YOUR PLACE, MY PLACE OR OUR PUBLIC SPACE?
BMW Guggenheim Lab

A pioneering global initiative aimed at raising awareness about important urban challenges and inspiring ongoing conversations in cities around the world.

Partners for Urban Knowledge, Action & Research

An independent research collective and urban knowledge production center that conducts cross-sectoral, multidisciplinary, community-based research on issues related to urbanization.
OBJECTIVE: To understand the concept of privacy and its relationship to personal and public spaces in Mumbai.
METHODOLOGY
Qualitative Study - Mumbai

- 39 qualitative interviews were conducted and captured on video and/or audio.

- Diverse respondents of different genders and from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, religions, and geographical locations participated.

- Recurrent and new themes were identified from the in-depth interviews. These themes then became the foundation for questions developed for the quantitative study.
800 interviews were conducted in ten areas in Greater Mumbai.

400 interviews were conducted in public spaces; 400 interviews were conducted in homes around these public spaces.
Mumbaikars choosing family and friends can be seen as a reflection of the cultural ethos in the city. But why are respondents choosing their partner?

Previous studies suggest that this could be because of nuclearization of families that are splitting apart due to redevelopment and globalization. Others suggest that it could also be because a majority of the respondents are married.
When asked, half of all Mumbaikar respondents revealed that they wanted privacy from the watchful eyes of either their family or neighbors.
Community spaces often provide individuals with the space that many homes lack. However, this study reveals that one-fifth of respondents did not have access to community space.

These crucial spaces are under threat from redevelopment and the local mafia, among other factors.
Privacy can mean something different for everyone.
Mumbaikars shared their ideas on what privacy is in a collection of short interviews.
It is startling that so many women in Mumbai still feel they do not have access to certain public spaces.
The main reasons why women in Mumbai feel they cannot access public spaces boils down to a fear of sexual harassment as well as societal pressures associated with what is considered “acceptable” of an Indian woman. Only one-fifth of women gave a non-gender-related reason for not accessing a public space.

**WHAT ARE THE REASONS GIVEN BY WOMEN FOR NOT ACCESSING PUBLIC SPACE?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eve teasing (sexual harassment)</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of men</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal perception</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family restrictions</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far from home</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near home</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

339 respondents