a design cohort, people already fluent in abstract thinking and comfortable with artistic methods. They knew how to translate feeling into form because that fluency was their training. The women I was actually designing for were not in the room. The method had proven itself in friendly conditions, and that meant it had only proven half of what I needed to know.

## 6.1.2

# Naari Ki Sawaari

Service and Business Design

**My first question was the most direct one: how do people give form to something as interior as fear? I wanted to understand how safety, sexual violence, and the felt sense of being protected or exposed move from sensation into expression, before language intervenes to organize and soften them.**

**As part of the prototyping module, I designed a ninety-minute workshop with my design cohort, structured around three activities.**

Image 6.5 "Pink City" rickshaw by Pranav Madhu



Naari ki Sawaari is a service design proposal exploring women's mobility, safety, and agency within India's public and informal transport systems, taking the Pink Auto ("In Surat Now," 2017) (image 6.4) model as its key reference point. It proposes a service, night cabs run by women, for women, layered on top of an existing driving course already offered by a women's NGO in Vadodara.

The idea was born out of my experience at the InCube Challenge 2025. Somewhere in that process I realized that design in isolation can only carry an idea so far. The world, as it actually works, moves when jobs and financial opportunities are created, not when an argument is well made.

So the proposal does two things at once. It adds a layer of employment for the women trained through the driving course, and it provides a safe ride for end users who are, primarily, other women. The same service answers two needs from opposite ends, the driver's and the passenger's, and closes the loop between them. I mapped this out as a simple service diagram showing how the night cab system might be built and run.

The logic was deliberately modest: add functionality to a model that already works. An existing course, an existing NGO, an existing need, with one new layer placed carefully on top. That restraint was the point. It meant the intervention could be organized from a distance, from here, without requiring me to build something from nothing.

## Service Proposal

### Fold 1

I mapped the proposal across two folds. The first is an audit of what already exists. Shri Maharani Chimnabai Stree Udyogalaya, a women's institute in Vadodara, already runs a driving course for women, complete with registration, two- and four-wheeler training, and corporate backing from Sun Pharma and the Cosmo Foundation. Read closely, the institute already holds the four things any intervention needs: money, resources, connections, and influence. My task was not to invent these but to extend them.

### Fold 2

The second fold is the proposal itself. The service trains drivers from the institute's existing student base and matches them to two kinds of passengers: locals, served through fixed schedules and one-time bookings, and tourists, offered guided sight-seeing routes. Each rider is a woman; each driver is a woman earning an income. The model resolves into two outcomes held in tension and met at once, safety for women in public space and employment for women behind the wheel.

A final question the map leaves deliberately open is whether the booking sits on a new women-only platform or layers onto existing aggregators like Uber, Rapido, and Jugnoo. Demand, meanwhile, is seeded through social media and in-person Gazra Cafe talks, grounding the service in the community before it scales.

SHRI MAHARANI CHIMNABAI STREE UDYOGALAYA



Course : Nari Ki Sawari



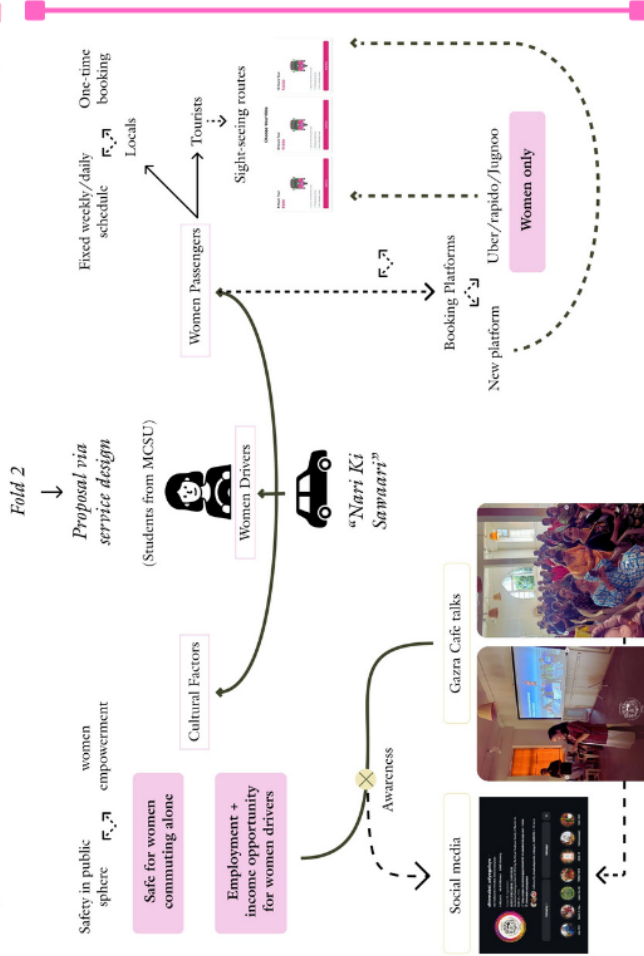
What exists?

- Driving classes for women.
- Supported by companies - Sun Pharma, Cosmo foundation
- Registration via phone number.
- 2 and 4-wheeler

Money ~ Resources ~ Connections ~ Influences

What already exists.

Fold 1



My service proposal.

**Outcomes and Learnings**

Naari ki Sawaari was the seed of what would eventually become Naari.

Working on it, I felt the ground shift under my approach. The artistic and provocative methods had surfaced honest feeling, but feeling is not the same as change.

What this proposal suggested, almost by accident, was that a financial approach, one that generates opportunity and puts money and employment into women's hands, might do more real work than expression ever could.



## 6.1.3

# Morgen Zeitung

Designing for Positive Futures

**In December, I took part in an interactive installation at the Kornhausforum Bern called Morgen Zeitung, designed and staged in collaboration with sixteen Master Design students at HSLU under the supervision of Prof. Karin Fink.**

**The premise was a provocation against the way we usually consume news. Instead of reporting the world as it is, the installation asked visitors to imagine the world as it might be, posing one simple question:**

WOMEN'S  
SAFETY



2

## “What would you like to read in the newspaper of the future?”

The newspaper was written with its readers. Built in real time alongside the audience, it became an optimistic counter-edition to conventional news, a record not of what had gone wrong but of what people hoped would go right.

*Image 6.6 Stills  
‘What If?’ exhibit in  
Kornhausforum Bern –  
Morgen Zeitung (Daniel  
Meeh, 2025)*

I used the installation as a way to put my own thesis into conversation with strangers. I asked visitors about women’s safety in public space, and I watched them imagine futures for it.





## Outcomes and Learnings

The finding was in the variation itself.

Visitors came from different countries, cultures, and lived experiences, and each one imagined the problem, and its resolution, differently. Safety meant one thing to a woman from one part of the world and something else entirely to a woman from another. Hearing those visions side by side made visible exactly what my introduction had insisted on: that this is not a single global problem with a single answer, but a condition refracted through place. Any solution worth building has to be local before it can be anything else.

After introspecting on the installation, noting visitors' reaction times, their answers, and the depth of feeling behind them, I concluded that participative and interactive design has the power to turn passive viewers into co-creators. *Morgen Zeitung* almost forced its visitors to write their own version of reality, making them an active element in authoring their own futures.

One moment stayed with me. A young father came to the exhibit with his daughter. The question took him aback, asked to think positively, for once, about the future of women's safety. In an ideal world, he said, his daughter could go out into public alone, without fear. The installation's AI article writer turned that thought into a headline, and he saw his own wish printed in front of him as news, real and possible.

That answer gave birth to an idea I carried directly into the final design of Naari.



## 6.1.4

# In Utero, Zurich

Scenography and installation design

**I had the opportunity to share my work at In Utero, an exhibition curated by the feminist collective F96 in Zurich. Presenting to an international audience reminded me of the power of perseverance, of feminist solidarity, and of the role design can play in shaping conversations that actually matter.**

The work I brought was older than the thesis itself. Three years ago, I set out to make a children's publication addressing period poverty in India's public education system.

The project was called Adventures of Pembu.



6.7 Stills from "In Utero" Exhibit (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

6.8 Stills from "In Utero" Exhibit (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)





The obstacle revealed itself immediately. Talking about menstruation with children aged eight to eleven was labelled “disrespectful” by many government schools, a reaction that exposed how deep the stigma around women’s sexual and reproductive health runs, and how early it is installed.

So I built a way around it. I developed a fantastical narrative that let children understand a completely natural process without anyone being able to call it inappropriate. The story carried what the curriculum would not.



6.9 Stills from "In Utero" Exhibit (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

## Outcomes and Learnings

Pembi was made three years before this thesis began, but presenting it at In Utero let me read it backwards, as a source of principles the final design would later be built on. Four of them held, and each became a pillar of the work that followed.

### ***Narratives matter.***

The fantastical story in Pembi worked because it made a forbidden subject approachable without being clinical or frightening. That principle would prove foundational. Difficult, gatekept information, the kind written in the language of bureaucracy and eligibility clauses, does not reach people on its own. It has to be wrapped inside a narrative and a visual language that a person actually wants to enter. This became a first principle of everything I designed afterward.

### ***Multilingualism is a strength.***

Producing Pembi in English, Hindi, and Gujarati taught me that access in India is a question of language before it is anything else. Information is useless if a woman cannot read it in the language she thinks in. I carried this forward as a non-negotiable design requirement rather than an added feature: anything meant to reach women across the country cannot assume English fluency.

### ***Better production is a selling point.***

Pembi was built to survive a chaotic classroom and to reduce cost for underfunded schools. The same instinct would shape the final design in digital terms. The value lies not in adding more but in building something durable, low-friction, and cheap to use for women who have neither time nor resources to spare. Robustness, I learned, is itself the offer.



***Scenography is essential to a holistic experience.***

Watching visitors move through the In Utero room showed me that where and how something is encountered is part of what it means. The room is never neutral. This conclusion convinced me that a digital solution alone would not be enough, that the final design would need a spatial, physical dimension as much as a screen-based one, so that the experience could be felt and not only used.

## 6.1.5

# Naari, the podcast

Media and content design

**Naari means “woman” in Hindi. The podcast began with a deliberate decision about who to let into the conversation.**

**I wanted to talk to experts in feminist discourse, to other women in HSLU, working on projects about women and FLINTA communities, and, less obviously, to men, about what Indian feminism actually means.**

The inclusion of men was the design choice, not an oversight. The logic was structural. Men are not outside the system that harms women; they are inside it, often sustaining it without realizing they are doing so. A movement that addresses the system without addressing the

people who hold it up is only ever working on half the problem. If the goal was change rather than indictment, then men were not the opposition to be argued against but allies to be recruited. So the podcast was conceived as a space that included the demography most feminist discourse tends to leave out.

To carry a subject this heavy, I needed a medium that was light enough to travel. I chose to design a trailer, a short film, rather than open with the podcast itself. A film is highly distributable and far more inviting as a first encounter with a difficult topic. It lets an audience arrive through curiosity instead of obligation.

The script's turn is its actual thesis. It admits that feminism has not always made room for men, that it has sometimes left them feeling blamed and uninvited, and then it borrows a line of logic from every math classroom: the hint of the solution is always hidden in the problem. If men are part of the problem, they are also part of the solution. So rather than issuing rules, the film extends an invitation. That reframing, from accusation to conversation, is what the entire concept rests on.



Let's be honest.

The moment a conversation in India  
gets too real -  
we pull out the emergency blanket.

Parampara.  
Prathishta.  
Anushasan.

A neat little trio that sounds poetic  
but somehow always lands on women's  
rights.

These traditions don't just "protect  
culture."

They shrink women.  
Teach us to doubt ourselves.  
And let's say it-  
teach men to resent women.

Like.  
A lot.

But here's the plot twist.

The men in my life -  
my brother, my partner, my friends -  
are actually... feminists.

{They dont like it when I call them  
that}

But they show up.  
They listen.  
They unlearn.

And it made me realise something un-  
comfortable.

Maybe feminism didn't always make  
space for men.

Maybe it made them feel blamed.  
Cornered.  
Uninvited.

But like every math teacher told us,  
the hint of the solution is always in  
the problem.

But if men are part of the problem,  
they're also part of the solution.

So instead of setting rules,  
what if we sent an invitation?

That's what Naari is.

Not instructions.  
Not accusations.

Just conversations -  
that slowly turn into reality.





## The men in my life



\*not my brother\*



\*not my partner\*



\*not my friends\*

**“A real man  
doesn't feel pain”**



Amitabh Bachchan in Mard ko Dard nahit

Image 6.10 Screenshots from 'Naari - Podcast' Video Design  
(Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)



### Outcomes and Learnings

Naari trailer confirmed the lesson from *Morgen Zeitung* and *Pembi* from a new angle. Narrative and medium do the persuasive work that direct argument cannot. A film that uses humour, familiar references, and a positive, quick pace can hold a viewer inside a difficult subject long enough for the real point to land, where a lecture would have lost them at the first line.

Most importantly, the podcast established the conversational posture that defines Naari as a whole. The medium was new, but the stance, inviting people into a difficult subject rather than confronting them with it, became one of the platform's foundational commitments.

It took a huge load off of my own shoulders. There was a point where I felt it was becoming too much of a discussive topic, and talking about feminism in a country that solely focuses on the benefits of a patriarchy was a weight I wasn't ready to take on. I needed to find something more positive to focus on; something hopeful and actually actionable, and Naari- the podcast, made this a bit more tolerable.

I knew that this wasn't the whole concept. It was still a bit fragmented, and did not feel holistic, but it felt like the right direction.



# 6.1.6 Prototyping

## Module 3

Academic Display design

**The prototyping module 3 exhibit was an amalgamation of all the prototypes discussed until now. It was a design challenge in the sense of showcasing a wide variety of diverse prototypes and concepts into one display.**

**It was a lesson was in design but also production. A big Thanks to Felix Schultz, Shanice Heuzeveldt and Evan Sands for organizing everything in the Aktionshalle at Hochschule Luzern - Design Film Kunst.**

ari

woman) is a podcast platform  
conversations on feminism, trauma  
inism has long been misrepresented  
to hostility, especially in recent years.  
nges this distortion by reframing  
ught as dialogue, reflection, and  
gh honest conversations and critical  
, the platform creates space for  
rning, and advancing women's rights.

Part  
Solution,  
in the p



Image 6.8 Stills from Prototyping Module 3 exhibit at HSLU – Design Film Kunst (Eva Moreno, 2026)



Image 6.11 Prototyping Module 3 exhibit (Eva Moreno, 2026)





# 7. Naari – Conception to Execution

**Every prototype had taught me something, but none of them had yet become the thing. The turn came in a coaching session.**

**I went in wanting to push Naari ki Sawaari forward as an NGO. Andreas asked me a single question that dismantled the plan and rebuilt the thesis in its place: if I wanted to operate in an NGO format, did I actually understand why NGOs in a country as vast as India are so fragmented in the first place?**

Some fragmentation is inevitable in a country of India's scale; that much was obvious. But "inevitable" is not an explanation, and I realized I had been about to build on top of a system I had never examined. So before designing anything further, I had to understand the ground itself. What actually characterizes the NGO sector in India? How are these organizations disconnected from one another, and from the people they serve? Where does the sector break, and how could design help repair it rather than add one more isolated node to the pile?

That single question opened into a field of them. Once I started pulling, the whole system came with it.

I began asking who Indian women actually are as a demographic, how they live, and what ecosystems they

already move within. I wanted to know whether a more feminist state could be built not by tearing down existing systems but by improving the ones already in place, tilting them in women's favour. What institutional support genuinely exists for them? Is the system organized enough, at either the governmental or the private level, to be navigated by the women it is meant to serve?

The questions grew more specific and more practical the deeper I went. Are there communities for women, online or offline, and how many? How many government grants exist, and, more pointedly, where is a woman supposed to find the ones she qualifies for? What schemes are available to her? Are there venture capital firms that fund women-led businesses? Are there social investors backing enterprises built for women's betterment?

And running underneath all of it, the hardest question of all: **what are the real ways to instill feminist values, and feminist self-belief, in women living inside a tradition as old and as binding as India's?** These were not rhetorical. They were the research agenda, set in motion by one coaching question, and the answers I found, or failed to find, are what made Naari necessary.

The pattern that emerged was consistent. The support was not missing. It was scattered, unlinked, and effectively invisible to the women who needed it most. The problem was never absence. It was fragmentation. And once I could see that clearly, the shape of the solution began to announce itself. I started seeing women entrepreneurs as a tool not just for economic opportunity but also as feminist action. A businesswoman would be the perfect embodiment of a feminist act in a socialist-capitalist economy. **I dove deeper into understanding the lives of women and ultimately women entrepreneurs.**

### Change in the Research Question

Realising the shift of design interest, it was time for an update on the research question. I wanted to make it more than just a service design; I wanted to make a way for women's growth to be positively facilitated through design. The research question evolved from asking how design could prevent harassment to asking how design could increase women's agency by facilitating access to economic opportunity, institutional support, and community. And hence, a new question emerged,



**“How can design increase women’s agency in patriarchal systems by facilitating access to economic opportunity, institutional support, and community?”**

The target shifted from creating awareness to creating infrastructure. Naari, in its final form, is the answer to this second question, not the first.

## 7.1 Desktop Research

### Existing infrastructure and institutional support available to Indian women and women entrepreneurs

The institutional landscape supporting women in India, and particularly women entrepreneurs, is broad but unevenly distributed across four categories. The first category is **financial infrastructure**, comprising dedicated credit programs such as the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana, which offers loans up to ₹10 lakh to micro enterprises without collateral, and the Stand Up India scheme, which provides bank financing between ₹10 lakh and ₹1 crore specifically to women and Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe entrepreneurs for greenfield enterprises. (Sharma et al., n.d.)

The institutional stakeholder category includes the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), which channels micro-credit through Self-Help Group-bank linkage programs; the Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), which organises women into community-based producer groups; and the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, which administers the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) and related schemes for women-led enterprises (Lp & -, 2026).

The third category is **skill-building and capacity-development infrastructure**, which includes government-sponsored training centres, digital literacy programs, and incubation hubs that aim to bridge the gap between women's existing capabilities and the requirements of formal-sector markets (Dr. Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi Government Institute for Post Graduate Studies and Research & Zaheer Ahmed, 2025)

The fourth category, **grassroots and community-based** infrastructure, centres on the Self-Help Group (SHG) ecosystem. Active SHG participation has been shown to increase women's financial autonomy, strengthen household-level decision-making power, and improve social recognition and leadership capacity (Rahman & Mehnaz, 2024b). Despite this range of provisions, a consistent finding across all four categories is that the support is fragmented: programs rarely share data, eligibility criteria vary from one scheme to the next, and there is no single entry point through which a woman entrepreneur can discover which grants or resources apply to her, a gap that was also echoed in the primary research of this thesis (Khatlawala, 2025). The system is supply-rich but demand-poorly organised, a condition Naari was designed to address.

### **An Indian woman's ecosystem and stakeholder mapping**

The ecosystem a woman entrepreneur in India navigates is best understood as a set of concentric rings, each containing distinct actors with whom she must interact, often across multiple points of friction.

At the innermost ring is the **household and family**, which functions as both a source of constraint and a source of support. Studies from the Global South show that family structures and male-headed households frequently mediate a woman's access to mobility, financial decision-making, and the labour market, meaning that any intervention designed for her must account for the stakeholders she answers to at home.(Ojediran & Anderson, 2020).

Outside this ring sits the **local community**, comprising neighbours, peer-women in Self-Help Groups, and local

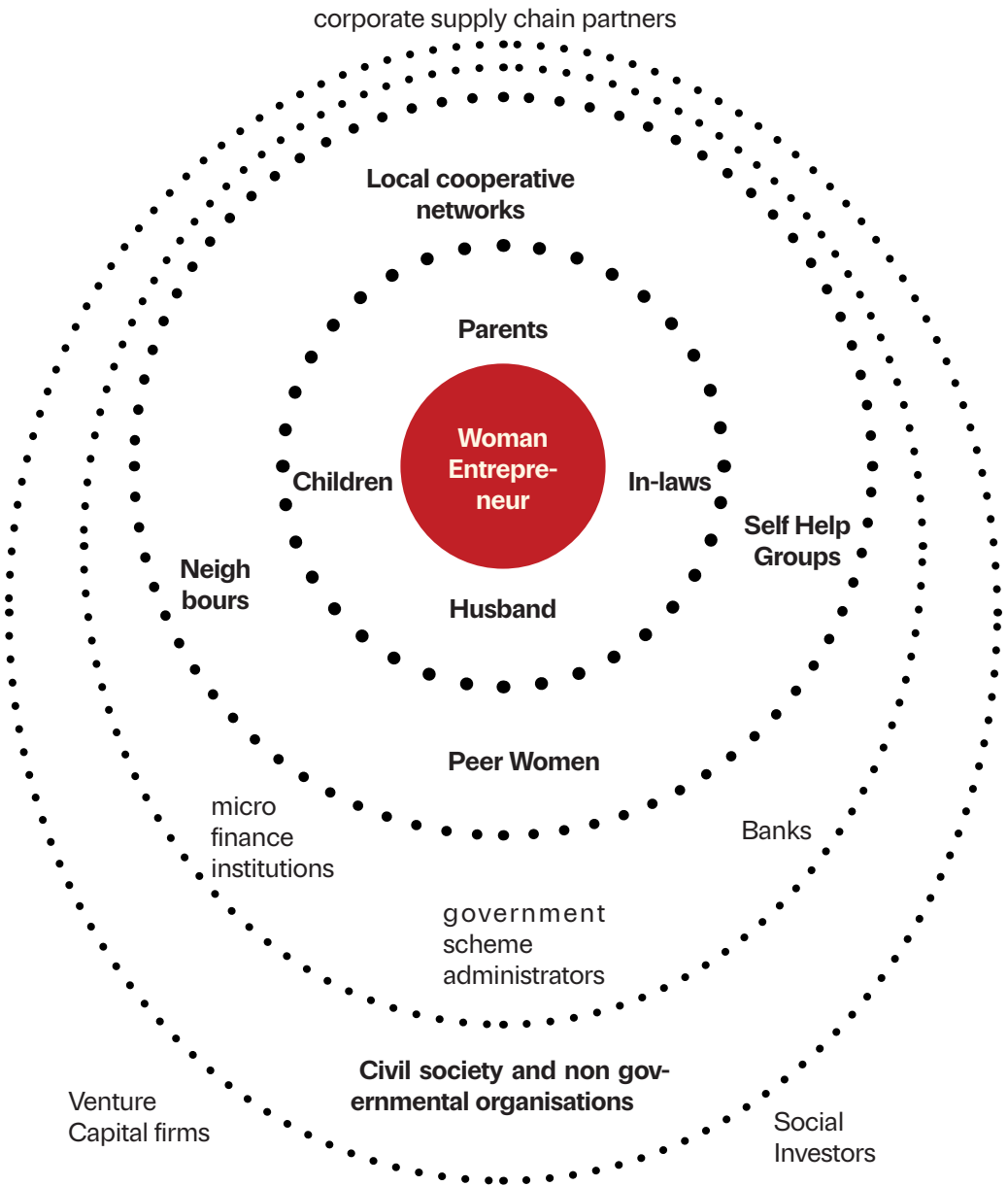


Figure 7.1 Women entrepreneur eco-system (Manushi Khatlavala, 2026)

cooperative networks. These are the stakeholders who provide informal childcare, loan-pooling arrangements, market information, and reputational endorsement, a layer of social capital that is especially important in India's semi-urban and rural contexts(Lp & -, 2026).

The third ring is **institutional**: the banks, micro finance institutions, and government scheme administrators who sit upstream of her. Here the relationship is not one of peer support but of gatekeeping; she must satisfy their documentation requirements, navigate their application processes, and meet their eligibility criteria, all of which impose a considerable time and literacy burden. (Singh & Pande, 2023)

The fourth ring is **civil society and non governmental organisations**, which in the context of women's entrepreneurship in India act as essential intermediaries. Organisations like the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), the Shri Maharani Chimnabai Stree Udyogalaya (MCSU) in Vadodara, and the Breakthrough Trust deploy training workshops, legal aid, and market linkage support; they are the bridge between the informal economy and formal sector entry. (Section 4.2, 4.3)

The outermost ring is **private sector and market facing actors**: venture capital firms, social investors, corporate supply chain partners, and the customers she needs to reach. In India, this ring is the least accessible of all to women entrepreneurs, because it demands the very things the inner rings do not provide, formal registration, digital literacy, a track record of revenue, and the confidence to pitch in spaces where she is often the only woman in the room. What the ecosystem map makes visible is that the connections between these rings are weak or missing entirely: a woman in a SHG in rural Uttar Pradesh has no direct line to the venture cap-



ital firm funding women led businesses in Bangalore; a government scheme in Delhi does not know she exists; and the institution providing her training has no way to follow her into the market. Naari's function is to sit in the centre of this map and pull those rings together, making the stakeholder network navigable rather than overwhelming.

## 7.2 In-depth research of India's Public and private sector

India has a growing ecosystem for women entrepreneurs. **A handful of venture funds exist that focus exclusively on women-led startups for example,**

1. She Capital (She Capital | VC Backing Female-Led Startups in India, n.d.),
2. Colossa Ventures (Colossa Ventures India Opportunity, n.d.),
3. Saha Fund (Home | Sahafund, n.d.)
4. StrongHer Capital (Home | StrongHer Ventures, n.d.).

**Several incubators, accelerators and networks, for example,**

1. NSRCEL's Women Startup Program (Women Startup Program | NSRCEL, n.d.)
2. FICCI-FLO (FICCI FLO | India's Leading Platform for Women in Business & Leadership, n.d.),
3. NITI Aayog WEP portal (Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) - Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in India, n.d.),
4. Womennovator, (Womennovator | First Virtual Global Incubator for Women, n.d.)

These offer mentoring, training, community and some funding to women-led ventures.

**The Government of India also runs many schemes**

1. Stand-Up India (Personal & Corporate Banking | MSME & Agri Banking - IDBI Bank, n.d.)
2. Mahila Udyam Nidhi (Home - Small Industries Development Bank of India, n.d.)
3. Annapurna (PMEGP Home, n.d.)

The schemes provide concessional loans and grants to women entrepreneurs. Below is a concise comparison of key players and schemes (ticks = service offered, × = not offered):

Entity	Funding	Funding	Grants/Subsidies	Mentorship	aiming/incubation	Networking	Women-only	National	Cost
<b>VC Funds (India, women-only)</b>									
Shiv Capital (Delhi)	✓		×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	×
Cosmos WomenFirst (Mumbai)	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	×
Sana Fund (Bangalore)	✓	✓	×	✓	✓ (via social)	✓	✓	✓	×
StrongHer Capital (Gloaba*)	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	×
<b>Networks/Incubators</b>									
WE Hub (Telungana)	✓	(seed/depend)	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	× (state)	✓
NSRCEL Women Startup Program		(NIR 10L grant)	×	✓	✓ (pre-incubation)	✓	✓	✓	✓
NIT Aayra WEP	×	×	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×
Womenosator (Gwalal/India)	×	×	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×
FICCI FLO (22 chapters)	×	×	×	✓ (mentors)	✓ (workshops)	✓	✓	✓	×
<b>Government Scheme/Portals</b>									
Startup India Women Portal	×	(info only)	×	✓	✓ (info)	✓ (resources)	✓	✓	✓
Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)	×	×	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stand-Up India (Banks)	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	×
MUDRA Yojana – WomenSch. (PMWY)	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	×
Mahila Udyam Nahi (SIDBI)	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	×
Aamapana Scheme (NSME)	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	×
<b>Networking/Mentorship Events</b>									
TE Women Founders Program (annual)	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	×
Women Power Summit (annual)	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	×
SheSpartan/WEP Events (annual)	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	×
WEConnect Meetups (WE Hubs)	✓	(seed funding pilots)	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓

Image. 71 Cross-comparison of India's Public and private sector (Manushi Khatawala, 2026)

### 7.2.1 Conclusion and Strategic Gap Analysis

India's women entrepreneurship ecosystem is rich but fragmented. Venture capital firms focused on women founders address the funding gap, while incubators, accelerators, government schemes, and networking organisations provide mentorship, training, compliance support, and community building. However, critical non-financial support systems remain neglected: only 4% of central and 3% of state schemes offer mentorship as a primary domain, and only 18.5% of central schemes target market linkages.(Shroff, n.d.)

What is missing is an integrated journey that moves a woman entrepreneur from idea validation through funding, business growth, market access, and long-term peer support within a single platform.

Most founders navigate multiple disconnected systems. They apply for government schemes separately, search independently for women-focused investors, join different networks, and source mentors through personal connections. This creates significant information asymmetry, particularly for first-time founders, entrepreneurs outside metropolitan cities, and women balancing professional and personal responsibilities. Over 85% of women entrepreneurs face challenges in availing loan services from public sector banks, and only 3.4% of all women entrepreneurs have benefited from government support schemes (Perez, 2023).

Support concentrates heavily around urban startup hubs and venture-backed businesses. Women-led startups in India receive only 0.3% of total venture capital funding, and for every ₹100 raised by founders, just ₹4 goes to women.(India's Startup Mafia Gives Women Just ₹4 for Every ₹100: Report, n.d.). The unmet credit gap for women-led businesses exceeds \$11.4 billion

(Calder, 2026).

These findings point to an opportunity for a unified women-centric entrepreneurship platform that combines discovery, education, mentorship (potentially), funding access (potentially), networking, and community engagement in one ecosystem. Such a platform would not replace existing funds, government programs, or support organisations. Instead, it would act as an enabling layer that connects women entrepreneurs to the right opportunities at the right stage of their journey.

Within this context, Naari emerges as a potential solution, designed to bridge aspiration, access, and execution through a centralized, trusted, and scalable ecosystem for women entrepreneurs across India.

### **7.2.2 Best practices**

Both platforms offer valuable pieces of what Naari aims to provide, but each operates within a limited scope.

**Decoding Draupadi** positions itself as a women-first social enterprise serving creative professionals. Its offerings include a vetted WhatsApp community of over 500 creative freelancers who share opportunities, a podcast featuring women experts, a speaker network for panels and conferences, and content across LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube (Decoding Draupadi, n.d.). The community model is effective within its niche but restricted in two ways: it exclusively serves women in creative fields, excluding entrepreneurs in other sectors, and the primary community touchpoint is a WhatsApp group, which limits scalability, searchability, and structured engagement. The platform is also fragmented across multiple verticals (content, commerce, commu-

nity, marketing services), each operating somewhat independently rather than forming an integrated journey.

**Feminism In India** functions as a digital magazine and podcast network delivering intersectional feminist discourse through long-form articles, podcast series, and media analysis. (Feminism In India | Intersectional Feminism – Desi Style!, n.d.) It excels at creating thoughtful, feminist content that educates and contextualizes issues ranging from insurance law to caste and gender. However, its engagement model is predominantly passive: readers consume articles, listeners stream episodes, but the platform offers no active community participation, no peer-to-peer networking, no access to economic opportunity or institutional support. It informs but does not connect.

Taken together, these platforms highlight the gap Naari is designed to fill. Decoding Draupadi demonstrates the value of a curated community for opportunity-sharing, but only for one profession and through a single informal channel. Feminism In India shows the appetite for feminist discourse in the Indian context, but stops short of enabling action. Naari brings both community and discourse into

## 7.3 Naari – Women connecting the Dots

After mapping the stakeholder landscape of Indian women's lives, the public and private investment sector and understanding feminist discourse through an organised institutional lens, I narrowed the focus to one category: women entrepreneurs. The proposition that emerged from this analysis was that the answer to Indian feminism lies not in abstract consciousness-raising but in two tangible enablers: education and financial independence. This assertion is not theoretical; it is grounded in the lived reality of my own family, where I have observed, first-hand, that financial independence creates the conditions for a woman to protest the direct structural effects of patriarchy. A woman with her own income does not ask permission to leave an unsafe situation; she has the bargaining power to negotiate the terms of her own life. Economic agency is, in this sense, a form of resistance; a rebellion against the systems that have historically confined women's autonomy to the domestic sphere.

The design response I arrived at was to build a small, self-contained ecosystem; a connective platform that would not simply aggregate resources but would actively facilitate genuine connections among women entrepreneurs and expose them to the institutional support that already exists but is currently scattered. This platform is Naari.

As an aspiring woman entrepreneur myself, I **defined three distinct touchpoints that the platform would serve, each one corresponding to a structural gap I had identified in the preceding research.**

### 1. Online Community

India is massive- geographically, linguistically, and in terms of the sheer number of women engaged in entrepreneurial activity across formal and informal sectors. The most scalable way to connect these women to one another, and to create a visible collective of Indian feminist entrepreneurial voices, is through social media. I envisioned Naari as an online space where women-led businesses could co-exist, where feminist discourse could circulate, and where the aggregate of achievements, legal wins, policy changes, and success stories could function as a living archive. It would be a platform for all the good things that happen to women in India as an active, participatory collective.

### 2. Information Platform

The second touchpoint is a website that serves as the foundational information layer of Naari. Its primary function is not to manage applications but to act as an information board and search engine. Here, women entrepreneurs can search what government schemes they are eligible for through a single, consolidated interface. The site would provide basic information about Naari itself, along with a searchable database of institutional offerings, filtering by criteria such as sector, location, and enterprise stage. The emphasis is on visibility rather than processing: the goal is to close the information asymmetry that has been identified as one of the primary obstacles to women's access to institutional support.

### 3. Physical Events and Reclaimed Spaces

The third touchpoint responds to a social gap that digital spaces cannot fill. I recognised that women entrepreneurs benefit not only from access to information

but from access to each other, to the informal networks, trust-building, and peer solidarity that face-to-face interaction enables. Naari's physical events depart from the conventional format of conferences and keynotes delivered in generic, male-coded spaces. Instead, they are "girl-coded" experiences: pottery-making workshops, supper clubs, board game nights, book clubs, and night excursions into public spaces to reclaim them. These events are designed to be welcoming without being performatively formal. They are hosted in women-owned spaces like cafés, restaurants, art galleries, and community centres and feature informal keynote inputs from successful women entrepreneurs who speak not from a podium but within the context of the gathering itself.

I want to be explicit about one important design decision: men are not excluded from Naari. As long as the focus of the event or contribution is the betterment of women, men are welcome participants. A model here is the initiative by CA Rajiv Khatlawala, whose series *Fin-telligent Women* provided financial literacy and investment training specifically to women in the corporate sector. The involvement of such men is an amplification of Naari, a recognition that the work of building an ecosystem for women's economic empowerment is not a women-only project but a societal one. What matters is the consistent centring of women's needs in every touchpoint, whether online or off.

### Why connecting the “dots”?

This tagline might sound a bit cliched, but there is a deeper meaning behind it. Of course, connecting the dots was about facilitation, but it simply could have been “filling the gaps”.

**Dots have a very integral part of feminine identity in South-asian communities.** There are various forms of adornments in the shape of dots. The two most notable ones are –

“**Trajva**” tattoos from Gujarat, western India and Bindi.

Trajva (or trajwas) is a traditional tattooing practice originating from the nomadic and rural communities of Gujarat and Rajasthan, India (most notably the Rabari, Mer, and Bharwad tribes). For women, these tattoos hold deep cultural significance, representing strength, identity, spiritual protection, and permanent jewelry. And in many agrarian and nomadic tribes, it is a spiritual belief that these tattoos, unlike physical wealth and prosperity, are the only meaningful markers that remain with a woman into the afterlife.

I wanted to respect that tradition and also celebrate it through Naari’s brand design. I will explain Bindi’s significance in the coming sections.

### 7.3.1 Designing Naari

This is where I started having fun. Having a bachelor's degree in communication design, I have worked with branding and identity design, social media engagement, content and public relations design. I wanted to leverage this expertise and do a quick round of brand design for Naari. The following section defines and outlines this.

#### Brand voice

Naari's visual identity was conceived at the cross-section of tradition and modernity, designed to feel deeply Indian yet ready for a global stage. The brand draws from two rich visual traditions: Pichwai paintings, with intricate lotus motifs and pastoral scenes of Krishna, and the ornamentation of Mughal miniature paintings, known for their detailed borders, gold-leaf accents, and layered compositions. Both styles were sourced as references rather than reproduced, allowing the design to evoke cultural memory without being bound by historical fidelity. They were reinterpreted through clean lines, generous whitespace, and modular grid systems familiar to contemporary digital design. The result is a visual language that feels inherited.

Typography was selected with dual-language parity in mind. English and Hindi appear alongside each other throughout the platform. This decision reflects the reality that India's women entrepreneurs speak, read, and think in multiple languages, and any platform that claims to serve them must meet them where they are.

The color palette carries its own argument. Red, the color of marriage, sindoor, and love in Indian tradition, is also the color of protest, rage, and lust. It holds both

meanings at once. Green draws from nature, harmony, and ‘mehendi’ (henna), which is a deeply feminine tradition in Indian celebrations. Against these, deep black and vanilla cream operate as strategic design choices as a visual contrast, for grounding the palette and creating visual hierarchy.

### 7.3.2 Identity and brand images

Keeping the mood board in mind, I started exploring with Devanagari type and Latin type. Traditional typefaces are often perceived to be with serif in both Hindi and English languages (Gholap, n.d.).

ना॰री  
NAARI

ना॰री  
NAARI

ना॰री  
NAARI

ना॰री  
NAARI





To continue the narrative of traditionalism intersecting with modernity, I began exploring Pichwai and Mughal Miniature paintings. These art forms became a source of inspiration for visual storytelling, as they often depicted women within domestic settings, surrounded by children, or portrayed as objects of desire and pleasure.

Using Generative AI in Photoshop, I redesigned these conventional representations into empowering imagery for Naari. The children in the paintings were replaced with symbols of economic independence, such as laptops and money. This transformation creates a dual effect: the visuals retain a sense of familiarity, cultural heritage, and antiquity, while the contemporary interventions introduce an unexpected and thought-provoking twist.



*Image. 7.3 Mughal Miniature, Cleveland Museum of Arts (n.d)*

Image. 74 Naari brand image (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

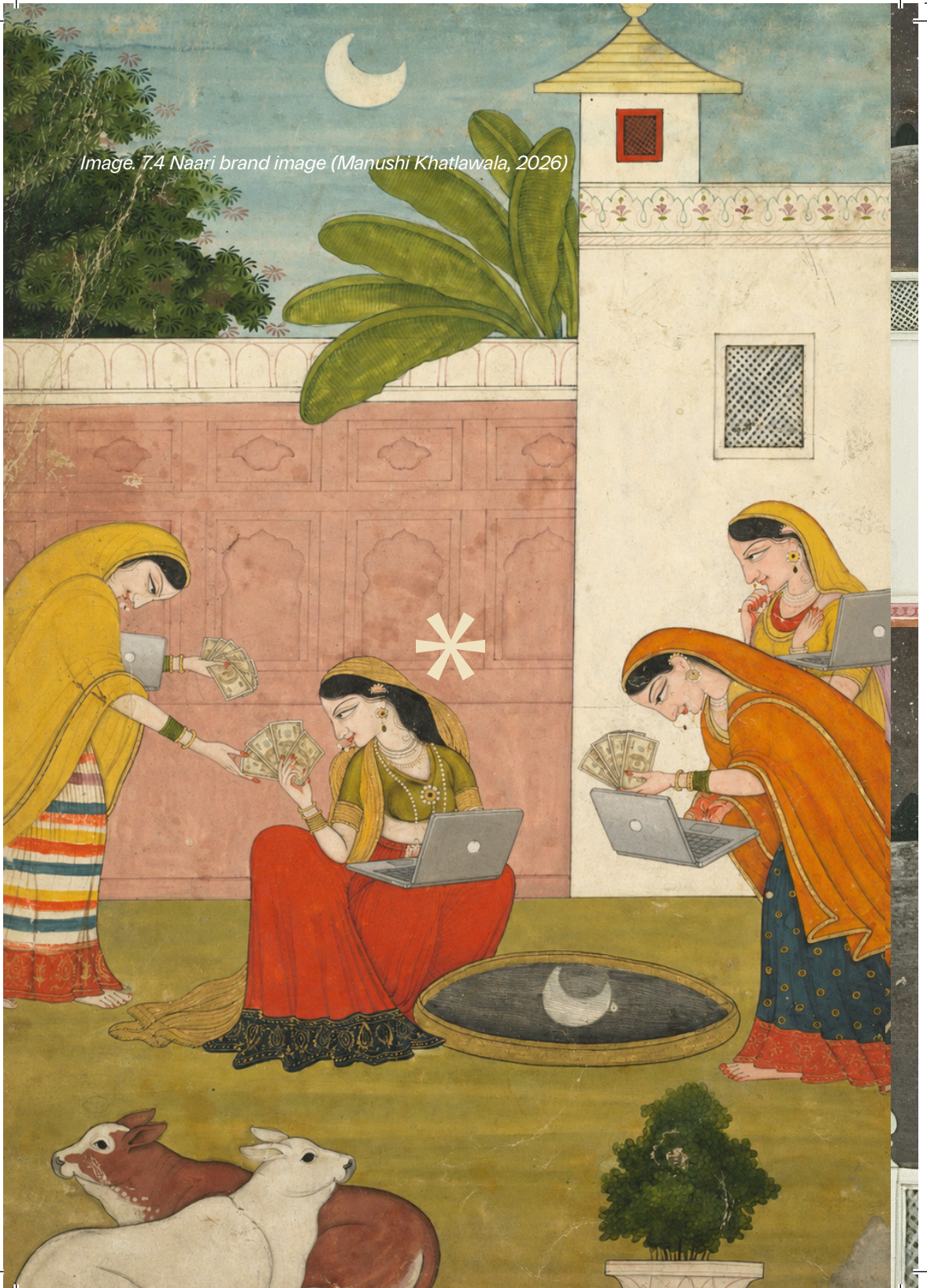


Image. 7.5 Mughal Miniature, Cleveland Museum of Arts (n.d)



Image. 7.6 Naari brand image (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

# ना.री NAARI



### 7.3.3 Website Design

I wanted the Naari website to feel official and corporate while still retaining an artistic sensibility. To achieve this, I explored several design directions in Readymag, the no-code website platform. One of the concepts I developed had a distinctly corporate aesthetic; however, I ultimately decided against it, as I wanted the project to remain rooted in experience design rather than resemble a conventional corporate website.



*Image. 7.7 Screenshot of Naari Website iteration 1 (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)*

*On the right, Image. 7.8 Screenshot of Naari Website final (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)*



#01

Who we are

# Connecting women entrepreneurs with opportunities, community, and real-world relationships.



## About Naari

Naari (hindi; woman) closes the gap between feminist intention and real, material change, connecting those who care with institutions that have resources, and artists who make it visible.



We believe feminist progress happens in boardrooms and over biryani. At keynotes and at sip-and-paint evenings. In policy papers and in video content. Naari holds all of it.

### 7.3.4 Government Information Board

The central element of the website was the government information board. This was not just a challenge to design, but also to code. I collaborated with Parin Shah (Manufacturing Engineer) and Daniel Warmouth (business developer and coder) to code the information board on Visual Studio Code. For this to work, I needed to make a document called Information Architecture – which would not only have user flows, Goals & Objectives, User Personas, Primary User Tasks, Success Metrics, Filter Dimensions, Content Inventory & Metadata Schema, but also Application Programming Interface (API) keys that would source data from Government website portals.

Some other technical diagrams and flows were made in collaboration with Daniel Warmouth in Berlin, Germany.

#### Information Architecture (technical)

Naari will be a one-stop portal to help women (entrepreneurs, job-seekers, homemakers, NGOs/field officers) find and apply for relevant government schemes. Inspired by platforms like myScheme (Digital India) and NARI, Naari will gather scheme data from official sources and present it via a user-centric IA. Users enter their profile (age, income, location, etc.) to discover tailored schemes (myScheme - One-Stop Search and Discovery Platform of the Government Schemes, n.d.). Each scheme record will include metadata (title, issuing agency, eligibility, benefits, etc.) so users can compare and apply.

Filters cover demographics (age, gender, caste, disability), socio-economic (income, education, marital status), business (sector, venture type, stage, legal status), and



location (state, city, urban/rural, language) to narrow results. Data will be ingested from authoritative sources (central portals like myScheme and WCD/NARI, state government sites, ministry APIs) and refreshed regularly to ensure accuracy. Key user flows include search/filter, viewing scheme details, and navigating to application links. Access control will be minimal (public portal with optional accounts for saving schemes). Privacy by design means minimal personal data storage. Localisation (multi-language UI) is built-in given India’s diversity. Edge cases (no results found, broken links) will be handled gracefully with fallbacks and feedback options. (India.Gov.in | National Portal India, n.d.) The IA will be documented with tables of filters, metadata, sources, mermaid ER/flow diagrams, and sample JSON data schemas.

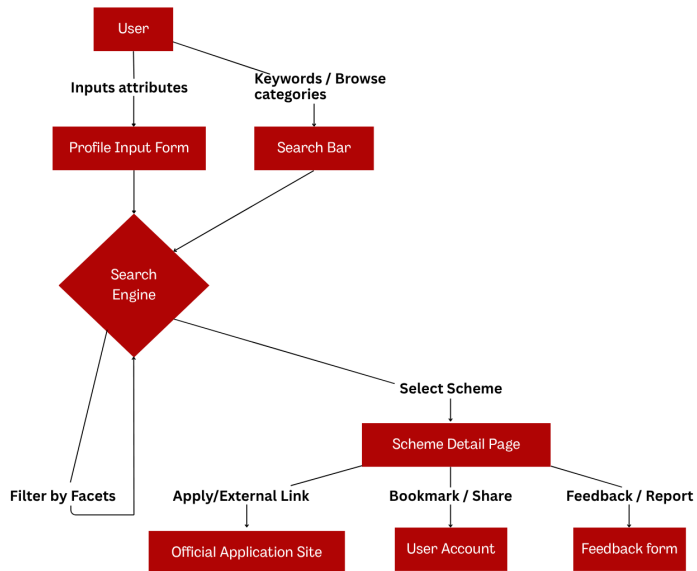


Figure 7.2 User flow of Naari – the scheme finder (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

naari Naari — Women's Scheme Finder
English
Set Profile
Login

Your Profile: No profile set — showing all schemes [Edit Profile](#)

FILTERS Clear All

- Location
  - State / UT
  - All States
  - Area Type
  - Urban & Rural
- Demographics
  - Your Age
  - e.g. 28
  - Caste / Category
  - All Categories
  - Marital Status
  - Any
  - Education Level
  - Any Level
  - Disability
  - Any
- Business
  - Sector
  - All Sectors
  - Business Stage
  - Any Stage
  - Annual Family Income
  - Any Income

Search schemes (e.g. 'loan', 'training', 'scholarship', 'startup')...

Showing 15 of 15 schemes

Find Schemes

Sort Relevance

**Mahila Udayam Nidhi Yojana**

Small Industries Dev. Bank of India (SIDBI)

Soft loan up to ₹10 lakh at 5% interest p.a. for women entrepreneurs setting up new production units

Up to ₹10 Lakh

• Open Year-Round

**Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)**

Ministry of Women and Child Development

₹5,000 cash incentive in 3 installments directly to bank account for maternity support and nutrition

₹5,000 Cash

• Open Year-Round

**MUDRA Loan – Shishu / Kishor / Tarun**

Micro Units Dev. & Finance Agency (MUDRA)

Collateral-free loan. Shishu (₹50K), Kishor (₹5M-5L), Tarun (₹5L-10L) at competitive rates

Up to ₹10 Lakh

• Open Year-Round

**Stand-Up India Scheme**

Dept. of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance

Bank loan ₹10 lakh – ₹1 crore to set up greenfield enterprise. 25% of project cost as margin money

₹10L – ₹1 Crore

• Open Year-Round

**PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana – Women Empowerment**

Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

Free skill training in 300+ job roles with govt-recognised certification and ₹500-₹3,000 stipend

Free + ₹5,000

• Open Year-Round

**Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Women Beneficiary**

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

Interest subsidy 3-4.5% on home loans up to ₹6 lakh, additional ₹1.5 lakh for house construction

Housing Subsidy Urban

Up to ₹2,87,500 Subsidy

• Open Year-Round

**Kerala Kudumbashree – Micro Enterprise Development**

State Poverty Eradication Mission, Kerala (Kudumbashree)

Revolving fund up to ₹1 lakh, business training, technology support & market linkage for micro enterprises

Microfinance SHG Rural ₹1 Lakh fund

• Open Year-Round

**TN Moovelur Ramamirtham Annaiyari Scheme**

Tamil Nadu Social Welfare & Women Empowerment Dept.

Monthly scholarship ₹1,000-₹1,200 plus free bicycle and tablet to enable higher education

₹1,200 / month

• Apply by September 30 every year

**Karnataka Women Self-Help Enterprise Scheme**

Karnataka Dept. of Women & Child Development

Seed grant of ₹50,000 plus 3-month skill training and market linkage support for SHGs

Grant SHG Training ₹50,000 Grant

• Apply by December 31, 2025

**National Scholarship for Single Girl Child (NSGC)**

University Grants Commission (UGC)

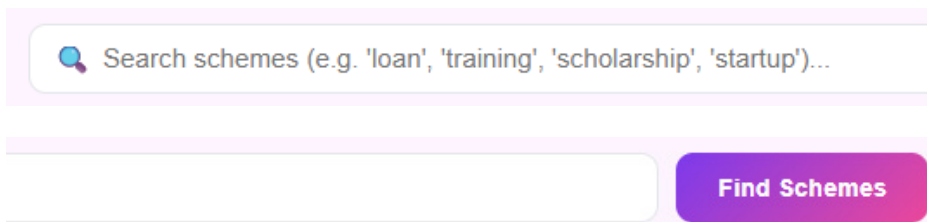
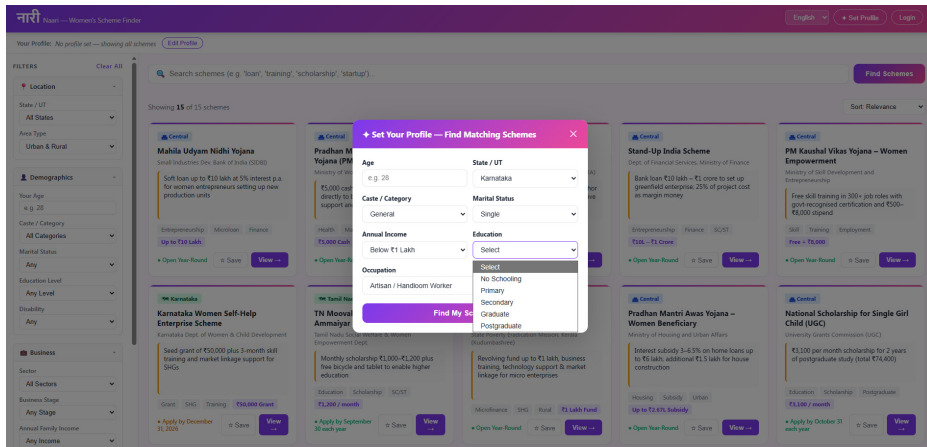
₹3,100 per month scholarship for 2 years of postgraduate study (total ₹74,400)

Education Scholarship Postgraduate

₹3,100 / month

• Apply by October 31 every year

Image. 7.9 Screenshots from Naari- the scheme finder (Manushi Khattawala, 2026)



*Image. 7.10 Screenshots from Naari- the scheme finder (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)*

The above images are from the working interactive web interface prototype of the Naari scheme finder. This interface was built by the information architecture document. It currently holds only 15 schemes as a demonstration sample, a small fraction of the roughly 350 women-focused schemes the full platform aims to eventually cover.

There is a language selector with options of English and Hindi, a “Set Profile” button, and a “Login” button. I also added a search bar that prompts its users to search by terms like loan, training, scholarship, or startup, paired

with a purple “Find Schemes” button. Directly under it, a row of active filter chips that are set according to the selection in the set profile menu. The result count also shows “Showing 9 of 15 schemes,” and a “Sort: Relevance” dropdown that can be edited by the user.

The left sidebar is the filter panel, headed “FILTERS”, organised into collapsible sections that mirror the Information Architecture filter dimensions. Location contains States of India and Area Type (Urban & Rural). Demographic filters holds “Your Age”, “Caste/Category”, “Marital Status”, “Education Level” and “Disability”. Business contains Agriculture, Manufacturing, Services, Technology, Finance, Health, Education Handloom (arts) ), Business Stage (Idea, start-up, growth, scale), and Annual Family Income (Below ₹1 Lakh, ₹1-3 Lakhs, ₹3-5 Lakhs, ₹5-10 Lakhs, above ₹10 Lakhs). And as a user scrolls, there are Scheme type filters - Finance / Loans, Entrepreneurship, Education / Scholarships, Health & Maternity, Skill Training, Housing, Social Support. And final filter is “Scheme Scope” – Central Government or State Government.

Each scheme displayed has a pop-up overlap detail card that shows the title of the scheme, benefit amount, sub-text with basic information, eligibility criteria, documents required, application details (like how to apply, deadline, processing time, validity, helpline, email) and finally tags for search efficiency. There is also a “Apply on Official Site” external link, “Save” and “Share” options available. To stay updated, a “report incorrect info” option is also provided, and the last verification date is mentioned as well to keep the user informed.

The screenshot shows a detail card for the Karnataka Women Self-Help Enterprise Scheme. The card has a purple header with the text 'Karnataka State Government' and a close button. Below the header, the title 'Karnataka Women Self-Help Enterprise Scheme' is displayed in bold, followed by 'Karnataka Dept. of Women & Child Development'. The card is divided into several sections: 'BENEFIT AMOUNT' with a value of ₹50,000 Grant and a description of the grant; 'ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA' with four bullet points; 'DOCUMENTS REQUIRED' with five document categories; 'APPLICATION DETAILS' with four sub-sections: 'HOW TO APPLY', 'DEADLINE', 'PROCESSING TIME', and 'HELPLINE'; and 'TAGS' with four tags. At the bottom, there are three buttons: 'Apply on Official Site', 'Save', and 'Share'. A footer note indicates the data was last verified on 2026-02-10 and provides a link to report incorrect info.

Karnataka State Government

## Karnataka Women Self-Help Enterprise Scheme

Karnataka Dept. of Women & Child Development

**BENEFIT AMOUNT**

**₹50,000 Grant**

Seed grant of ₹50,000 plus 3-month skill training and market linkage support for SHGs

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

- ✓ Female resident of Karnataka
- ✓ Age 21–50 years
- ✓ Family annual income below ₹4 lakh
- ✓ Member of a registered Self-Help Group (SHG)

**DOCUMENTS REQUIRED**

- Aadhaar Card
- Domicile Certificate
- Income Certificate
- SHG Membership Proof
- Bank Account

**APPLICATION DETAILS**

<b>HOW TO APPLY</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>
Offline – District WCD Office, Online Portal	Apply by December 31, 2026
<b>PROCESSING TIME</b>	<b>VALIDITY / DURATION</b>
60 days	Annual Scheme
<b>HELPLINE</b>	<b>EMAIL</b>
080-22345678	dwcd@karnataka.gov.in

**TAGS**

- Grant
- SHG
- Training
- Karnataka

[Apply on Official Site ↗](#) [★ Save](#) [🔗 Share](#)

Data last verified: 2026-02-10 | [Report incorrect info](#)

Image. 7.11 Screenshot of detail card from Naari- the scheme finder ( Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

### 7.3.4 Instagram Design

For most brands, social media is treated as a distribution channel, a feed where finished content is broadcast. For Naari, it was designed as brand infrastructure, because the platform's three core touchpoints (feminist discourse, collective history, and member promotion) all depend on social media's specific capabilities as a space for visibility, community, and networked support.

Contemporary feminism is shaped by what Banet-Weiser et al. (2018) call "media feminism," where digital platforms become central spaces for the formation of feminist subjectivities, the circulation of affects, and the politicization of the personal.(González Moreno et al., 2025)

Social media amplifies feminist voices and enables collective self-exploration, allowing women to share experiences, recognize themselves in others' stories, and articulate common responses to patriarchal structures. For Naari, this means the brand's social presence promotional collateral and also space where feminist discourse lives, a digital common room where conversations about rights, policy, and everyday experience can unfold continuously rather than being confined to scheduled events.

It also functions as a living archive of wins, legal milestones, and member achievements, a deliberate counter to the erasure women's contributions have historically faced.

For member promotion, social media serves as a visibility engine. Research on Indian women entrepreneurs shows that social media enables them to enhance visibility, build personal brands, and foster supportive com-



munities that share resources and knowledge. (Role Of Social Media In Empowering Women Entrepreneurs In India | Open Access Journals, n.d.)

Naari extends its brand identity – the Pichwai-inspired visuals, color palette and dual-language typography into templates, story formats, and repostable assets, making every member’s post a signal of belonging to a recognizable community (Community-Led Branding for Creator Belonging, n.d.). The brand’s visual system does not stop at the website. It travels through the feed, where it does its most active work.

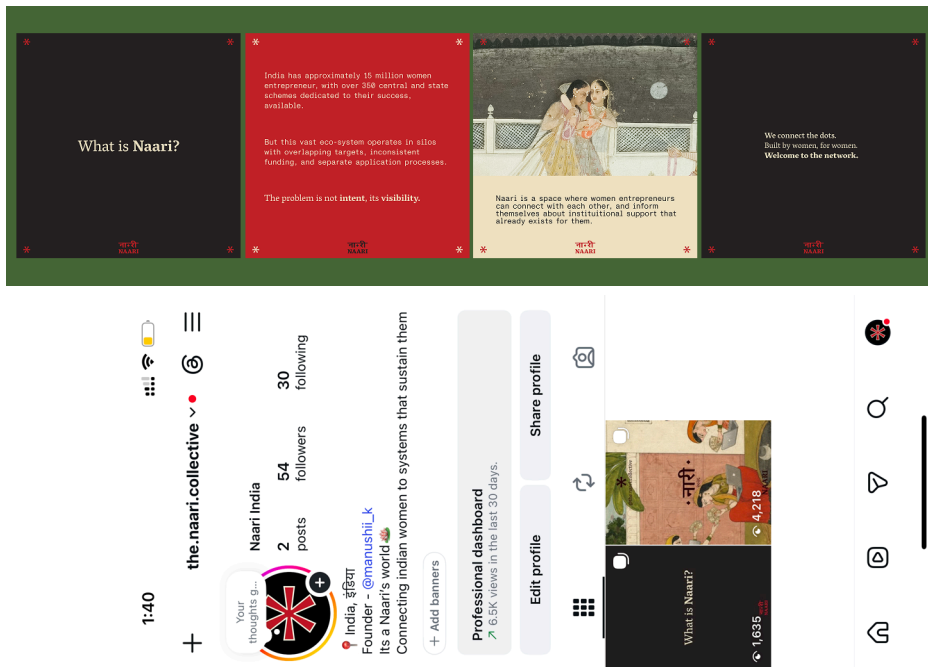


Image. 7.12 Instagram post design and profile for Naari (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

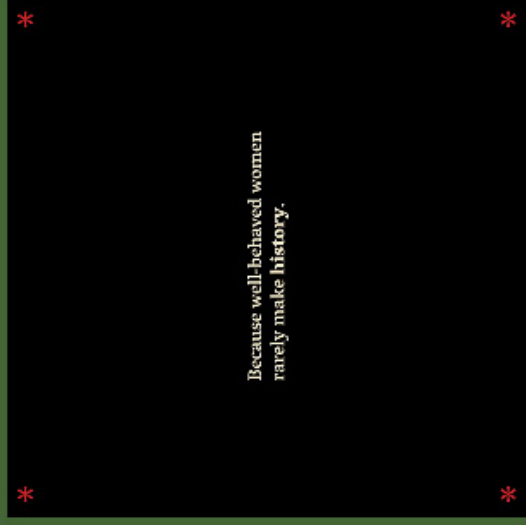


Image. 7.13 Instagram post design for Naari ( Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)



### 7.3.5 Naari's Pilot Event Design – Supper Club in Vadodara.

Naari's first supper club was organized in collaboration with Divyanshi Agrawal, the co-founder of Disco Studios, a marketing firm based in Mumbai and Vadodara, with additional sponsorship from Nuva Nutrition. The menu was designed by Bhavya Agarwal, a Vadodara-born chef now based in Berlin who trained at a Michelin-starred restaurant in New York. Vegetables were sourced through Nuva Nutrition. I designed the 1.5-hour event end to end: the menu card, the flow of conversation, and a short facilitation script developed with Disco Studios to seed discussion among the eight participants.



*Image. 7.9 - 7.14 Photos from Supper Club Naari event in Vadodara, India (Divyanshi Agarwal, 2026)*







### **Learnings**

One limitation emerged from the guest list: all participants came from a similar demographic and school network. Some already knew each other, others brought a friend, and small clusters formed within the group. This was an expected consequence of the organic marketing pool and the nature of short-format gatherings. Even so, the format proved that an informal activity with a curated space, can function as a genuine networking touchpoint for women entrepreneurs.

### 7.3.6 Design artefacts for Naari

While researching potential brand touchpoints for Naari, I began noticing a recurring pattern. Many objects that have been integral to feminine Indian culture for centuries - such as the bindi, saree, and depictions of goddesses- have, in various ways, become shaped by patriarchal interpretations and expectations. Take the bindi, for example. Traditionally, it is a coloured dot worn between the eyebrows. Across Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, the bindi is associated with the third-eye chakra, while the Sanskrit word \*bindu\* refers to the central point around which a mandala is created, symbolising the universe itself. However, over the past few centuries, its meaning has gradually shifted, becoming a visual marker of a woman's marital status:

- \* Red bindis for married women
- \* Black bindis for widows
- \* Colourful or decorative bindis for unmarried girls

Similarly, the saree is a length of draped cloth that carries deep cultural significance, it has often become subject to sexualisation despite its traditional roots.

For Naari, I wanted to create artefacts that felt rebellious, by rejecting these cultural symbols, reclaiming them and reconnecting them to their original meanings. The goal was to challenge the narratives imposed upon them and reimagine them as symbols of agency and self-expression.

#### **Bindi**

This led to the creation of a Naari bindi packet. Designed as both merchandise and a statement piece, it transforms the act of wearing a bindi into a subtle feminist gesture, one that reclaims its symbolism from social

expectations and returns it to the wearer.

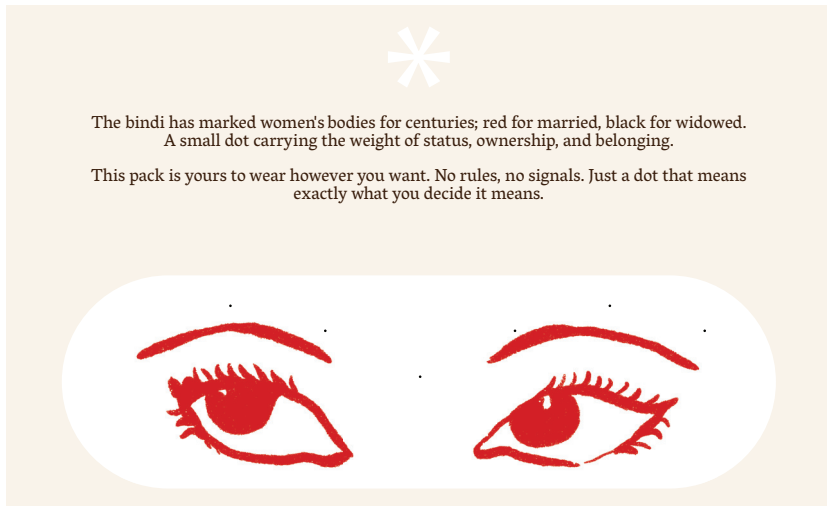


Image. 7.20 Bindi Design (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

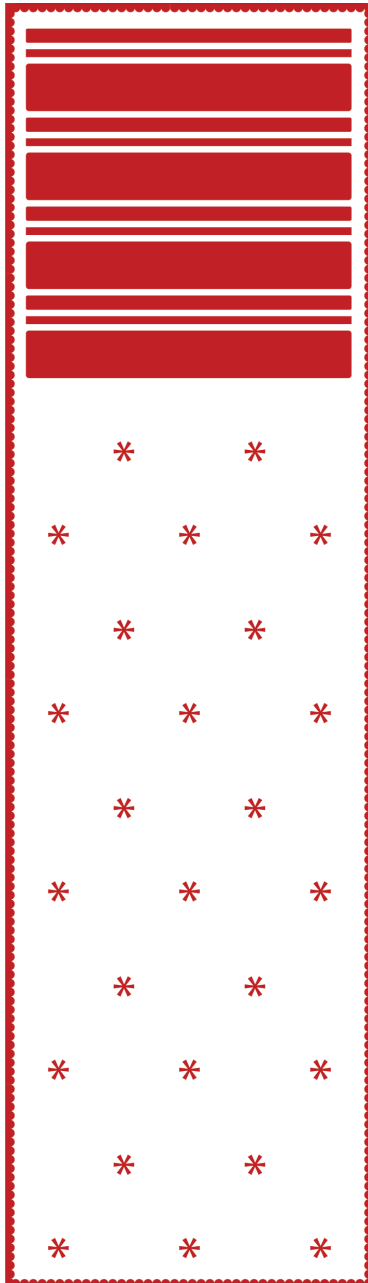


**Sari, not sorry – Zine design**

Sari Not Sorry is a zine, a format chosen on purpose. Zines have always belonged to the margins, self-published, passed hand to hand, printed cheaply and circulated outside official channels. Naari uses the form for the same reason: a space that answers to no editor, no sponsor, no approved narrative. The title holds the stance. Sari, the garment so often used to define and contain a woman, paired with a refusal to apologise for occupying it on her own terms. The zine collects the symbols, stories, and language tied to Indian womanhood and puts them back in the hands of the women they describe. For the Werkshau booth, it works as the opening note, hung at the entrance of the booth, something to read, take, and carry through the booth.

The format is proportional to an actual saree, and has a block print on one side with the title “sari not sorry”. And on the other side is an introduction to Naari, a QR code to the website, contact information, the team, some details about the upcoming events.

(next page) Image. 7.11 Sari, Not Sorry Zine (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)



NAARI



नारी

# Issue 01

What is Naari?

## About

Naari is an ecosystem designed to support women entrepreneurs in India. Emerging from a landscape shaped by vast cultural, geographic, and social diversity, it responds to the fragmented nature of existing support networks. Rather than creating new resources, Naari brings viability to what already exists while fostering connections, knowledge exchange, and collective growth. The project explores how design can expand women's agency within patriarchal systems by improving access to economic opportunity, institutional support, and community.

Connecting women entrepreneurs with opportunities, community and real-world relationships.

## DISCOVER



India has 350 Central and state schemes for women; but they are not always accessible to them. Find out what schemes you qualify for from Naari's Scheme Finder.

## DISCOURSE



Find out about India's long history of feminism, dating back to the time of Sita and Draupadi. Because knowledge, is enlightening.

## DEVELOP



Come to our next event & make genuine connections. We're unlike any other networking event; we paint, eat, discuss books, visit art galleries, and meet women you'll surely admire.

## VISIT

@THE.NAARI.COLLECTIVE

## The Team



**MANUSHI**  
Designer and Founder  
manushirk.work@gmail.com



**DIVVANSHI**  
Marketer and Collaborator  
discinc.studio@gmail.com

## Upcoming Event

# Pride Parade

20th June, 2026  
Kamatibaug Gate no. 3  
5 pm onwards

Inspired by Mira Malhotra's  
"Unveiling the Saree"

Designed by Manushi K.  
Master Design, HSLU

### 7.3.7 Werkshau Booth design

As I approached the Werkschau and final thesis presentation, the concept evolved in both scale and intensity. Through the process, I realised that storytelling was the most powerful tool for communicating an idea like Naari. My initial booth concepts were more corporate in nature, featuring a different colour palette and a cleaner visual language. However, these iterations neither strengthened the concept nor added any meaningful depth to it.

I wanted the exhibition space to showcase both my inspirations and the core values of the project, while still allowing room for artistic expression. This led me to ask a simple question: what is unique about Indian entrepreneurs, and what resonates with my own lived experience?

The answer was the Indian household.

For many entrepreneurs, especially women, the home is more than just a physical space. It is where ambitions are nurtured, resilience is built, and dreams first take shape. It represents community, love, family, and support, but also the realities and expectations that women navigate every day.

Inspired by this, I designed the booth around the idea of an Indian household. The wall became a reimaged domestic space, one that reflected the cultural context from which so many entrepreneurial journeys begin. In doing so, the installation connected the personal with the political, creating an environment that felt both familiar and deeply tied to the story of Naari.



# 8. Conclusion, Learnings and Future Plans

**Naari started as an exploration of a simple question: why are so many women-led businesses in India unable to access the opportunities, networks, and resources that could help them grow? What started as research into a broader investigation of gender, culture, community, and visibility, narrowed down to women's feminist acts of financial autonomy and agency.**

**Throughout this project, I discovered that the barriers women face are rarely isolated. Limited access to funding, lack of mentorship, safety concerns, social expectations, and the absence of strong professional networks are often deeply interconnected. Designing for women entrepreneurs therefore required more than creating a digital platform; it required building a sense of belonging, representation, and collective support.**

Naari became an attempt to bridge these gaps, connecting the dots, might I say, through a combination of practical tools, networking opportunities, cultural storytelling, and community-building. By drawing from traditional Indian visual languages and reinterpreting them through a contemporary feminist lens, the project also explored how design can reclaim cultural symbols and use them to tell new stories.

More importantly, Naari demonstrated that design can move beyond awareness and become a catalyst for action. The conversations, feedback, and real-world engagement generated during the master thesis showed that there is a genuine need for spaces where women can connect, learn, and grow together.

### **Key Learnings**

One of the most significant learnings from this thesis was understanding the importance of designing with communities rather than simply designing for them. Conversations with women entrepreneurs revealed insights that could never have emerged through desk research alone. Their experiences continuously shaped the direction of the project.

Another key learning was that cultural references can be powerful when used critically and intentionally. Rather than rejecting traditional symbols associated with femininity, Naari explored ways to reclaim and reinterpret them, creating new meanings while remaining rooted in cultural familiarity.

Finally, this project reinforced the idea that design outcomes do not need to be limited to digital products. Communities, events, experiences, conversations, and physical artefacts can all become meaningful forms of

design intervention.

### **Future Plans**

Although this thesis marks the conclusion of the academic project, it also represents the beginning of Naari's next phase.

The immediate goal is to continue expanding the network through community-led events in different cities. In the coming month, Naari is organising a night march in Vadodara, where a group of women will travel together using public transport. The event aims to encourage confidence, solidarity, and greater visibility of women in public spaces.

Another exciting development emerged organically through the project itself. After the launch of the Naari Collective Instagram page, a woman based in Berlin reached out expressing interest in adapting Naari's networking format for the expatriate community in Germany. Along with her, I plan to host a girls' day in Berlin in August, opening the possibility of extending Naari's model beyond India and into international communities.

On the digital side, the Government Scheme Finder will continue to be developed and expanded with additional schemes, resources, and support programmes relevant to women entrepreneurs. Improving accessibility and discoverability of these opportunities remains a key priority.

Ultimately, the vision for Naari is to evolve from a thesis project into a living network; one that continues to connect, support, and celebrate women entrepreneurs across cities, communities, and cultures.

**Naari**



**नारी**



Part 2

# Bibliogra- phy

totyping activity (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)

Image 6.3 “Safety” by Marja Cielecka, in Collective Prototyping activity (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)

Image 6.4 Stills of Faculty, Leah Schmidt and student, Marja Cielecka, in Collective Prototyping activity (Manushi Khatlawala, 2025)

Image 6.5 “Pink City” rickshaw by Pranav Madhu

Image 6.6 Stills ‘What If?’ exhibit in Kornhausforum Bern – Morgen Zeitung (Daniel Meeh, 2025)

6.7 Stills from “In Utero” Exhibit (Manushi Khatlawala)

6.8 Stills from “In Utero” Exhibit (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

6.9 Stills from “In Utero” Exhibit (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image 6.10 Screenshots from ‘Naari - Podcast’ Video Design (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image 6.11 Prototyping Module 3 exhibit (Eva Moreno, 2026)

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Figure 7.1 Women entrepreneur eco-system (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026) Women entrepreneur eco-system (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image. 7.1 Cross-comparison of India’s Public and private sector (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image. 7.2 Naari Moodboard (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image. 7.3 Mughal Miniature, Cleveland Museum of Arts (n.d)

Image. 7.4 Naari brand image (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image. 7.5 Mughal Miniature, Cleveland Museum of Arts (n.d)

Image. 7.6 Naari brand image (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image. 7.7 Screenshot of Naari Website iteration 1 (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

On the left, Image. 7.8 Screenshot of Naari Website final (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Figure 7.2 User flow of Naari – the scheme finder (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image. 7.9 Screenshots from Naari- the scheme finder (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image. 7.10 Screenshots from Naari- the scheme finder ( Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image. 7.11 Screenshot of detail card from Naari- the scheme finder ( Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image. 7.12 Instagram post design and profile for Naari ( Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)



Image. 7.13 Instagram post design for Naari ( Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

Image. 7.14 - 7.19 Photos from Supper Club Naari event in Vadodara, India  
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Image. 7.20 Bindi Design (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

(next page) Image. 7.21 Sari, Not Sorry Zine (Manushi Khatlawala, 2026)

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