



Research Paper

Fear of Violence and Gendered Spatiality in Contemporary City Space of Kolkata

Upamanyu Basu

(Doctoral Candidate National University of Juridical Sciences, India)

ABSTRACT: *The concept of space in social science research has been in a constant state of becoming. Space is considered as the means by which an individual is manipulating his/her interests, for which the access of this space reflects a kind of power dynamics. Space is never a neutral means of control; it is always dynamic and is humanly constructed. Power relations concerning these spaces; determine the legitimacy of the inmates of this space as well as their identities. It is through these identities that a specific space comes to be associated with being masculine or feminine, because these spaces influence strongly the men or women's actual behaviour. This study tries to locate the relationship between gender and space in the context of city space of Kolkata, India. To contextualize gender is also to contextualise space and this happens in complex ways. This study tries to locate mobility patterns of women in city spaces. From this mobility pattern, a sense of mapping is done to locate where women are fearful of sexual violence and why? And how they associate with these places and narratives associated with them? This study primarily locates women's fear of sexual violence in public space. But the study is careful of also taking into account the narrative of men, and other gender identities to get a broader understanding of gendered spatiality in contemporary city space of Kolkata.*

KEYWORDS: *Gender, Space, Mobility, Violence, Fear*

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I. INTRODUCTION

While conducting this study, I examine different aspects of fear and safety in public space, understanding the views of those who are marginalised historically in public spaces; of those who have been dominant and underpinning perceptions of gendered bodies that are implicated in the discourse of space. For instance, women's and a queer subject's fear of violence in public spaces and their self-disciplining and limitations in accessing these specific public spaces is a marker of the spatialized patriarchal power dynamics. The overall aim of this study is to conceptualise the contours of fear of violence, predominantly sexual violence, and gendered spatiality in the city of Kolkata. The study had primarily two research questions, to be addressed: 1) Does fear of violence in a city stem from and generate gendered spatiality? 2) How it is conceptualised in the context of city space of Kolkata.

The study is based on the analysis of qualitative data collected through unstructured interviews of women, men and members of transgender community living in Kolkata. The research is designed to gain an understanding of gendered individual's experiences and perceptions, and to examine and study the shifting meanings of fear among them. Stories about fear form the crux of this research, and attention has been given to both 'what the respondents tell me, and also 'how they narrate it'.

Feelings of fear or insecurity have received increasing attention in social science research in recent times, and the fear of violence as a phenomenon has become a research topic in its own right i.e., among many like Valentine (1989), Koskela (1999) and Listerborn (2002). Quantitative assessment of fear through crime surveys had dominated the research field in the 1980s and 1990s, and a number of studies clearly documented differences related to gender, ethnicity and age in people's fear of crime in public space. More recent research has examined how fear is related to existing power relations in space and how meanings of fear may differ depending on circumstances. Most of these researchers fall within the rubric of what is understood as 'feminist geography', which examines gendered construction of space. Feminist geographers like Massey (1984) and Pain (1997) were the first to use methods like mapping, indigenous to disciplines like geography to enter the realm of social science and map the fear of crime. Here the initiative of Hidden Pocket based in Delhi and other

metropolitan cities is noteworthy. This NGO tries to use mapping methodologies to locate safe places where couples can get fertility advices.

II. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING OF THE CONCEPT OF FEAR OF VIOLENCE:

In order to make sense of different aspects of fear and space coming into dialogue in public space and the importance of space in our conceptualisation of fear, in this subpart, I will present the main theories: the literature and ideas that has influenced my work. In specifics, I will be discussing the core theories of space, place and gender, and also seek to lineate an interconnection between them

2.1 Introduction of Fear

Quantitative studies generally are helpful in showing who are more fearful in public space, and where these spaces are located. For example, since the late 1960's Statistics of Sweden have studied the fear of violence in public spaces of Sweden. The nature of the survey, has given data that women are more fearful than men in accessing certain public spaces after dark. (Koskela, 1999)

A similar survey was conducted in the Indian context. Delhi's city space was identified as the perfect spot in understanding the nature of gender usage and gendered violence in public space in the city. The study argued that the cities constructed a form of social life and gave them and encouraged different understandings of public spaces that are deeply gendered in the access of these spaces. The lack of access also constructs a cycle around it, to give it a particular gendered colour. (Vishwanath, 2007)

The fear of crime is a variable between individuals. It is a phenomenon with geographical, economic, social, cultural and psychological dimensions and is influenced by variety of institutions and relations and may be understood from the national to individual scale. The problem of defining fear is articulated by Pain(2000). Her work contends that it is not fixed and is never a measurable quantity, but rather marked by context based complexities. Women's fear of violence in public space has been highlighted by feminist geographers in several studies since the 1980's, like in the works of Valentine (1989) and Pain (1997). The nature of fear and its relation with space is complex, and this perception of fear can be never a part of an equation where one can be an actual subject of violence. Hence, such an equation does not exist. Fear degrades the quality of life of an individual and thus has to be recognized as a societal problem.

Researchers on the geography of fear thus argue that fear of violence in public space should be addressed as a structural problem in society rather than an individual problem. In the end I define fear of violence in public space as being about control of space, whereby fear is an expression of people's – gendered – unequal power relations. Fear is related to gendered power relations in space and created in gender practices in everyday life (Koskela, 1999; Rose, 1993). This is expressed in how gender relations create different spatial behaviours. Women are socialized to be more afraid than men, but also to be more open about their fears, while men are socialized to not show or express fear (May, 2001). Valentine (1989) highlighted the spatiality of women's fear of violence, examining the relationship between woman's fear of male violence and their perception and use of space, and connecting this to gender inequality. She argues that it is a spatial expression of patriarchy when women restrict their mobility as a consequence of fear of violence. This in turn creates certain spaces that are considered appropriate for women to use. In urban space, women are more likely than men to be gazed upon (Massey, 1994). In public space, women have their privacy invaded by unknown men, in the form of various comments, whistles and sometimes a slap on the backside. In urban space it is more likely that it is women who are observed, by men (Massey, 1994). Being a woman includes feelings of being constrained by space. Bondi and Davidson explain these feelings in terms of women's awareness of embodiment, associated with a sense of being the object of other people's gaze. They argue that —Women rarely claim or control space, instead they are caught and confined by space. Women feel they have no control over space, especially at night. The fact that women are more afraid at night has less to do with darkness and poor visibility than with who controls the space.

In this study, I place myself within this broader research field of the geography of fear, where feminist geographers have examined fear in relation to gender, place and space since the late 1980's. One of the key contributions of feminist work on the geography of fear concerns its analyses of power relations. This research has demonstrated how fear is related to gendered power relations in space, and produced in the gender practices.

2.2 Space

Space and place are key concepts in geography. In everyday understanding we may sometimes use place and space as interchangeable, and they are often taken for granted and not reflected upon. The concepts of space and place are subject to debates within human geography and have different definitions and interpretations. A discussion of space and place that has contributed to my own conceptual understanding is that by Anderson (2010), who defines the difference between place and space as —in contrast to space, places are meaningful, they root people both geographically and socially, and are fashioned by culture from context. Places

can occur on any scale, and can be both material and imaginary. Massey's (1994) work provides a clarification of the concepts of place and space. Social space is defined—in terms of the articulations of social relations which necessarily have spatial forms in their interactions with one another (1994). She defines place as—particular moments in such intersecting social relations, nets of which have over time been constructed, laid down, interacted with one another, and decayed and renewed. Massey offers a conception of places as not so much bounded areas as open and porous networks of social relations.

McDowell (1999) asserts that bodies in space raise all sorts of questions about the space and place they occupy. For me, this concerns how gender can be seen as inscribed, through bodily practices, in the production of spaces. The relationship between body and space is complex and changing. Experiences of fear of crime in public space also depend on what body you have. Which bodies fear which bodies? Which bodies fear which bodies, when and where? The question expands the discussion on fear and safety in public space to include both those who are afraid and those who scare, and in this a focus on both women's and men's bodies, as well as on the significance of space and place for our understanding of the complexity of fear.

The category of gender is complicated by ethnicity, class and age, and an awareness of these categories and their impact has been part of my research process. Research on fear of violence in public space has primarily been concerned with the category of 'women', while fewer studies have examined the intersections of fear, gender, race, social class, age and sexual identity (Hollander 2001). Notable exceptions include observations by Pain (1995) of the intersections of gender and age. Intersectionality is a concept that captures the complexity of the exercise of power and inequality in different contexts. Gender, class, ethnicity and sexuality are neither fixed nor essential categories, but rather social positions that have meaning in and through people's actions in specific contexts.

The rationale of this study is to regard space and place as gendered and according to Massey, this phenomenon of space getting gendered is reflective of nature of construction of gender itself in our society. In her seminal book from 1994, Massey goes on to highlight the conceptual interconnections between gender and geography and particularly how they relate to space and place as geographical analysis is concerned. Gender relations are thus constructed in and through space and place and quite oppositely space and place constructs gender.

2.3 Gender and its conceptualization:

Gender is relationally produced in space and also to the constructions of bodies. Different schools within Human geography have dealt and tried to understand body in a variety of ways. Feminist geographers have mostly laid emphasis on the mutually constitutive relationship between the human body and space, as analysing the ways places and bodies shape and mature each other. Bodies play an important role in people's experiences of place. They not only occupy space ,but are spaces themselves in their own right.(Mcdowell,99).Rose(1993) argues that bodies have got a history and geography of their won ,and they are constructed by their positions within the specific context ,be it historically or geographically .Thus ,it is concerning to observe how gender can be inscribed through bodily practices ,in the production of spaces. Thus, the relationships between body and space are complex and changing. Also your experience of fear in a specific space depends on what body you possess.

Gender is never a closed category of analysis; its relation with ethnicity, age, class is very important and complex with the meanings of fear. Researches for example of Connell(2005) shows how categories such as class ,ethnicity and age are important in consecutions of masculinity and femininity. The challenges of a binary understanding of gender is also haunting gender analysis, that why this study tries to understand narratives of other gender groups as well.

Questions regarding ethnicity have still not been a prominent position in Indian researches on fear of violence. Studies from Britain have focused on race and its interconnection with fear of violence. Race becomes a strong influence of fear of violence and Pain (2001) shows how people of colour have more fear of crime than white people do. So here an intersectional approach is used to understand fear. Valentine (1989) goes on to argue that women of colour may fear hate crime, but at the same time they also feel the fear of sexual violence too. In this study, thus I try to understand which bodies are feared and who are fearful. Certain ethnic communities in the Indian context, speaking of my research area as Kolkata, are feared more than the others.

2.4 Fear of Violence and the idea of masculinity and femininity construction:

Public fear is constructed at local as well as national levels, which in a way makes people typify certain "strange men" as potential offenders. Different constructions of gender, through socialization and through media representations, given men and women distinctive ideas about a typical victim and also what typical criminal might be like. Thus young men are always potential offenders in these spaces. Gender relations influence the different ways in which culture and society defines rights and responsibilities of man and woman in a space and also their conducts .Masculinity for example is constructed, through these social interactions and

this is even more achieved through culture of that space. Contexts and nature of the relationships, plays a huge role in this construction of masculinity. Scott (2010) argues how these sexed bodies are constructed in contexts and their meanings are changed with each context. And thus it has been my ambition to locate how masculinities and femininities are created in city spaces and how a space becomes gendered. The key lies in the why social relations take place in the dominant forces in that particular space.

Emotions can clearly change the way the world is for us, our sense of space and time. Our sense of what we are, and what we feel changes and is reshaped every moment (Davidson and Milligan, 2004). Anderson and Smith (2001) have argued that the silence of emotions both in social science research and public life needs to be observed and also the need to understand how this produces an entire world of its own. Emotions like fear are contributory factors in the usage of space, and also help us understand how perception of fear is constructed about certain spaces.

In conclusion, my theoretical influences were to study gender relations in space, with specific focus on construction masculinity and femininity of spaces, through perception fear, and also how does this happen with relations with people occupying these spaces. Space thus, is not only the area where social activities take place, but product of what kind of activities take place and who are the people occupying or accessing these spaces.

III. METHODS AND DATA

A qualitative approach offers opportunities to study complex phenomena within their context. The reasons for, and consequences of, fear of violence in public space are related to complex power relations. Qualitative studies have contributed importantly to research on social and spatial processes behind fear as well as to research on the consequences of fear. The empirical studies of this study focus on meanings of fear of violence in public space, through analyses of in-depth interviews with women and men and members of transgender community living in Kolkata. The qualitative methods I have used have allowed me to capture the respondents' sense-making, how they interpreted their experiences and emotions in their stories, and how they positioned themselves in relation to public discussion of fear of violence in public space.

The empirical data for this dissertation consists of in depth interviews with a total number of 25 women (with varied backgrounds and age group), 15 men (of different age groups) and 3 members from the transgender community from the city of Kolkata. The data was collected in 2018.

Different groups of Women: Women from colleges, IT professionals, Domestic workers, Housewives are taken as respondents to make the nature of narratives varied and then do thematic analysis from the data collected, narrowing down broader themes or common parts of each of their perception of fear in public space. The rationale that the upper income group had more respondents is only because the lower income group had restrictions in accessing certain specific public spaces which was the objective of the research. So the nature of narratives collected for the upper income group remained very varied as compared to the lower income group.

Different groups of Men: Here, the rationale of taking male narratives is much more as a contrast to the presence of women narratives, and to investigate the differences or similarities present in both. So majorly, the nature of division has been done based on age, with college going boys making one respondent group and above 25 men being the second grouping.

Incorporating Transgender: Most safety audits and narratives of fear of violence in public space takes into account women's presence. Feminist geographers started this discussion. In my research, I attempted an incorporation of the narratives of transgender individuals as well, and how they look at public space in the city, while understanding their limitations in accessing these spaces in Kolkata.

The first interviews were conducted in September of 2018, with eight women around the age of 20-55 years. The Park Street rape case had happened in 2012, but still respondents were repeatedly mentioning this case as a reminder of how unsafe women are in Kolkata city spaces. Thus as part of my research I started inquiring the various spaces they felt as safe and unsafe, and locate a pattern of mobility around these narratives. The later interviews took place around January 2019, and the time was post Durga Puja celebrations and passing of the Christmas New year's fever. The respondents started giving fresh narratives on their experience in crowded spaces and how they felt uncomfortable in crowded public transports. The new set of narratives had a different understanding, much more contemporary and recent in its experience.

The male narratives were collected, and mostly young men shared their experience of being extra careful in public transports, where they did not want to be the "feared" subject. Middle aged men, around the age group of 35, were mostly less afraid in accessing public spaces, and were very abrupt in their responses.

A stark observation was observed in the narratives shared by transgender individuals and also gender queer individuals, both of whom had a similar wish of being invisible in the public spaces. They claimed that because of their sexuality and presence, they were hyper-visible and this was the cause of concern. Where women, felt the need of being invisible in some spaces, the narratives of other gender identities, whose sexuality is itself, marginalised, this narrative served as a contrast.

The interviews were not formally structured, but I had an interview guide that provided a checklist to ensure that we covered the main themes I wanted to explore. The interviews were tape-recorded with permission from the respondents, and were subsequently transcribed. The interview sessions included questions about fear and safety in public space, including both the respondents' own and other people's experiences, and hence their own and other people's fear. During the interviews the participants described their use of the city and their perceptions of different spaces at different times. They also explained where they felt safe or insecure in relation to places, times and situations.

3.1 Creation of narratives:

Stories get constructed in the interplay between storyteller and the listener, who are participating in a dialogue. Thus in interviews, it is important to keep formulating questions which can lead the respondent in verbally giving his/her experience. (Reissman 1997)

Following Reissman (1993), it is only possible to represent experience, and that one cannot give a voice to someone, only one can interpret the experience. This is because at times while getting very ambiguous experience, the need is to transcribe the representations and reading these experiences in context. Through my interviewing, transcription practices and analyses I played a major part in constructing the narratives analyzed in this study. Through my presence, by listening and asking certain questions in certain ways, I shaped the conversations and hence the stories the respondents chose to tell.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Male, Female and Other gender group's narratives about threatening experiences in city space of Kolkata

There was a clear difference in responses when the respondents were asked to describe a threatening situation. Without hesitation, female respondents of all backgrounds highlighted situations they experienced as frightening. They localized their story in concrete places such as dark paths and deserted roads. Across interviews, there were strong similarities in female responses about fear in public space with certain immediacy. The women knew —how to talk about it. The female stories of fear of violence in public space had similarities across the interviews in terms of structure and content, irrespective of ethnic or class background. They reproduced a kind of master narrative of experienced fear in localized situations.

One of my respondents, clearly, showcased discomfort in specific areas like Khidderpore, Metiabruz, Ekbalpur, where the respondent avoids going alone after the sunset. A similar observation was noticed while interviewing another respondent, where she mentioned similar places when asked, to locate unsafe places to go in Kolkata. Now it was imperative for my understanding to locate the reason behind the choices of these places. And this led to my third respondent, who was resident of Khidderpore. The nature of public space in Khidderpore, in the areas near the dock remains quite dark, with lack of street lights. The nature of bikers and men commuting those roads are considered to be unsafe and thus women after a certain time avoid coming out in lanes and areas of Khidderpore, except the market places.

"I don't want to name exactly what kind of area is unsafe for me, but young guys riding bikes makes docks very unsafe in the night" one the respondents, a resident of Khidderpore shares her experience, where she had a past experience of being harassed by a biker gang in Khidderpore. With repeated warning to the local police stations, the nature of area has been cultured in a particular way, that young girls are not allowed to loiter in these spaces after 6 pm. This made me visit Khidderpore during that time, The spatial organization of Khidderpore is that to the east there is the dockyard, and an extension to areas like Watgunj and Munshiganj, where one of the largest Red Light Areas in Kolkata is situated. The west is that of schools and police grounds extending to New Alipore road, a opulent residential block. At the centre is the dazzling market area. The nature of space, made me go back to how the respondents had described Khidderpore to me, the moment you travel east towards the dock, the lights are getting dim, and through narrow lanes you enter the dock, where there are small *chai stalls*. The space is devoid of women, elderly men and with passing time after 10 pm, bikers dominate the areas. Hence these spaces in its reality are structured to make young men of a particular exterior dominate and hence restrict the mobility of women in these spaces.

This nature of observation, made it clear that the "unpredictable" quotient of a strange man, is exponentially higher in places which are dark and less travelled. And the narrative of being unsafe is a result of this unpredictability. The nature of this identification of these specific places can from the fact of fear of specific community which presumed to be dominant in these areas create a ghetto, where the outsiders fear these spaces not just because of darkness or a strange man violating them, but also the nature of this strange man gets specific community based colour.

Male respondents hesitated when asked about their own fear. Men rather talked about other people's fear, usually women's. The male respondents' talk about fear was fragmented and seldom included a main point of the story. They themselves were rarely prominent in their stories. Their hesitation or silence showed that there

was no shared story among them of male fear of violence. Instead, the male respondents expressed an understanding of how they as male strangers were defined as potential threats. Very similar narratives about causing fear in others and acting as —a ‘good’ guy were expressed by men.

Most of the women respondents below the age group of 45, showed similar discomfort in accessing public spaces in the dark. The way they spoke about their experiences was very detailed and though it took some warming up sessions with some respondents, but they ended up stating similar discomfort in spaces which are dark and lonely.

“I was very uncomfortable while entering the restaurant, as many drivers were waiting for their food delivery outside and there was no one inside the seating area” one of the respondents exclaimed her discomfort during Durga Puja celebration while finding hotels to eat have dinner.

A stark difference was observed in case of transgender narratives that were collected. The observation was majorly, that public spaces which are highly crowded are considered unsafe by them. They collectively hinted the discomfort of being visible in public spaces. In the background of that, transgender individuals face similar restrictions, since their presence is still stigmatized socially.

4.2 Construction of Gendered Spatiality in specific areas of the city

Certain areas of the city had a heightened gendered spatialization. Some observations with regard to the ‘hang-out’ spaces are quite insightful. Lottery, tea and *paan* shops were perceived to be mostly occupied by men while cafeterias (surveillance present coffee shops, like Barista, CCD), by women. It is worthwhile to note that the cafeteria emerges as a somewhat feminine space while tea stalls as masculine. Perhaps, it gives women a legitimate right to use public spaces for personal leisure activities ‘respectfully’. Tea stalls tend to be at roadsides, frequented by ‘men of all sorts’ and most importantly, they are open to public view. Cafeterias, on the other hand, are marked by comparatively restricted access and their sophisticated enclosure provides a kind of wall for the users, keeping them away from the full gaze of the public. It has been observed, as discussed later, that women perceive low-class, illiterate men as potential threats to their bodily integrity. Tea stalls users and their profiles make them illegitimate spaces as far as women are concerned.

Mostly this has been the nature of response presented by women from the slightly upper and upper income groups. This part of the paper is mostly interested in locating mobility patterns of women and transgender in the city space, since men never had a problem in dominating public spaces. The nature of questions put towards the respondents were hypothetical in nature, asking them to place themselves in certain areas where they felt safe or places which they preferred to ‘hangout’ with friends in the city. The observations are quite different from safety audits done in Delhi by the group led by Vishwanath(2007). Kolkata in that respect is considered far safer, as compared to the audit reports of Delhi. Most the respondents never felt discomfort in accessing places of leisure like malls, movie halls, cafeterias, gardens etc. But this observation changes with time. Each respondent shows discomfort in accessing most of these places, after a specific time.

The discussion reveals that men have been perceived to access public places at any time; women can ‘intrude’ these places only to assuage specific purposes of domesticity and they have to ‘legitimize’ it in ways that comply with socially sanctioned ‘appropriate’ norms in terms of the places where they can go, the time when they can go and the code of conduct they are to follow in public places..

A completely contrasting nature of public space is noticed in areas near night clubs and inside night clubs. One of the female respondents, who works as a manager in one of the clubs in Park Street, stated that the presence of bouncers in night clubs is a guarantor of safety for her and that she finds going a known night club to be safe for her.

“Why will it be a problem? Is it about that rape case? No. Park Street is very safe”

Here what we can notice is that a place like Park Street had different narratives with respect to its nightclub culture. A similar observation was not found, when asked about other clubs in a supposedly less popular area in Kolkata. It is interesting that only clubs near Park Street may be seen as safer at night. There are many bars and clubs on VIP road(outskirts), however mostly catering to ‘non-family’ clientele- comprising of real estate speculators in this fast developing zone of the city, who come here for entertainment and leisure. This predominant clientele may make such spaces of leisure limited to other customers- especially middle class professionals and women.

What can be observed, in this discussion, is for some respondents, the nature of space that the nightclub was a private space, so the unpredictable strange man being a cause of danger supposedly loosens up. But women respondents who did go to night clubs, had a very interesting addition as to how nightclubs turn into private spaces, because of certain perceptions. Group hopping can generate a sense of ‘privacy’ in a club. Also the class perception of the area is important- and mode of access and transport. And the most of these respondents had a very stable way of returning home, most of them returned by their private car or app cabs, yellow taxis in the Kolkata spaces are avoided by them late at nights while returning from these parties in the Park Street Area.

V. CONCLUSION

5.1 The shared experiences of women and the distinct experiences of men

After analysing both male and female narratives, with respect to individual positioning as well as public narratives, the findings does not show a complex pattern with respect to women. As the women's experience remain uniform. Without any restraint or hesitation, female respondents from all backgrounds have vivid imagery of their fearful experiences. The women living in fearful spaces themselves, had somewhat accepted the norm of not going out after the street lights are on. And the women, who travel though these spaces out of lack of option, make every attempt to change their mobility pattern to avoid these spaces in the dark. They all localized their experiences to dark places, and narrow lanes. The female respondents gave consistent views on their own vulnerability and also admitted on taking a fearful position in spaces like public transport, where they feared being groped. This therefore becomes a uniform pattern of fear. As I went through the different female respondents, the image of a woman walking alone from a dark lane kept coming to my mind. An image taken from behind, the type mostly seen in movies to depict a dark scene .It is not a very uncommon image.

Despite their shared story, the nature of fear was a bit different, while some women were fearful of their own residency, while other avoided spaces. A college going respondent ,clearly mentioned that Muslim dominated areas of MG Road is something she avoids in the evening ,rather she goes to the metro station from the Central Avenue road. While a resident of College Street ,herself mentioned “ It is something very normal ,so I take the opposite route.” .Here the sense of fear is homogenous ,but the attitudinal factors remains by nature distinct.

On the other hand, the male respondents interviewed for this study expressed complex emotional positions as they talked about their own fears, women's fear of unknown men and how they felt they were under suspicion and compared to the perpetrator.

Mostly young men are fearful of being labelled as a potential threat, and this experience was not a homogenous observation but differed from every class. Some even could not identify any fearful incident, but were able express their fear of being beaten up when with a girl in some spaces. Here individually, the men's lack of fear is considered to be normal by most of the respondents.Hence they identified themselves to be fearless with respect to accessing spaces. Despite this fragmented image of the men's description of their own fear, the male respondents expressed similar experiences of how they experienced the way they generated fear in others. All men expressed an altruistic fear for women they knew rather than for themselves. The male respondents in this study became protective with respect to their use of space, and in relation to women they knew. These men started to worry about the safety of female friends, girlfriends, wives and daughters. The men had a shared story about their altruistic fear and their protective use of space that resulted from their awareness of women's fear of assault. This protective nature of masculinity united men of different backgrounds.

5.2 Not only fear, but emotions also make fear of violence gendered:

Here, I seek to develop a broader understanding of emotional responses, to discuss the respondents' emotional responses in order to relate to considerations of gender and space, giving primacy to how people relate emotionally and through practise of discourses of fear.

Fear of violence, is intrinsic of various emotional relations. Fear, worry, anger, rage are all emotional responses. Koskela (1997) argues that fears as an emotional response, can take a rage of different variants and can be momentary. But when these fears are socialised, the nature fear becomes so much internalised that, it results in permanence of gendered spatiality in a city space, where justification of fear takes place.

With these shared stories of women respondents and other gender groups, it is clear that women face a majority threat of sexual violence, while other gender groups have different experiences of fear. For example, gender queer individuals mostly stated fear is of public humiliation because of their sexuality. One respondent mentions “I get very uncomfortable holding my partner's hand in metro, with fear of being humiliated by uncles”.Hence fear differs, but the space construction remains intrinsic.

5.3 From the construction of femininity and masculinity of spaces through gender relations:

The vulnerable femininity and the protective masculinity come from the hetero-normative construct of gender relations. In context of Kolkata, the larger social responsibility of nurturing the family, and upholding feminine virtues and respectability restricts certain patterns of mobility in the urban space. Here these factors or relations, construct the special organisation of gendered city space, with men largely dominating public spaces. But women, after narrating their experiences, conclude by saying that Kolkata is still better than other metropolitan experiences. This sense of justification is also present among them .But what is striking is that, all of the female respondents were sexually intimidated at some point in the public space, but only a minority completely avoided that space. For example the nature of public transport ,all of them have experienced

intimidation in busses and metros ,but due to lack of availability they still have to access such spaces ,being fearful most of the time.

Women, who are working, seldom loiter like men do after office hours. They merely use roads, alleys and lanes ,as a pathway to reach a destination and not loiter around with the freedom that men have in these spaces(Phadke,2005).While some places like liquor stalls are “male hang out points” ,while the movie halls ,cafes ,malls are places where both sexes interact. However the time of accessing these places too are taken into consideration. Only when its “safe” these spaces are allowed to be accessed. And other mapping data done on women’s mobility state that ,younger women are mostly seen hanging out in cafes and movie halls, married women are not dominant in these spaces as a group .So here, Marriage becomes an institution which further becomes a socialisation point ,which restricts women’s access outside with respectability and responsibility quotient coming in .

Even the *adda(chatting)* culture in Kolkata, becomes mostly a male exercise, of sitting outside the *para(colony/locality)*, and having a chat with male friends .Women do that, but indoors.

These in a way ,gives us the broader theoretical tool of understanding how these gender relations give rise to masculinity and femininity of a space. I was able to observe these constructions through the various gender relations, a specific space had with respect to time. Public places are clearly the breeding ground of sex differed activities ,which makes the space gendered ,with dominance of a particular gender and the gender relations and power dynamics legitimizing it. As Ranade, argues that, in spatial terms, social relations become dominant product of gender relations. The consequences are unequal power relations, which restrict women and other marginalised gender groups, from choosing their life decisions effectively and with free will. It jeopardise her real freedom, which is the essence of a valuable life. Thus to understand the essence of these unequal gender relations in spaces, the spatial analysis is important, but keeping in mind the various categories it is intrinsic of.

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